

1JOHN
THIS IS THE LIFE
SMALL GROUP STUDY #2: STAY IN THE LIGHT
1John 1:8-2:2

Ice Breaker: In what area do you *know* you have a tendency toward sinfulness? When was the last time sin surprised you? To the extent you feel you can, describe the situation.

INTRO: In our last study we talked about living in the light. But what do you do when you wonder off into darkness? None of us is able to live our faith perfectly. Sometimes we ignore instruction. Sometimes we deceive ourselves, not even realizing how dark our path is getting. And sometimes we just out and out rebel: recognizing sin but not being willing to turn away from it. John understood the struggle with sin and gives us some straight talk about how to overcome even the most deeply ingrained sins.

READ: 1John 1:8-2:2

8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

1 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. 2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Q: What happens when you refuse to acknowledge your sin? (vs. 8)

Q: What does it mean to “confess”? Is confessing more than just naming your sins?

- The Greek word John used for “confess” means to “say or think the same as”.
- We can name our sins and acknowledge that God calls them sin, but confessing goes further. It means we must see or think about our sin the same way God does.

Q: What does God promise you if you confess your sins? (vs. 9)

Q: Is John saying Jesus does not pay for your sins *until* you confess them?

- John used a different Greek word for “forgive” than Luke used in Acts 2:38. (Luke’s word means “remission” or “pardon”). The word John used has to do with sending something away.
- The promise here is to remove sin, even habitual sins and addictions, from our lives so that we no longer do those things.

***John is saying that when you see your sins the way God does, you will not give in to them any more. He will take away your habit or addiction (sin) by changing what you want.

Q: If John's purpose for writing this letter is so you will not sin (vs. 2:1), why does he address what will happen if you do?

- We have been given the power to overcome **any** sin. However, learning not to sin is a process.
- You must be transformed by renewing your mind (Ro. 12:2). The process of confessing so that sin is sent away and you are purified from it may take longer than you would like.

Q: What does it mean that Jesus "speaks to the Father in our defense"?

- Considering why He is qualified to speak to the Father in your defense (vs. 2:2), what do you think He says to the Father when you struggle with sin?

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

1. Is there a sin that you keep giving in to?
 - a. Do you want to overcome it? (Col. 3:5 calls us to put to death such sins, but it is difficult to kill a best friend!)
 - b. Will you allow others to help you learn how to confess it (James 5:16)?
2. If you and Jesus were both standing before God, would Jesus represent you differently than you would? If so, what would the difference be?
3. How does knowing Jesus defends you to the Father when you sin make you feel about your ability to overcome it?