

## 1 John Home Group Guide

This guide through the letter of 1 John is meant to help your group to interact with the details of Scripture. Your group discussion will be more meaningful if group members will read each week's passage before attending the group.

*THE FOUR QUESTIONS* below are to be used with every passage. Then there are additional questions specific to each passage to help with application.

### THE FOUR QUESTIONS

- 1) What does this passage reveal about God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit)?
- 2) What does this passage teach us about being a follower of Jesus?
- 3) What are the key words or ideas in the passage and how do they help us understand what is being said?
- 4) Is there some kind of action that this passage calls us to?
  - Is there a sin to confess?
  - Is there something to thank God for?
  - Is there someone we need to pray for because of this passage?
  - Is there a behavior I need to change?
  - Is there someone I need to encourage with this Truth?

### CONTEXT OF 1 JOHN

Here is some background information on 1 John to help you have a fuller understanding of what John was trying to accomplish in his writing.

#### *"Theological Conclusions"*

The first epistle of John represents a major New Testament statement concerning the person and work of Christ. The epistle also contains definitive ethical teachings for the Christian. The following doctrinal emphasis may be noted:

1. The uniqueness of the person of Christ.
2. The truth of the genuine incarnation of Christ.
3. The definitive nature of atonement.
4. A person's relationship to God is reflected in his/her dealings with other persons.
5. The Christian cannot claim sinlessness but must not reflect a life-style of sin.
6. The Christian is to be an overcomer in relation to the world.
7. God is love.

The Christian community to whom John wrote was in danger of succumbing to false teachings concerning the doctrine of Christ, as well as the doctrine of God. These two cornerstone doctrines of Christianity were being undermined by the false teachers. They denied the interest of God in humans and in the created world. They denied the true incarnation of Jesus, and they taught that He was less than the divine Son of God.

Under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, John responded with a resounding assertion of assurance for believers. There is no sham in the Godhead. God is light or good, and in Him there is no darkness or evil

at all. God is personified in love. These are the primary affirmations concerning God the Father. Jesus came in the flesh, and anyone who will not affirm this fact is of the devil and is an antichrist. The eternal, immortal, invisible, preexistent Word truly became man. As a man, He died on the cross, this making atonement for the sins of all persons. Because of what God in Christ has done, the Christian is to have faith in God and love others.

### ***Contemporary Teachings***

The first epistle of John challenges modern Christians in several areas of life. John challenges us: (1) to have a proper view of the person and work of Christ. He is the eternal, sinless Son of God who became perfect man in every sense of the word and was the atoning sacrifice for human sin. (2) To understand that we cannot live above sin, but, on the other hand, we are to live a life that is not marred by the continual practice of sin. (3) To be properly related to other persons in an atmosphere of love, trust and forgiveness. (4) To keep the revelation of God to His people precious and to guard against those who would prevent this sacred trust."

*Disciple's Study Bible, Introduction to 1 John*

### **Chapter 1 – FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND OTHERS**

1. How would you summarize the message of chapter 1?
2. What attitudes of your own heart does this passage bring to light?
3. Based on this passage, what does it mean to have fellowship with God and each other?
4. What can we do as a group to enjoy greater fellowship with one another?

### **Chapter 2:1-11 – WALKING IN THE LIGHT**

1. How should the message of verse 1 and 2 impact the way you think about sin?
2. Practically speaking, how would you describe what it means to walk like Jesus (v.6)?
3. Based on the message of this passage what do you think it means to live "in the light"?
4. Are there any relationships in your life that you need to re-examine in light of John's thoughts on love and hate?

### **Chapter 2:12-17 – GROWING TO NOT LOVE THE WORLD**

1. What do you think is the significance of the three groups represented in verses 12-14? How does what John says to each group encourage you?
2. What do you think John means by "loving the world"? Share about a time in your life when you have been tempted to "love the world" too much?
3. How should John's reasons to NOT love the world reduce our desire to love the world?
4. What can you do to fight against the temptation to love the world?

### **Chapter 2:18-28 – FALSE TEACHERS AND REMAINING IN HIM**

1. Why is this passage important for us to understand in our day and time?
2. Based on John's writings, how can we identify false teachers, or "anti-Christ"?
3. How can we put into practice what John writes in verse 24-25?
4. What role can our group play in helping each other remain in truth?

**Chapter 3:1-10 – LIVING AS CHILDREN OF THE FATHER**

1. Why do you think the message of verses 1&2 is so important for us to remember as followers of Jesus? Share about a time when that truth has been meaningful to you.
2. How can we understand John's thoughts on sin in light of the fact that we sin daily?
3. What is the deception that John warns to be aware of? How can others help us in our fight against sin?

**Chapter 3:11-24 – LOVING ONE ANOTHER**

1. John paints a very clear picture of the importance of loving one another. Why do you think love for one another is so important among believers?
2. What do you think it means for us to "lay down our lives for one another"?
3. Why can it be difficult for us to obey verse 17-18? How can we overcome those difficulties?
4. Share about a time when someone loved you in the way that John describes love. How did that impact you?

**Chapter 4:1-12 – DISCERNING AND LIVING BY TRUTH**

1. John is emphasizing the importance of discerning truth from error. Why is that important for us today?
2. What insight does John give us for discerning truth from error?
3. Share about a time when you have had to determine if something was biblically true or not? How did you "test the spirits"?
4. In what way does love give evidence for something being true and of God?

**Chapter 4:13-21 – FEAR AND LOVE**

- 1) What does it mean to "abide" in God and for God to "abide" in us?
- 2) How has God's love helped you overcome a fear in your life?
- 3) John continues to emphasize our love for one another. Why do you think he keeps coming back to this command?
- 4) How can we continue to grow in our efforts to love one another?

**Chapter 5:1-12 – OVERCOMING THE WORLD THROUGH CHRIST**

- 1) Based on all that you have studied, what does it mean for us to "overcome the world"?
- 2) What do you find to be your greatest challenges in overcoming the world?
- 3) What does John tell us should be true of us if we are followers of Jesus?
- 4) In what ways should this passage lead us to have greater gratitude for what Christ has done?

**Chapter 5:13-21 – THAT YOU MAY KNOW THAT YOU HAVE LIFE**

- 1) Verse 13 sums up the entire letter. What are the "things" that assure us that we have life?
- 2) How should our assurance of life effect the way that we pray?
- 3) What things in this passage encourage you the most?
- 4) How would you sum up 1 John for someone who is not a follower of Jesus?