**STRUCTURE OF FIRST JOHN** (as per Zane Hodges):

1. PROLOGUE: THE CALL TO FELLOWSHIP (1:1-4)
2. PREAMBLE: LIVING IN FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD (1:5-2:11)
	* 1. Staying on the Path: Walking in God’s Light (1:5- 2:2)
		2. Reaching the Goal: Knowing the God of Light (2:3-11)
3. PURPOSE: THE READERS MUST RESIST THE ANTICHRISTS (2:12-27)
4. By Recognizing Their Spiritual Assets (2:12-14)
5. By Recognizing Their Spiritual Adversaries (2:15-27)
	* + 1. Resisting the World (2:15-17)

2. Resisting the Antichrists (2:18-27)

IV. BODY OF THE EPISTLE: THE LIFE THAT LEADS TO BOLDNESS BEFORE CHRIST’S JUDGMENT SEAT (2:28-4:19)

1. The Theme Verse: Abide to Be Bold (2:28)
2. By Learning to See God’s Children (2:29-3:10a)
3. By Learning to See Christian Love (3:10b-23)
4. What Love Is Not (31:0b-15)
5. What Love Is (3:16-18)
6. What Love Does for Believers (3:19-23)
7. By Learning to See the God of Love (3:24-4:16)
8. God’s Indwelling Affirmed (3:24)
9. God’s Spirit Recognized (4:1-6)
10. God’s Indwelling Recognized (4:7-16)
11. Conclusion: Having Boldness at the Judgment Seat (4:17-19)

V. CONCLUSION: LEARNING HOW TO LIVE OBEDIENTLY (4:20-5:17)

 A. What Loving Our Brothers Means (4:20-5:3a)

 B. What Actually Empowers Our Love (5:3b-15)

 C. What Faith and Love Can Do for Our Brother (5:16-17)

VI. EPILOGUE: CHRISTIAN CERTAINTIES (5:18-21)

 **THREE CARDINAL RULES FOR INTERPRETATION:**

1. Customary Use of Language: The precise meaning of the words used must be determined. Normally, words have a **RANGE** of meaning! Do not assume a word always means exactly the same every time it is used.
2. CONTEXT IS KING! When there is a range of possible meanings, the precise meaning of a word or expression is determined by the context!
3. Analogy of Scripture: The best commentary on the Bible is the Bible,

Itself! Always compare each passage with what scripture says elsewhere.