

Growth Group Leader Guide

This “growth group leader guide” is meant to be just that, a guide. Please feel free as the leader of your group to add questions or comments, as you feel necessary to fit your group’s dynamics.

Also, don’t feel pressured to cover every question.

Intro 1 John

Why did John write the epistle of 1 John?

- *Leader’s Cheat - Address false teaching*
 - *Probably the Gnostic heresy*

What do we know about the Gnostics or what did we learn about the Gnostics this last Sunday?

- *Leader’s Cheat – important information about Gnosticism*
 - *Physical world is evil*
 - *Salvation is through a secret knowledge*
 - *Lived licentious (immoral) lives.*
 - *Treated others with contempt*

1 John 1:1-4

Read as a group - 1 John 1:1-4

3 – Main Points Sunday’s Sermon

- What is “Which”?
- Who is “We”?
- Why are the “So That’s”?

1) What is “Which”?

- What is the relative pronoun “which” referring to in the first 4 verses?
 - *Leader’s cheat: Verse 1 – “the word of life”*
- Why is the word – “Beginning” such a big deal?
 - Read Genesis 1:1

- Read Gospel of John 1:1-3
- Read Hebrews 1:1-3
- Read Colossians 1:15-17

- How easy (or hard) is it for you to believe in things that can't be seen, heard or sensed in some other physical way? Why is that?

- Why do you think Jesus is called "the Word" in the Gospel of John and in 1 John?
 - **Warren Wiersbe Writes** - Why does Jesus Christ have this Name (the Word)? Because Christ is to us what our words are to others. Our words **reveal** to others what we are thinking and how we feel. Christ reveals to us the mind and heart of God. He is the living means of communication between God and men.
 - **Douglas O'Donnell Writes** - The Phrase "Word of Life" is in tune with this high Christological note in the first 4 verses, teaching that the eternal, preexistent, fully divine Son came into the world as the **"revelation of God."** He is the Voice, image and embodiment of God. Through him, God is made audible, visible, and touchable.

- What are some things Jesus reveals about God?

- Why is it encouraging to know that Jesus is the revelation of God?

2) Who is "We"?

- What is the personal pronoun "we" referring to in the first 4 verses?
- What are some of the ways John is emphasizing his apostolic authority in 1 John 1:1-4?
- Why is John appealing to his apostolic authority in this epistle?
- Read Eph. 2:19-20 and discuss how the apostles are foundational to the Church.

3) Why are the "So that's"?

- Find the two "So That's" in verses 3 and 4. After finding them, as a group, put into your own words why John is proclaiming "the Word of Life."

- Verse 3 says, “we proclaim... to you, **so that** you too may have fellowship with us.”
- Have you ever thought about that fact that one of the main reasons we preach the gospel is for fellowship?... Read John Stott
 - **John Stott Writes** – The purpose of the proclamation of the Gospel (Jesus) is, therefore, stated in terms not of salvation but of fellowship. Yet, properly understood, this is the meaning of salvation in its widest embrace, including reconciliation to God in Christ... Just as the Son, who is the eternal life, was (eternally) with the Father, so he purposes that we should have fellowship with them and with each other. ‘Fellowship’ is a specifically Christian word and denotes that common participation in the grace of God, the salvation of Christ and the indwelling of the Spirit which is the spiritual birthright of all believers. It is our common possession of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which makes us one. So John could not have written *that you also may have fellowship with us* without adding, *and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ*, since our fellowship with each other arises from, and depends on, our fellowship with God.
- Explain how the Christian life begins with sonship and continues in fellowship.
- Why is fellowship so important to John and why should it be important to us?
 - **Greek word for “fellowship” means** - A close association involving close mutual relations and involvement— “A shared life”
 - **Biblically** – Fellowship is far more than just a partnership of those who have similar beliefs – **Rather, it is the mutual life and love for those who are one in spirit.**
- How are the concepts of fellowship and Joy connected in 3 & 4?
- How can we as a group promote and intentionally seek out a deeper, richer fellowship with one-another? How can we as a group reach out to others, in our church, that don’t have the fellowship we enjoy?

Pray as a group for a deep, rich fellowship – within your group and within our church.