

1 John 1

Intro:

- Besides Hebrews, 1 John is the only NT letter without an author ascribed to it. The other 19 letters all mention the author, usually in the first word! E.g. Paul, Peter, James, Jude...
- 2 & 3 John both begin with “the elder” who most scholars think refers to John.
- The initial verses mention that the author was an original eyewitness to Jesus. He speaks w authority.
- Similarity of style and content between 1 John and the Gospel of John (contrasts between light and darkness, truth and falsehood, love and hate, etc.)
- 1 John is written in the simplest Greek found in the NT. Thus, most seminary Greek classes begin by studying 1 John. There are over 5,000 different words in the NT, but 1,2, & 3 John, only use 300 different words. John writes about the core of the gospel.
- Note how 1 John begins and ends – no writer or recipients are identified, no specific names or places mentioned anywhere, no salutation, no final greeting. (2 & 3 John are more obviously letters.)
- 1 John is obviously a literary document (13X he mentions he is “writing”). John has specific people in mind (22X he mentions “you” in the plural). Thus, 1 John is a literary epistle – a written document addressed to a particular audience, probably a community of churches around Ephesus that John pastored.
- The purpose of John’s writing – 1 John 5:13: “...so that you may know you have eternal life.”

Read 1 John1: 1-4

It is a prologue, beginning the same way John’s gospel began. In John’s prologue in his gospel, the emphasis was on Jesus’ Divine Nature. Here, the emphasis is on the physical manifestation of the Word of God, his human side.

This is 1 long sentence in Greek. The main verb: we declare or we proclaim

What John would have seen and heard concerning Jesus:

1. He stayed with Jesus – John was a disciple of John the Baptist but left him to follow Jesus.
2. He was present at Jesus’ Transfiguration.
3. He was with Jesus at Gethsemane.
4. He was present at the crucifixion.
5. John discovers the empty tomb.

Thus, John heard, saw, and touched the Word of Life.

John is writing this: 1) so that his recipients would have fellowship with him, 2) that their joy may be complete.

Read 1 John1: 5-10 John addresses 3 false claims about sin in vv. 6, 8, & 10.