

The First Epistle of St. John (Part I)

Objective:

- 🕒 To get acquainted with the epistle and its writer briefly.

Memory verse:

“We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death” (1 John 3:14).

Introduction: Briefly:

I. The Writer of the Epistle

🕒 He is John, the son of Zebedee, from Bethesda in Galilee. Although his name is not mentioned in this epistle, it has been attributed to him due to the similarity between its contents and those of the Gospel in his name, because he speaks in both about:

- The eternal Word (1 John 1:1,2).
 - The Incarnate Word that grants life to believers (1 John 1:14; 1 John 10:10; 1 John 4:2.9).
 - Faith that transfers the Christian from death into life (1 John 5:45; 1 John 3:14).
 - Love being the most important feature of a believer (1 John 3:34,35; 1 John 2:11).
- 🕒 He is the brother of James, and his mother is Salome (the cousin of the Virgin Mary). His father was a fisherman.
 - 🕒 He is the writer of the Gospel according to John, the three Epistles and the Book of Revelation.
 - 🕒 He is the only one who did not die as a martyr, yet he underwent a lot of torture. He passed away at the beginning of the second century at the age of ninety-eight.
 - 🕒 He preached the Word in Asia Minor and was banished to the Isle of Patmos.

II. To Whom Did He Write This Epistle?

He wrote it to believers, originally Gentiles, who had come into the faith. He aimed at preserving and warning them against idols (1 John 5:21).

III. Why Was It Written?

Heretical teachings appeared and were spread by false teachers:

- 🕒 Dualism: They believed that there are two gods; a good god who created the spirit and an evil god who created matter like the flesh.

⌚ Gnosticism: They imagined that they could attain salvation through knowledge only.

IV. What Is The Goal Of Writing This Epistle?

- ⌚ So that our joy may be complete (1 John 1:4).
- ⌚ That we may keep away from sin (1 John 2:1).
- ⌚ To avoid deceivers (1 John 2:26).
- ⌚ To know that life is eternal (1 John 5:13,14).

V. Subjects Dealt With In The Epistle:

Chapter One: The effect of the belief in the incarnation in our lives.

Chapter Two: Fellowship with God and with our fellow brothers.

Chapter Three: The blessing of adoption we have been granted and the obligations associated with it.

Chapter Four: Love within a framework of truth and wisdom.

Chapter Five: The effect of Baptism upon us and our capacity to believe in Christ our Lord

- ⌚ Walking in the light (Romans 13:12).
- ⌚ Humility: If we say we do not sin, we deceive ourselves.
- ⌚ Continuous repentance: If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just.