

December 26 Answers

- 1) 1 John is filled with helpful and straightforward teaching on what it means to be a **genuine disciple** of Christ. John knew there were false **teachers** and **antichrists** in the church (1 John 2:18, 26), and he wrote this letter to reaffirm the **truth** which his readers already knew (1 John 2:21). John taught that false teachers and antichrists can be recognized by what they **say** and how they **live**. They will deny that Jesus is the **Messiah**, and they will say Jesus is not fully **human**. (1 John 2:22; 4:2). They will say they have fellowship with God, but they will walk in **darkness** (1 John 1:6). They will say, "I know God," but they will not keep God's **commands** (1 John 2:4). They will say, "I love God," but they will hate their **brother** (1 John 4:20). This means that we must **examine** the lives of those who claim to be disciples of Christ. If they profess faith but practice **sin**, they are false. If they love in word but hate in **deed**, they are false. If they claim to love God but love the **world**, they are false. John also told his readers how to **recognize** a genuine disciple of Christ. A true disciple will walk in the **light** and accept the cleansing blood of Christ (1 John 1:7). They will **confess** and **repent** of their sins, and seek God's forgiveness (1 John 1:9). Above all, their life will be characterized by **love** (1 John 4:7), which is the defining mark of a true disciple, and true love for God always expresses itself in **obedience**. Obedience then gives us the **assurance** of salvation (1 John 2:3).