

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.

1 John 1:5-10

Read as a group – 1 John 1:5-10

- What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend’s message did you find to be most helpful, eye-opening or troubling? Explain.

3 – Main Points of Sunday’s Sermon

- The Light of God
- Those Walking in the Darkness
- Those Walking in the Light

1) The Light of God

- **Read 1 John 1:5**
- Discuss the significance of this verse? List some qualities of light?
- What does the Bible mean when it says God is light? Read the following verses and discuss.
 - Read Psalms 78:14
 - Read Isaiah 60:19-20
 - Read John 3:19
 - Read Psalms 27:1
 - Read John 12:36
 - Read Matthew 17:1-7
 - Read Psalms 104:1-2
- As a group put into words why you think John summarized Jesus’ message as – God is Light?
- What can we learn when it comes to evangelism knowing that John started with “God is Light” before he claimed, “God is love”?

- **Commentator** - To John, God is both “love” (1 John 4:16) and “light” (1:5). **But the apostolic ordering is significant.** To the issues in ancient Ephesus as well as to our evangelistic presentations in the contemporary world, **it matters that light comes before love.** God’s holiness (he is light) shows our unholiness (we are stained black with sin) and thus the need of an incarnate and crucified Christ to wash us in his holy blood. (love)
- **Read Ephesians 5:8-10 & Romans 13:11-14** What added insights does the apostle Paul provide in these passages about the importance of being light in the midst of a dark world? How does he contrast these two ways of living?

2) Those Walking in the Darkness

- **Read 1 John 6, 8 & 10**
- Discuss this quote by John Stott. Explain why you agree or disagree with this quote.
 - **John Stott** – Still today, although Gnostic notions are outmoded, it is not uncommon for people to claim fellowship with God who see no necessity thereafter to lead a consistent holy life. We are right to be suspicious of those who claim a mystical intimacy with God and yet walk in the darkness of error and sin, paying no regard to an all-holy God. Since God is light, such claims are ludicrous. Religion without morality is an illusion. Sin is always a barrier to fellowship with God, for ‘what fellowship can light have with darkness? (2 Cor. 6:14)
- Discuss this quote by Robert Yarbrough. Explain why you agree or disagree with this quote.
 - **Robert Yarbrough** – In popular Christian religion of modern times, the impression is sometimes given that sin is in the end not intrinsic to the person (“**God hates the sin but loves the sinner**”), or that sin is compulsory by God’s design (“**that’s just the way God made me**”), or that salvation alters the destiny of the soul someday not necessarily the behavior of the body today (“**Christians aren’t perfect, just forgiven**”), or that tolerance mandated by Scripture forbids ethical distinctions of any kind (“**Judge not lest you be judged**”). While John would no doubt recognize the element of truth in some of these slogans in appropriate contexts, he would also decry their misuse. He writes to commend a higher road: liberation from the compulsion to believe, behave, and love in ways that fall short of God’s glorious and

transforming light. He writes to commend a full, satisfying, and efficacious knowledge of God.

- How do some of these popular “slogans” of today's Christianity go against what John is saying in **1 John 6, 8 & 10**

3) Those Walking in the Light

- **Read 1 John 1:7 & 9**
- Compare and Contrast Verse 6 & 7. Pay close attention to “who” we are having fellowship with in these 2 verses. Why is it significant that John says, “*we have fellowship with one another*” instead of saying “*Him*” in verse 7? What does that say about the importance of fellowship?
- Do you agree (or disagree) that sin in the life of a Christian is worse than sin in the life of an unbeliever? Why or why not?
- How do Christians try to cover up their sins?
- What does confession have to do with gaining forgiveness in 1 John 1:9? How is admission of sin and guilt a prerequisite to salvation and forgiveness?
- Why is honesty with ourselves, others and God so important in the Christian life?
- How can we build into our lives the habit of honesty with ourselves, others, and God about our sins?