

Briefing Document: 1 John Lesson 60

May 6, 2026

Executive Summary

This document summarizes a teaching on the book of 1 John, focusing on the incompatibility of sin with a life of faith. The core message is that true salvation results in a permanent transformation of a person's nature. This change is caused by the work of the Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

A true believer is identified by two behavioral tests: righteous conduct and love for fellow Christians. The teaching emphasizes that salvation is not just a past event or a change in status, but a present pattern of living. Believers are warned to stay faithful to the original gospel truths and to be cautious of "new" revelations or teachings that contradict the Bible.

Administrative Announcements and Community Concerns

The church community is engaged in several upcoming events and mission efforts:

- **Mission of the Month:** Intended Hope (May).
- **Memory Verse:** *Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples. (1 Chronicles 16:24).*
- **Upcoming Events:**
 - Vacation Bible School (VBS) workers are needed.
 - National Day of Prayer events are scheduled for 9:00 AM, 12:00 PM, and 6:30 PM.
 - The We Care Pregnancy Center is distributing baby clothes on the 8th.
 - The 9th Annual Walk for Life takes place on the 16th.
 - A Women's Breakfast and Raffle will be held on Saturday at 8:00 AM.
- **Prayer Requests:** The community is praying for several members facing health challenges, including back pain, blood clots, potential lupus, pneumonia, and recovery from surgery. Prayers were also offered for the salvation of family members and for peace in nations like Israel and Iran.

The Work of the Trinity in Salvation

Salvation is presented as a comprehensive miracle involving the entire Trinity. Each member of the Godhead plays a specific role in transforming the believer:

- **The Father:** He uses the law to humble the individual and create a recognition of sin. This leads to a changed attitude where the believer begins to love God's law.

- **The Son (Jesus Christ):** He lifts the weight of sin from the believer, joining them to His righteousness and breaking the power of Satan.
- **The Holy Spirit:** He performs the work of regeneration. As stated in *Titus 3:5–6: not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior;*

The Evidence of a True Christian

A central theme of the teaching is how to identify a genuine believer. It is argued that a true Christian is "manifestly recognizable" through their behavior.

Pattern vs. Event

The teaching makes a sharp distinction between a "past event" and a "present pattern."

- **Past Events:** Actions like walking a church aisle, signing a card, or saying a prayer are described as "nice," but they do not prove salvation on their own.
- **Present Patterns:** The legitimacy of faith is found in a current, ongoing direction toward righteousness.

The "God Seed"

The reason a believer cannot continue in an unbroken pattern of sin is the presence of the "God seed" (**spermos**). This divine life is planted within the heart through the Word of God. As noted in the summary of *1 John 3:10: In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.*

The Test of Love

The second major behavioral test for a Christian is the presence of love for fellow believers. This is described as a "mark" or characteristic of a disciple.

A New Level of Love

While the command to love others is old, Jesus gave it a "newness" by setting Himself as the standard. He commanded in *John 13:34: A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.*

Key points regarding this love include:

- **Self-Sacrifice:** Believers are called to a self-facing, self-sacrificing affection.
- **A Natural Result:** Love is a natural production of the Holy Spirit living within a person. It is not just a duty but a privilege.

- **Unity:** It is described as impossible for a true believer to lack love for the "family" of God. If a person cannot love other believers, they lack evidence of God's presence in their life.

Fidelity to the Truth

The document warns against the "devil's message," which claims that salvation is merely a change in status that allows a person to continue sinning.

The "Spiral" Method of Teaching

The author of 1 John uses a "spiral" approach to teaching. He introduces a topic, like love or righteousness, at one level and then circles back to it multiple times, each time "screwing the truth in" deeper to ensure clarity and remove ambiguity.

Warning Against "New" Revelations

The teaching emphasizes that anything "new" in terms of the gospel is not true. The faith was "once for all" delivered to the saints. The document identifies several groups and historical figures—such as Joseph Smith, Ellen G. White, and various modern media preachers—as proponents of false revelations or cults. True believers are urged to go back to "the beginning"—the original apostolic teaching—to avoid being led astray.

Greek Language Reference Guide

Greek Term/Phrase	Phonetic Pronunciation	Definition
Spermos [^1]	SPER-mos	The "God seed" or divine spark planted in a believer that produces new life.
Manifest [^2]	fa-ne-ROS	To be clearly visible, obvious, or easily understood.
Born Again [^3]	ah-NO-then	To be born from above; to start over completely through a spiritual rebirth.

[^1]: Used to describe the "divine seed" that prevents a believer from living in a continuous pattern of sin. [^2]: Referring to the Greek word *phaneros*, used in the context of identifying the children of God versus the children of the devil. [^3]: The speaker notes that in the Greek, this phrase implies being born "all over again" or "from above."