

Come, Follow Me: December 2 – 8

1 – 3 John; Jude

“God is Love”

By Third Hour



Tradition assigns the authorship of the Epistles of John to John the Beloved. These epistles were supposed to have been written before 100 A.D., but not much before. Remember that John was translated and allowed to live on. Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D. but there were a few rebellions against the Romans there afterward staged by remaining zealots. By the time these epistles were written, however, Jews were essentially in the diaspora, meaning they had been dispersed among many nations. These epistles may have been written from Ephesus. John was exiled to the Isle of Patmos at some point.

The Epistle of Jude comprises just one chapter with 25 verses and was meant to be circulated among all the churches. Authorship is traditionally attributed to Jude, the servant of Jesus and the brother of James the Just. This is interesting because James is traditionally identified as the brother of Christ. Matthew 13:55-56 and Mark 6:3 tell us everything we know about the identity of Jesus' siblings in the flesh. Jesus' brothers were called James, Joseph (or Joses), Judas (or Jude), and Simon; he also had sisters, though these were not named.

We draw closer to God through obedience (1 John 1):

In these last days, people in America are becoming "spiritual, not religious." When a person is "spiritual" only, then they may acknowledge a higher power, but they can live their life according to their own will and pleasure. There are no laws for being spiritual in this way. Joseph Smith said that a religion that has the power to save requires the sacrifice of all things.

Striving to be obedient does a lot of wonderful things for us in building character and learning to rely on the Savior. This could make a great discussion.

John bears a personal witness that he has seen the Christ and knows and shares in His holiness.

Christ is our advocate with the Father (1 John 2):

The Jews emphasized their worship of One God in contrast to the multiplicity of gods of pagan beliefs. These people and their beliefs were everywhere around them. As they did so, they lost sight of the need for an advocate with the Father. The entire plan of salvation depends upon Jesus as our advocate and redeemer to save us from the Fall and from our sins.

John says we grow to know Christ by keeping His commandments. In verses 15 - 17, John talks about the world as contrasted to a spiritual life:

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

John says that at his time there were many anti-Christ, signifying that they were in the last days. "He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son" (verse 22).

We will be like Christ (1 John 3):

Verses 1 and 2 are beautiful:

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, **when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.**

John tells us that the world cannot comprehend Christ or His righteousness, and it can't comprehend people who are righteous in Christ. He tells us not to be surprised that the world hates us.

If we keep the commandments, we dwell in Christ. And He dwells in us by giving us the Holy Ghost. (See verse 24.)

False prophets in the world (1 John 4):

John urges us to "try the spirits" of those who come to us with a message. By that, he means to discern whether these are representatives of the world and wickedness or Christ and righteousness. Many false prophets were teaching heresies even while the apostles were on the earth. It's interesting that in the Book of Revelation, where God decries various sects, all of those sects included promiscuous sexual behavior.

John says, "...Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God" (verse 2).

Verse 12 is confusing: "**No man hath seen God at any time.** If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." The Joseph Smith Translation says, "No man hath seen God at any time, *except them who believe ...*". Who are the people we know have seen God?

Verse 16 says, "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." Some people today say that because God is love, He will love you no matter what you do. That's true, but it doesn't mean He forgives everything people do. He expects us to keep the commandments.

Verse 18 says, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear..." What does it mean to have confidence before God? Watch the video below. This sister has confidence before the Lord.

Are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost one? (1 John 5):

This chapter begins by reiterating that if we love God we keep His commandments and that the commandments are not "grievous." Even anciently, many in the world saw Christianity as restrictive. But Christ says His yoke is "light." This would make a great discussion. John says, "...whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world." Why is this a goal we should seek?

In verse 6, John says that Jesus came by both "water and blood." What does this mean and why is it important? Continuing on, John says, "...the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. How do these verses support the idea of a trinity (3 Gods in one essence) or not (our belief that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are 3 separate personages who are one in purpose)?

In verse 13, John says, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." Many Christians believe that those who won't accept Christ are doomed to hell. How does our belief differ? How do we define "eternal life"? How is eternal life different from "salvation" in Latter-day Saint doctrine?

