

1 John 1:1-4

Jesus: Truly God and Truly Man

Scripture: 1 John 1:1-4, John 1:1-4

Memory Verse: 1 John 1:4 "And these things we write to you that your joy may be full."

Lesson Focus: We will bounce back and forth between the introduction to this letter and John's gospel to show how important it was to John that people would know that Jesus was truly God, truly man, and the only true Savior.

Activities and Crafts: 1 John Intro Coloring Page, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion for 3rd - 5th.
Activity for 1st and 2nd Graders: Trinity Craft

Starter Activity: Name That Introduction

Consider getting the lesson started with a silly challenge to see which intro themes kids will recognize. First have a little discussion about what an "introduction" is.

Q: What does it mean to "introduce" something? A: It means to begin or start something new so that others are focused on it. (**Teachers:** Consider going around class introducing yourself to a few kids in a formal, but silly, way and point how this is how you begin a new relationship or friendship with people)

Afterwards, consider playing several intro songs that kids should recognize. Several common intro themes are posted online [here](#) which you can just play through your phone (as well as some of our worship song intros). Either play them one-by-one and have the kids guess them as a class or consider splitting the class into two teams and have volunteers go head-to-head in a "Name That Tune" style challenge (see [here](#) for some ideas). Make it fun! *

To transition into the lesson, mention how certain biblical authors each had their own style of introduction. Last year we read several of the letters of Paul to the churches and he would introduce every letter with, "grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (see Ephesians 1:2 for example) *

Today we're going to start another book of the Bible and cover just the introduction. While it's another letter, it is not by the apostle Paul. This author has his own style of introduction which we will cover today. Let's open our Bibles and take a look!

Background:

Important questions to establish context and background of any book of the Bible.

- 1) **Who?:** * The apostle John wrote this letter to believers in the early church.
- 2) **When?:** John wrote this about 60 years after Jesus's death and resurrection (more on this in the lesson!)
- 3) **Why?:** While there are many reasons he wrote this letter, one major reason he cites at the end was to give believers assurance/confidence! (1 **John 5:13**)

Bible Study:

1 John 1:1: John introduces his letter to the church in a way that echoes his introduction to the gospel that he also penned.

Teachers: Consider rereading v. 1 but then read **John 1:1-4** and ask the kids to listen and find three words common in each introduction: beginning, Word, and life. *

In both introductions, he is talking about Jesus: How Jesus is God who has always been there from "the beginning". How Jesus is the Creator and author of life who spoke things into existence by His word. One of the most important points that John repeatedly emphasizes in his gospel is that Jesus is truly God (reread **John 1:3**) *

Teachers: Draw on the board one large box divided into two boxes and label them as "created things" and "uncreated things". This larger box represents everything that exists. In the "uncreated things" box, write God. In the "created things" box, ask the kids for ideas of what belongs in that box (i.e. animals, humans, trees, stars, etc.)

Now, take a cross or a coin or something and tell the kids that this represents Jesus. Ask them which box He belongs in. * **John 1:3** said that "*all things were made through Jesus*" so He belongs in the "uncreated things" box with God the Father and the Spirit.

So, while in both introductions we learn about Jesus as God, we also learn about Jesus as Man. A few verses down **John 1:14** says that "*the Word (Jesus) became flesh and dwelt among us.*" * And circling back to v. 1 of his letter, he describes Jesus as a real human being that he heard with his ears, saw with his eyes, and touched with his hands.

One of the most famous stories in John's gospel is when Thomas meets the risen Jesus. Thomas was doubting Jesus was actually alive. **Read John 20:27** and point out how Jesus told him to touch him and see He was real flesh and blood, not a ghost or a spirit.

Read John 20:28. Q: How did Thomas respond? A: With assurance/confidence that Jesus was alive and Who He said He was: the God-man!

Jesus is truly God, but also truly Man. He is the God-man come down to rescue us! * In both the introduction to his gospel and this letter, John wants us to know this!

1 John 1:2: John was likely the only one of the original disciples still alive. * 60 years have passed since Jesus died and rose again, and therefore John was the only one left who walked with Jesus and had first-hand knowledge of all he said and did.

Think about Yoda in the original Star Wars movies (**Teachers:** We will leave a picture of Yoda in your class that you can reference). * He was old and the last of the Jedi who still had first-hand knowledge of "The Force". In that way, John was like Yoda in being the last one still living with first-hand knowledge of Jesus and the way to eternal life.

1 John 1:3: But what makes John different from Yoda was that he was not "in hiding" keeping everything to himself. Rather, John, in his old age, was busy declaring the truth about Jesus to everyone inviting believers to be more assured and unbelievers to be saved. This is certainly another reason why he wrote both his gospel and his letter!

One thing that makes our faith so wonderfully unique is that it is public and available to EVERYONE! Many other world (false) religions began with one person having a secret, private vision and inviting others into sharing in this secret/special knowledge. * But that is not how the Christian faith started, nor how it works today. Jesus's life, death, and resurrection were visible and always accessible to all. (**Teachers:** See the last two pages of the lesson with some fun pictures explaining this important difference) *

No, the Christian faith did not begin behind closed doors, nor was it ever supposed to be a secret society. All anyone needs to know is recorded in the Bible. * And God's heart is that we would continue (like John) to share the message of Jesus's death and resurrection for sinners with all people that they might be saved and enter into fellowship and relationship with God and other believers.

