

— 1 John —  
Lesson #5 Chapter 2 Overview

The goal of this lesson is to teach you how to look at and begin to study a text of Scripture. Observation is a necessary part of Bible study, yet all too often it can be overlooked or rushed through. Simply put, observation is the practice of noticing what God has placed in His Word. *At this stage* in our Bible study, I only want you to notice and then record what you observe in the chapter. You're not making any interpretations about what the Scriptures mean or how they apply to your life—that will come later, I promise.

Don't rush through this lesson. Set aside time this week to peer into the living and abiding Word of God. Rich treasures are waiting for you!

I've included Chapter 2 (NASB) at the end of this lesson so you can print it out and mark it up if you'd like. I find it helps me see items more easily if I'm marking and noting things as I go.

1. SUMMARIZE. To begin, read through Chapter 2. Now, summarize the contents of Chapter 2. This is not the time to be super detailed; instead, think of trying to tell a 4th grader the contents of the chapter.<sup>1</sup>
  - a. Summarize paragraph 1 (verses 1-2).
  
  - b. Summarize paragraph 2 (verses 3-6).

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<sup>1</sup>The method and process of observation in Bible study does God honor, as we stop, observe, and consider each and every one of His recorded Words, in their context. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the debt I owe to the Precept Inductive Bible Studies observation method, which I have adapted in my studies. As far as I know, the method is the brainchild of Kay Arthur, though I've encountered a number of others who have also come up with similar ways for observing the text. The point of observation is to slow down and really look at what God has preserved for us in His Word. What I've created here is simply another variation to help us peer more closely at the Scriptures—for our good and His glory.

- c. Summarize paragraph 3 (verses 7-11).
  
  
  - d. Summarize paragraph 4 (verses 12-14).
  
  
  - e. Summarize paragraph 5 (verses 15-17).
  
  
  - f. Summarize paragraph 6 (verses 18-25).
  
  
  - g. Summarize paragraph 7 (verses 26-27).
  
  
  - h. Summarize paragraph 8 (verses 28-29).
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2. SUMMARIZE. After reviewing the chapter and what you wrote for your summaries, ask yourself: *What is the main point of this chapter?* How do all these details and events reveal the main idea of the chapter? Record your answer below.

3. TITLE. Now you're ready to title your chapter. Your 3-5 word title should reflect the contents of the chapter. Remember, a title's purpose is to help you remember what is in each chapter.

Let me encourage you...

I just want to give you a heads up that identifying the pronouns for God and Jesus Christ in Chapter 2 will tax your brain! Unlike most of the other biblical writers, where we can count on the rule of the "nearest antecedent" to help us identify the pronoun, John is a bit more cryptic. [The nearest antecedent rule is simply look for the closest noun that would identify who the pronouns are referring to.] John thinks more globally and collectively so that identifying who is the focus of his pronouns becomes more difficult.

So, if you've started Lesson #5 and are feeling confused, you are not alone! I have found that referring back to Chapter 1 and looking at what John stated in Chapter 1 has helped *some*, like when John talks about the Light (compare 1:5-7 with 2:8-10). *But I've also erased my markings a few times already as I've been working! And I might change them again soon!* Also know that in almost every instance, whether you mark a pronoun as referring to God the Father or Jesus Christ, it won't impact doctrine. This is super comforting, don't you think?!

Read how these commentators talk about identifying the pronouns. I think you'll find their thoughts helpful! *For John, Jesus is so closely linked with the Father that a precise distinction between the Persons of the Godhead sometimes seems irrelevant. Fellowship is with both the Father and the Son (1:3) and to know One of Them intimately is to know the Other.* [Walvoord, John F., and Roy B. Zuck, Dallas Theological Seminary. 1985. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*. Vol. 2. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.]

*The PRONOUNS are ambiguous as to whether they refer to God the Father or God the Son. In v. 6 the context demands "the Son" (as do 3:2, 5, 7, 16; 4:17). However, for John, there is a fluidity between the redemptive and sanctifying actions of the Triune God.* [Utley, Robert James. 1999. *The Beloved Disciple's Memoirs and Letters: The Gospel of John, I, II, and III John*. Vol. Volume 4. Study Guide Commentary Series. Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International.]

As you go over your lesson, review how and why you chose to mark your pronouns a certain way based on the clues in the text. *But don't get too crazy about it all since even the commentary writers were having trouble identifying which member of the Trinity was John's focus.*

Have fun, ask the Lord for help, and thank Him for the gift of the Holy Spirit, who helps us understand and study God's Word! Remember, God is pleased when we wrestle with His Word, desiring to understand every jot and tittle of it!

