



The Minor Epistles

The Johannine Epistles

Interpreting the Text:

1. The language and themes of the Johannine epistles draw upon those of John's Gospel. What stood out to you when reading them? How might these patterns strengthen the validity or authority of the Johannine epistles?
2. The First Epistle of John affirms a widespread early Christian conviction that the end time was coming soon, in contrast to John's Gospel, which has muted expectations about the end and emphasizes the present reality of what Christ has provided. Why do you think this is? What might the author of 1 John be concerned about, and how might this show us the order in which the texts were written?
3. The First Epistle, like the Gospel, emphasizes the importance of love. What language in this letter echoes what we hear in John's gospel? Are there places where you sense contrast?

Applying the Text:

1. The Johannine epistles are particularly concerned with sin. How does your community talk about sin? How can John's writing on the topic in the epistles either support or challenge your personal understanding of sin?
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3. These letters are famous for their language about love, sometimes being used in wedding ceremonies. How does the kind of love John is talking about differ from a romantic love? How do we use the word 'love' in our faith communities and how is it nuanced in John's writing?