

# 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 3:19-24

Read as a group 1 John 3:19-24

- 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 Assurance of an Informed Conscience**
- **The Boldness of a Clear Conscience**
- **The Peace of a Spirit-Filled Conscience**

#### I. The Assurance of an Informed Conscience

- What is a conscience and why do we have one?
  - **Read and discuss Romans 2:14**
- How does God use our conscience to restrain evil?
- Read and discuss the following quote by John MacArthur
  - **John MacArthur** - The conscience is thus not in itself an independent system of morality. Rather, it operates based on whatever knowledge and belief system informs it, and in response to the cultural conditions surrounding it. If the level of moral and spiritual knowledge is drawn from any other source than Scripture, the conscience will function in response to those false ideas.
- **Read Psalms 19:7-9** and discuss the role of God’s word in informing our conscience.

- Have you ever felt guilty and didn't know why? What did you do? What should you do when you feel guilty?
- **Read 1 John 3:20** and discuss what it means that "God is greater than our heart."
- How is it comforting to the believer that God knows everything?
- Read and discuss the following quote by Douglas O'Donnell
  - **Douglas O'Donnell** - God is not blind to our unloving actions. He knows every detail of every sin. He knows that even the slightest lack of love carries the weight of eternal condemnation. But (here is the gospel according to John!) God still forgives. Accept his forgiveness through Christ. Rejoice in the renewed relationship. Pray. And return to practicing righteousness.
- Read and discuss the following quote by John Stott
  - **John Stott** - Our conscience is by no means infallible; its condemnation may often be unjust. We can, therefore, appeal from our conscience to God who is greater and more knowledgeable. Indeed, He knows all things, including our secret motives and deepest resolves, and, **it is implied**, will be more merciful towards us than our own heart.
- Do you agree with Stott that often God is more merciful toward us than our own hearts are? If so why is that encouraging?

## II. The Boldness of a Clear Conscience

- How does a clear conscience produce boldness in the believer?
- In light of the previous question, Read Revelation 12:10 and discuss how Satan tries to keep Christians ineffective in their ministries.
- How does guilt (the feeling or true guiltiness) affect your prayer life?
- Discuss the following quote and how it helps explain verse 22.
  - **Warren Wiersbe** "When our delight is in the love of God, our desire will be in the will of God."
  - *Leaders Cheat: Read 1 John 5:14 to help answer this question.*

- **Read 1 John 3:23** and discuss the connection between belief and love. Why is it significant that John uses the singular word “commandment” instead of the plural word “commandments”?

### III. The Peace of a Spirit-Filled Conscience

- **Read the Gospel of John 14:15-27**
- What is the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer according to this passage?
- What does Verse 19 mean when it says “After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but **you will see Me**”
  - *Leaders Cheat: Jesus is talking about the Holy Spirit.*
- Do you think the Apostles knew Jesus better before Pentecost when they walked with Jesus or after (in the book of Acts)? Explain your answer.
- Read and discuss the following quote by Timothy Keller
  - **Timothy Keller - In the upper room the night before the cross, the apostles still don't have the slightest idea of how much he loves them, what it will cost him to love them, or what his love will accomplish for them. All of that is cloudy to them. Therefore, though they have actually lived with him for three years, they haven't encountered the real Jesus. They still don't know him. But the Holy Spirit will come. And he will not merely hold their hand or give them energy - he will teach them deep, life changing truths. He will finally help them see the depth of their sin and he will finally show them what Jesus did for them.**
- How rich are we as Christians?
- Read and discuss the following passages and how they should bring assurance, boldness and peace to the life of the believer.
  - Ephesians 1:3
  - Romans 8:31-39
- What are some ways you personally can cultivate a deeper understanding of who you are in Christ?