Grace, peace, and perseverance to you!  
Lisa

4. MARK and LIST. On the *1 John Bible Text* handout mark any key words you see in the chapter. *God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit* are always key words. It's easiest to start with these "God" words first. Next mark words or phrases that are repeated at least 3 times. Mark any other words that seem important to the chapter or are strongly emphasized.

You can mark words or phrases by creating a symbol or using a certain colored pencil every time it appears. This will enable you to see at a glance how often a word is used in the chapter or note a progression of thought.

- a. Next, *list the phrase containing the key words* on a separate sheet of paper. This step will allow you to pull together the information you noted from marking the key words. Be sure to cite the verse references when you list your key word information.

For example, with *God* as your key word you would begin to make a list of the information you discovered every time *God* is mentioned in 1 John Chapter 2. Your Chapter 2 list about *God* should begin by looking something like the one below.

Verse 5—*God* is love

Verse 13—*God* is Father. He is knowable.

Fun study tip to try: Mark any key/repeated words that you notice appear all the way through the book, even if their use in individual chapters may not fit the "3 times or more" rule. This will allow you to trace major themes and an author's thoughts throughout the book.

5. MARK and LIST. Mark any *commands* that are listed in the chapter. Look for things the author is telling his readers to do or be. Now, list them on your separate sheet of paper in the same way you did for the key words.
6. MARK and LIST. Mark words or phrases that are being *compared or contrasted*. Words like *as, likewise, in the same manner, or like* will help you find words or phrases being compared. Contrasting words like "light/dark" or "love/hate" and the word "but" will help you find words or phrases that are being contrasted. Now list what you discovered about comparisons and contrasts on the extra paper you've been using.
7. MARK. Mark transition terms: *therefore, wherefore, finally*. Sometimes an author has his own kind of transition term that lets you know he is making a switch to a new topic, so be sure to look for those kinds of terms. (Generally, these are at the beginning of a paragraph.)

8. MARK and LIST. Mark any time *so that* is used. In putting together your list, look for what comes before the “so that” which will bring about or produce some kind of result. For example, in Philippians 1:10 “so that” appears, but in order to understand its significance you need to also look at verse 9. Your entry for Philippians 1:9-10 might say something like, “Paul prays that the Philippians’ love would abound in real knowledge and all discernment *so that* they would be able to approve the things that are excellent and live sincerely and blamelessly until the day of Christ.” I think you will be so blessed by this part of your observation time!
9. MARK. Mark expressions of time—words like *shortly, quickly, soon, for a little while*.
10. MARK. Mark words that are synonyms of each other. For example: *Paul and Timothy* are *bond-servants* from 1:1.
11. LIST. List any *attributes* of God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit that you notice in this chapter. You’ll start this list by going back up to your listed “God” words that you marked earlier in Question #4. An attribute is a characteristic or quality used to describe an object or person.

For example, you might read John 3:16, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*” From this verse we see that God is *loving* [because He loved the world]; He is *giving* [because He gave His Son]; He is *eternal* [because only the eternal can offer eternal life].

12. LIST. Look for lists of words, phrases, or related thoughts. Number the lists within the Bible text, then record your list out to the side in the margin or on a separate sheet of paper. This will help you see the thought progression of the author or the results of some action.

For example, in 1 John 1:1 we find a list about the *Word of Life*. We discover 1) the Word of Life was from the beginning; 2) John heard the Word of Life; 3) John saw the Word of Life with his own eyes; 4) John looked at the Word of Life; 5) John touched the Word of life with his hands.

13. NOTE. Be sure to mark or write down any “nuggets” you observed which you thought were interesting, spurred on some thought, or made you want to study further.

*Remember*, the purpose of this lesson is to observe and take note of what is in the chapter. You are not making any interpretations or applications to your life right now. Your task at this time is to simply look for the treasures that God has put in each chapter.

As you do this lesson, take time to worship and thank the Lord that He has preserved His Word for you to study. Admire and marvel at what He placed in this chapter for you to notice. There really isn't any other time in our studies where we simply look at, think on, and study God's Word for itself, so have fun with this lesson! And may the Lord be blessed by your labors!

## **1 John Chapter 2**

**1** My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;

**2** and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

**3** By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.

**4** The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;

**5** but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:

**6** the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

**7** Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you have heard.

**8** On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining.

**9** The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now.

**10** The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him.

**11** But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

**12** I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake.

**13** I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father.

**14** I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

**15** Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

**16** For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

**17** The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

**18** Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.

**19** They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.

**20** But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.



**21** I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth.

**22** Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.

**23** Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.

**24** As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.

**25** This is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life.

**26** These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you.

**27** As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.

**28** Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.

**29** If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.