

1, 2, 3 JOHN
THIS IS THE LIFE
SMALL GROUP STUDY #10
IT'S WHO YOU KNOW...
1John 5

Ice Breaker: Have you ever been in a relationship, or a maybe a job, where you weren't really sure where you stood? If so, what was that experience like?

INTRO: Not knowing where you really stand in any relationship creates insecurity and doubt. That insecurity and doubt will keep you hoping from one foot to the other, never really moving forward.

John finishes his letter by reassuring his readers they can **know** where they stand with God. John also makes the case that knowing where we stand with God should move our relationship forward, resulting in ever deepening faith and greater obedience.

READ: 1John 5:1-21

1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. 2 This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. 3 This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, 4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

6 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. 7 For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. 9 We accept man's testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. 10 Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. 11 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. 14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

16 If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, he should pray and God will give him life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that he should pray about that. 17 All wrongdoing is sin, and there is sin that does not lead to death.

18 We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him. 19 We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. 20 We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

21 Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.

Read 1 John 5:1-5

Q: In this passage we can see the cycle of faith, love, obedience, and faith. Based on John's words here, explain how each of these leads to the next one and then back again to faith.

- Have you experienced this cycle in your life?

Q: What does verse 4 mean by, "overcome the world?" What gives us the power to overcome the world? (vs. 4-5)

- Give an everyday example of how this might work.

Read 1 John 5:6-15

Q: What evidence does John cite as proof that Jesus really is the son of God and the Christ? (vs. 6)

- Nobody really knows for sure what is meant by "water and blood", but a convincing case can be made for the water representing Jesus' baptism (the beginning of His earthly ministry) and the blood representing Jesus' death.

Q: Though God's testimony is greater than any man's, we often struggle with believing Him more than we struggle with believing people. Why is this? (vs. 9)

- We all believe things that people tell us, even though we might not be able to personally prove it (ex: the evening news).
- God tells us that believing Him gives us victory over the world and eternal life.
- Sometimes God's testimony seems too good to be true.

Q: How can we make God out to be a liar? (vs. 10-11, 13)

Q: What promise does John give concerning prayer in verses 14-15?

- What is the premise for this promise?
 - Quite often we use prayer to ask God for what we want; but true prayer is asking God for what He wants!
- What other premise does John base God's promise to answer our prayers in 1 John 3:22?
 - "...and receive from him anything we ask, **because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.**"

Read 1 John 5:16-21

Q: What should we do when we see a Christian sinning? (vs. 16)

- How does Gal. 6:1 help you understand your role?

Q: What do you think John meant by “sin that leads to death”? (vs. 16-17)

- Scholars disagree about exactly what John meant. However, it seems obvious that not all sins are same in terms of consequence, and require different responses from us.
- What might be the result of treating every sin like it is a big deal? What about treating every sin as though it is small?

Q: Verse 18, 19, and 20 all start with the words “We know.” What does John want you to be certain of?

- Christians don’t continue to live in sin.
- That we are God’ children living in a place that is controlled by the evil one.
- God has given us the ability to know Him.

Q: John uses the *keep* in verse 18 and 21 as he ends this letter. What part does God play in keeping or guarding us? (God keeps us safe from the evil one) What part do you play in keeping or guarding yourself? (We can’t love , trust, or fear anyone or anything more than God!)

APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT: *Answer the following questions as best you can, then get with your discipler/discipleship group and discuss your answers.*

1. How is the cycle of faith, love, obedience and faith going for you right now? (Think of the cycle as something like the threads of a screw)
 - a. Are you going deeper?
 - b. Are you stuck/going nowhere?
 - c. Are you backing out?
2. How active are you in helping those who struggle with sin?
3. What are the idols that pull at you? How will you keep yourself from them?
 - a. To help identify an idol answer the following:
 - i. What or who am I tempted to love more than God?
 - ii. What or who am I tempted to trust more than God?
 - iii. What or who am I tempted to fear more than God?