

1 John 4 & 5

In verses 1-6 there is a call to test the spirits to discern if it is the Holy Spirit or some evil spirit. And just like in chapter 2 with the contrast between Christ and the antichrists here there is the Holy Spirit and the spirit of the antichrist. The Holy Spirit confesses Jesus is from God the anti-spirits do not.

In verses 5 & 6 there is a contrast between the world's truth and God's truth. Do you see things so diametrically opposed? What is your belief about the Spirit?

In verses 7-12 we get the crux of the letter that God is love. This section can take us back to one of those favored verses in John's Gospel – 3:16! Here what all do verses 7 & 8 say to you?

The discussion continues in verses 13-21. Can you affirm the faith expressed in verses 14 & 15?

Three simple yet profound words are found in here twice. In the middle of verse 16 (and back in verse 12) it says, "God is love." What does that mean to you?

Verse 19 is another keeper. Do you know it?

This chapter ends with an explanation and a reminder to the reader about the Great Commandment. Did you gather any insight here about that?

In Chapter 5 verses 1-5 this love of God leads us to obey God's commandments and then into faith.

Again, it returns to talking about the world and acknowledging that faith conquers the world. What does that mean to you? Though it does not say it here, we know from history the church was persecuted by the Roman empire, and it may have felt like the world was at war.

In verses 6-13 the letter concludes with three testimonies in verse 8 – the Spirit, the water, and the blood. What do you make of this?

The testimony for the early church was that Jesus was the Son of God, when the world (and the Jewish people) did not believe that. And the early church believed they had eternal life in Christ whereas the rest of the world did not all have that belief. What do you believe?

In the epilogue in verses 14-17 there is a thought about prayer in verse 14 we should not miss!

In verses 16 & 17 there is a distinction between mortal and non-mortal sins. What is this all about, and what do you believe about it?