Children who continue to walk in the light (2 John 1):

John wrote this letter to a faithful sister whose children have continued in the faith. John finds this a delight. He encourages her to protect her household from the wickedness of the world.

Continue to minister (3 John 1):

John wrote to Gaius, whom he hoped to see in person after a time. John praises him for his constancy in the gospel and his efforts to minister unto all. John expresses some consternation over a man named Diotrephes, who appears to be exercising unrighteous dominion among the saints. What seems to be Diotrephes' problem? Do these kinds of things happen today?

Archangels and prophets (Jude):

Jude calls himself the brother of James, but James was the brother of Christ. Perhaps this is a show of humility. It sets Jesus apart as being the Son of God and not just the son of Mary and Joseph.

Jude shows us that apostasy was already occurring:

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ (verse 4).

These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage (verse 16).

Jude complains that these people are still participating in full fellowship with the saints. He talks about how Lucifer fell, the Israelites who were wicked were destroyed. Righteous people can fall from righteousness. He urges the righteous to be cautious about who they trust.


Come, Follow Me

NEW TESTAMENT 2019

1 JOHN MESSAGES OF LOVE GAME


Materials Needed: Printed hearts with scriptures and “I Can Feel God’s Love” worksheet (see following pages)

Instructions: Cut out hearts from printed pages. Tape the hearts around the house. Tell the family you are sending them on a scavenger hunt to learn about God’s love. Have everyone look for the hearts until they have found all 8. Come back together as a family and discuss what the different scriptures mean to them. Have them fill out the worksheet and share what they wrote down.

A pink heart with a black outline, containing text and a reference.


He that loveth not
knoweth not God; for
God is love.

1 John 4:8

A teal heart with a black outline, containing text and a reference.


In this was manifested the
love of God toward us,
because that God sent his
only begotten Son into the
world, that we might live
through him.

1 John 4:9

A purple heart with a black outline, containing text and a reference.

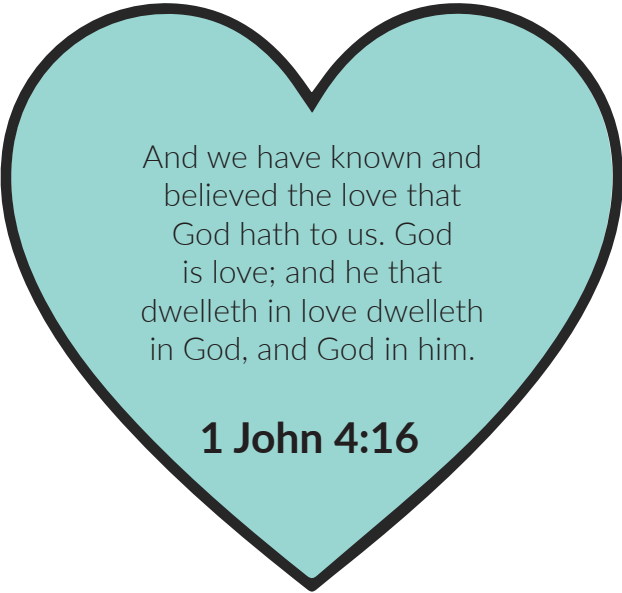
Herein is love, not that
we loved God, but
that he loved us, and
sent his Son to be the
propitiation for our sins.

1 John 4:10

A blue heart with a black outline, containing text and a reference.


No man hath seen
God at any time.
If we love one another,
God dwelleth in us,
and his love is
perfected in us.

1 John 4:12

A teal heart with a black outline, containing text and a reference.


And we have known and
believed the love that
God hath to us. God
is love; and he that
dwelleth in love dwelleth
in God, and God in him.

1 John 4:16

A yellow heart with a black outline, containing text and a reference.


We love him
[God],
because he
first loved us.

1 John 4:19

An orange heart with a black outline, containing text and a reference.

By this we know that we
love the children of God,
when we love God, and
keep his commandments.

1 John 5:2

A pink heart with a black outline, containing text and a reference.

For this is the love of
God, that we keep his
commandments.

1 John 5:3

I Can Feel God's Love



I can feel God's love when...

This is a picture of how I feel God's love:

