

Sam Allberry

1, 2, & 3 John

Joyful Certainty



 7-Session Bible Study

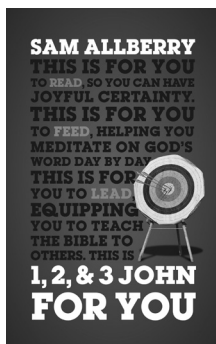
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📖 7-Session Bible Study



1, 2, & 3 John For You

These studies are adapted from *1, 2, & 3 John For You*.

If you are reading *1, 2, & 3 John For You* alongside this Good Book Guide, here is how the studies in this booklet link to the chapters of *1, 2, & 3 John For You*:

Study 1 > Ch 1-2

Study 2 > Ch 3

Study 3 > Ch 4

Study 4 > Ch 5-6

Study 5 > Ch 7

Study 6 > Ch 8

Study 7 > Ch 9

Find out more about *1, 2, & 3 John For You* at:
www.thegoodbook.com/for-you

1, 2, & 3 John: Joyful Certainty

A Good Book Guide

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Published by The Good Book Company

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A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Published in association with the literary agency of Wolgemuth & Wilson.

Design by André Parker and Drew McCall

ISBN: 9781802543049 | JOB-008070 | Printed in Turkey

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Introduction

One of the Bible writers described God's word as "a lamp for my feet, a light on my path" (Psalm 119:105, NIV). God gave us the Bible to tell us about who he is and what he wants for us. He speaks through it by his Spirit and lights our way through life.

That means that we need to look carefully at the Bible and uncover its meaning—but we also need to apply what we've discovered to our lives.

Good Book Guides are designed to help you do just that. The sessions in this book are interactive and easy to lead. They're perfect for use in groups or for personal study.

Let's take a look at what is included in each session.

Talkabout: Every session starts with an ice-breaker question, designed to get people talking around a subject that links to the Bible study.

Investigate: These questions help you explore what the passage is about.

Apply: These questions are designed to get you thinking practically: what does this Bible teaching mean for you and your church?

Explore More: These optional sections help you to go deeper or to explore another part of the Bible which connects with the main passage.

Getting Personal: These sections are a chance for personal reflection. Some groups may feel comfortable discussing these, but you may prefer to look at them quietly as individuals instead—or leave them out.

Pray: Here, you're invited to pray in the light of the truths and challenges you've seen in the study.

Each session is also designed to be easily split into two! Watch out for the **Apply** section that comes halfway through, and stop there if you haven't got time to do the whole thing in one go.

In the back of the book, you'll find a **Leader's Guide**, which provides helpful notes on every question, along with everything else that group leaders need in order to facilitate a great session and help the group uncover the riches of God's light-giving word.

Why Study 1, 2, and 3 John?

I can think of two seasons in my life, each lasting several months, when I felt very little assurance that I was a Christian. I didn't doubt God's goodness, or his faithfulness to his promises. I didn't doubt the resurrection of Jesus. I was seeking to follow God's ways and actively serve his people. Yet it didn't feel like I had really come to know him.

When I have been in that state, needing assurance, it is to the writings of John that I have turned—especially his first, much longer letter.

You will already know John as one of the Gospel writers—but his purpose in writing these letters is different from his purpose in writing his account of Jesus' life. In John's Gospel, he wrote so "that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:31). The Gospel was written to help people believe. But John's first letter was written to help believers *know* that they believe.

John, led by the Holy Spirit, assumes there will be followers of Jesus who struggle to know if they truly have come to know him. It is a comfort to know that such struggles are not unexpected! God is not frustrated with us for experiencing such need. Indeed, his heart is to help us.

In his first letter, John's concern is to reassure his readers that they are in the truth and that they have eternal life—while making it clear that the false teachers who were infecting the church were not and did not! John sets out three tests which he revisits throughout the letter, concerning doctrine, love, and obedience. These tests are given to provide assurance, helping us to see the ways we sincerely do believe Jesus, seek to follow his commands, and love his people—albeit imperfectly.

John's second and third letters are much shorter. You will spot the same themes of doctrine, love, and obedience. But these letters are written to more specific audiences and contain more practical and detailed instructions about how to walk in the truth of the gospel.



1, 2, & 3 John
85-95 AD

1

The Real Jesus

1 John 1:1 – 2:2

Talkabout

1. How do people in today's world try to find out about God, or about the meaning of life?

Investigate

 Read 1 John 1:1-4

DICTIONARY

Testify (v 2): talk about something as a witness, as if in court.

John is talking about Jesus in these verses. He calls him “the Word of life.”

2. How does John emphasize the fact that he really knows about Jesus?
What words does he use?

3. But it's clear that Jesus isn't like every other person you might see and touch. How does John highlight this? Pick out the key phrases.

Explore More | OPTIONAL

Jesus himself made the same claims that John is making about him.

Read John 8:48-59

Jesus claimed to have existed before Abraham, and he referred to himself as "I am"—the name God gave himself at the time of the Exodus (v 58).

- Why was this so controversial to his opponents?
- What else did Jesus say that shows us who he is?
- How did Abraham respond to the thought of Jesus' coming?

-
4. In verses 3 and 4, what is the result of Jesus having appeared and John having seen him and talked about him?

Apply

5. How could this passage reassure someone who...
- is worried that they are not a very good Christian because they don't know enough?
 - feels sad that they missed out on seeing Jesus in the flesh?

- is doubtful about whether God exists at all?

Getting Personal | OPTIONAL

We can be in a living relationship with Jesus today through receiving with faith the message John is sharing. We have true fellowship with the Father and with Jesus Christ (v 3)!

What is your relationship with Jesus like? Can you find assurance in this passage for when you feel distant from him?

Investigate

 Read 1 John 1:5 – 2:2

DICTIONARY

Advocate (2:1): a lawyer who makes a case for someone.

Atoning (v 2): making amends and providing reconciliation.

Jesus really did come. But why does this matter so much? It matters that Jesus is real because we have a real problem that we need him to solve: our sin.

6. John mentions three claims people might make (1:6, 8, 10). Look at the first claim. Given that John has just said that God is light, what do you think it means to walk in the darkness?

- What might it look like for someone to claim that they have fellowship with God while walking in the darkness?

7. Look at the claims in verses 8 and 10. What might it look like for someone to make one of these claims, and why are they wrong to do so?

8. Instead of making these claims, we should acknowledge and confess our sin. Why do you think this can sometimes be so hard to do?

- But what is our great hope and motivation (v 7, 9)?

Getting Personal | OPTIONAL

Can you identify any of the “claims” in your own attitudes? Are there areas of your life where you need to let God’s light expose your darkness?

It may be painful to confess your sin, but it is always worth it.

9. What is John's hope for his readers (2:1)? How can we square this with what he has just said?

10. Look at verses 1-2. When we do sin, why is it significant that Jesus is...

- our "advocate"?
- "the Righteous One"?
- "the atoning sacrifice"?

Apply

11. When we do sin, what should we do next? How does the identity of Jesus help us in this?

12. John wrote all of this "to make our joy complete" (1:4). What makes you feel most joyful or excited in this first part of 1 John?

Pray

Use your answers to question 12 to help you praise God. Ask him to keep on giving you the same joy in him throughout your week.

Then spend some time praying about your sin. You may like to confess your sins to one another. Whether you do that or not, cry out to the Lord together, asking him to help you to hate the sin in your lives and thanking him for sending a real Savior to deal with our real sin.