1 John 1:4: And here is another reason why John wrote this letter.

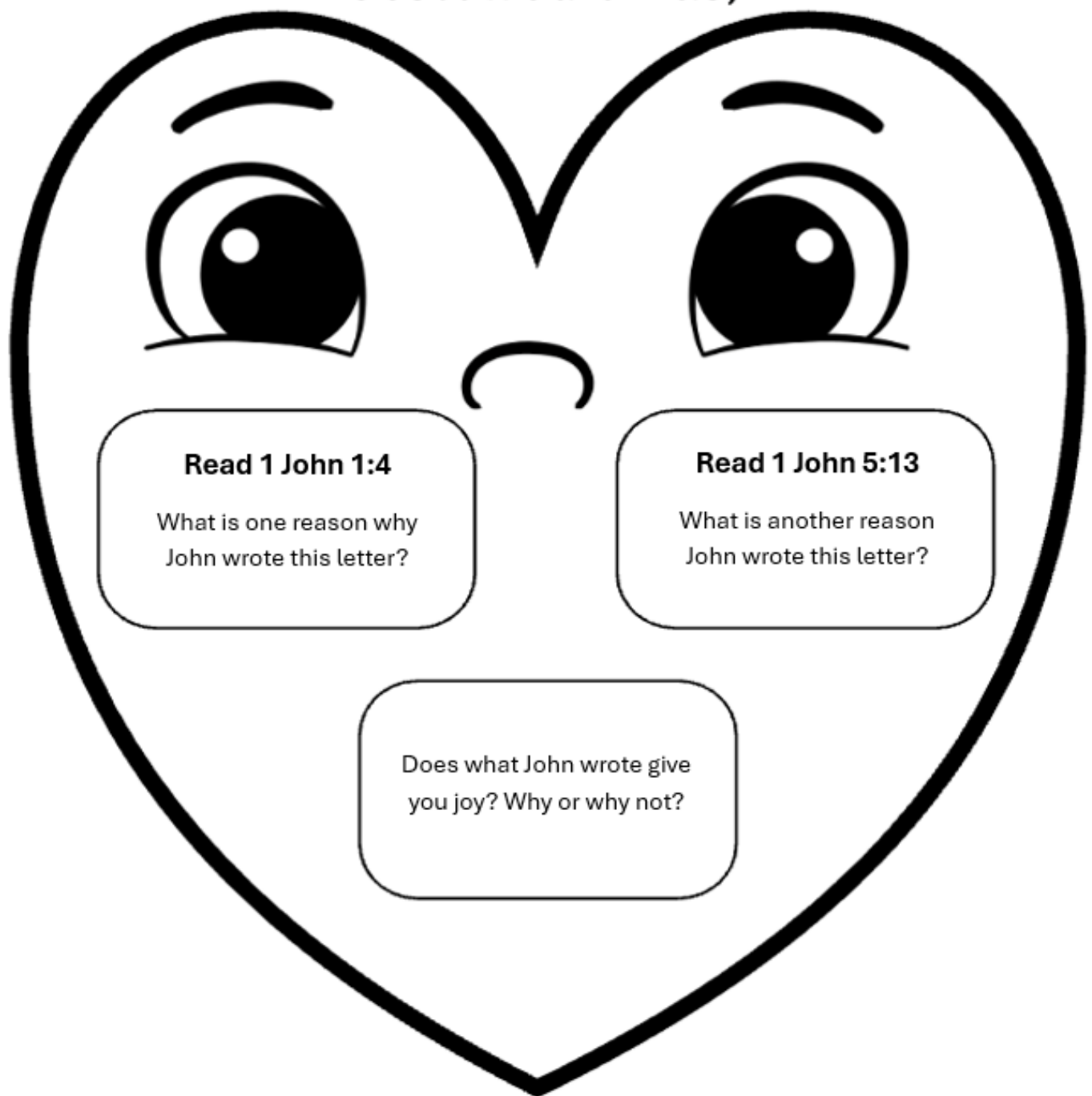
Q: What reason does he give here? A: That the joy of knowing all of your sins are forgiven, the joy of knowing that you are loved by God, and the joy of knowing that you have eternal life may be full and complete!

Key Point: We've been bouncing between John's gospel and this letter a lot in this lesson. Let's wrap up with one more comparison. Earlier, I mentioned that John said he wrote this letter to believers so that they may have assurance (**1 John 5:13**). Fewer things give you more joy, than knowing you are safe with God! **Believer:** May you walk with assurance and joy this week knowing that you have eternal life thru faith in Jesus!

But what about unbelievers? Well, at the end of his gospel he explains why he wrote it. **Read John 20:30-31.** He wrote the gospel and recounted all the wonderful things Jesus said and did so that unbelievers would believe and receive eternal life. This gospel includes the famous **John 3:16** about God's love for you. If you are not a believer, become one today. Jesus is the God-man who came to rescue you and save you. Put your faith and trust in Him and enter into the same joy and relationship!

BRING IT HOME

BEHOLD what manner of **LOVE** the Father has bestowed on us,



that we should be called children of God!

How Christianity Started

After a public ministry,
Christ was killed publicly



Christ rose from a public
tomb publicly



Christ publicly showed him-
self to the public



The public told everyone
what they saw



How Other Religions Started

Private dream about God



OR

Private idea about God



OR

Private angelic encounter
about God



One person told everyone
what he saw

