

The  
New  
Testament  
in a Year

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Week 45

1<sup>st</sup> Letter of John 5

2<sup>nd</sup> Letter of John

3<sup>rd</sup> Letter of John

Jude

Hebrews 1

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Monday

1<sup>st</sup> Letter of John 5

At the end of this first letter by John, we see themes from the chapters we read last week reappearing. John is trying to make his point clear, that Jesus was both fully human and fully divine.

Jesus came by water (his baptism) and blood (his atoning death on the cross). The Holy Spirit testifies to this (the Spirit descended on him at his baptism). The Spirit works in our hearts to show us the truth.

Verse 11 reads, "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."(NIV)

*Is it hard for us to talk about this gift of eternal life God has given us through Jesus? Why?*

Tuesday

2<sup>nd</sup> Letter of John

The commentaries all say to read 2 John and 3 John together. After some long chapters in the gospel of John these short letters seem to be a breeze. But because they were personal letters, written for specific small gatherings of Christians, we may not understand them without knowing some background information.

Again, John warns of "deceivers" ("false prophets") who do not teach that Jesus is both fully human and fully divine. Of particular concern are those who did not believe God could become human (they were called *gnostics*). They believed the physical body was evil, and so denied that God, who is pure, could take on a body. Believing this would also deny that God, through Jesus, died for us.

John warns the new Christians reading his letter not to welcome such people into their house gathering (their church). *What do we make of such a warning when we have been encouraged to welcome all? How do we guard against false teachings in our Christian gatherings? And how do we decide what is false?*

Wednesday

**3<sup>rd</sup> Letter of John 2**

Showing hospitality towards strangers was important in this first century culture. Teachers of the Christian faith could expect to be welcomed into the home of the leader of the local church, usually also the meeting place for Christian worship. Strangers, proclaiming the Good News, needed to have letters of recommendation from such leaders as John or Paul to be welcomed into the local leader's home. It seems such a letter from John did accompany a teacher, but was rejected by Diotrephes. Of course, John is not happy about this.

3 John seems to also be one of these letters, recommending Demetrius (vs. 12)

*How do you decide if someone is a credible Christian teacher? Does that affect who you read or listen to? Does this affect who you recommend to others?*

Thursday

**Jude**

This letter from Jude to another Christian community seems to be shouting "Look Out!!" Like the letters of John there seems to be great concern about false teachers who are part of the community. "Woe to them!" (vs. 11). Jude saves no words in describing the dangers such teachers may be to the faith of the community.

He sums up his letter with praise "to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore!" (vs. 25)

This is the truth the early Christians and we need to hold on to.

*As you pray with God today, meditate over each word of vs. 25.*

Friday

**Hebrews 1**

The writer of Hebrews sets up his arguments in the first few verses. Jesus is the Son of God, short and simple. Using many Old Testament references to back up his arguments he is setting the stage to try and convince the readers (and us) that belief in Jesus Christ is worth the risk.

The line "the Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being . . ." (vs. 3) is a beautiful description of Jesus.

*How do you see Jesus being the "radiance of God's glory?"*

*From what we know of Jesus, what does that show us about who God is?*