

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 3:4-10

Before you get started with the questions on the sermon, take some time to discuss what you have learned as a group so far from 1 John.

- Where in your personal walk have you been challenged?
- What are some ways God is challenging you in your relationship with other Christians within the Church?
- What healthy habits (such as meditating on God’s Word, praying, or serving other people) do you particularly need to focus on increasing in your life in order to uproot habits of sin?

Read as a group – 1 John 3:4-10

- What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend’s message did you find to be most helpful, eye-opening or troubling? Explain.
- What reasons are given in this passage for why practicing sin is incompatible with a relationship to God?

3 – Main Points of Sunday’s Sermon

The Children of the Devil

- **Oppose the Work of Christ**
- **Oppose the Nature of God**
- **Oppose the Ministry of the Holy Spirit**

1) Oppose the Work of Christ

- What did John mean when he spoke of “children of the devil” (see 1 John 3:10 and John 8:44)? How does this fit in with the popular notion today that everyone is a “child of God”?

- **Read 1 John 3:4** And discuss why the clarification about sin is necessary. What is lawlessness? Why is sin lawlessness? What law is sin against?
 - *Leaders Cheat:*
 - *“sin” is used to describe the transgression of the Law*
 - *“Lawlessness” defines sin as rebellion against God*
- **Read 1 John 3:5 & 8** According to these verses why did Jesus come?
- Why is sinning so contrary to the work of Christ?
 - **John Stott - If the first step to holiness is to recognize the sinfulness of sin, both in its essence as lawlessness and in its diabolical origin, the second step is to see its absolute incompatibility with Christ in His sinless Person and saving work.**

2) Oppose the Nature of God

- 1 John 3:7 says, “Little Children, Let no one deceive you”. What have you learned so far about the gnostic heresy and explain why it may have been attractive to those in the church?
- What teachings in modern society “deceive” people into thinking that sinning is OK or perhaps even good?
- Have you ever tried to tell yourself that some kind of sin is acceptable? Explain.
- What should our view of sin be?

3) Oppose the Ministry of the Holy Spirit

- Take some time and carefully read the following verses and discuss what it means to be “born again.”
 - 1 John 3:9-10
 - John 3:1-10
 - John 1:1-14
 - 1 Peter 1:22-2:3
 - Titus 3:1-8 (regeneration means born again)
 - **The new birth signals the end of the sinner’s old life; those who were hopelessly corrupt now become new creatures in Christ, buried with Him and raised unto a new life of righteousness.**

- The new birth involves the acquisition of a new nature through the implanting within us of the very seed or life-giving power of God. The birth of God is a deep, radical, inward transformation.
- **Read 1 John 3:10** and discuss the following quotes.
 - **David Allen Writes** - John then adds a final comment specifying one act of righteousness that he has already addressed and will address again: loving Christian brothers and sisters in the church. In essence God and Satan are the heads of two families. You are either a child of God or of Satan. Every person who has not been born into the family of God is a member of the family of Satan. The new birth determines what family you are in today. If you have not repented of your sin and believed on Jesus Christ as your Savior, you are still in the family of Satan.
 - **Glenn Barker Writes** - The author, then, is not stressing absolute moral conformity or “sinless perfection” but the one requirement by which all other requirements are measured – love for one’s brother. For this there is no substitute, its violation allows for no excuse, its application permits no compromise. Here there are no gray areas, no third possibilities. One either loves his brother and proves he is a child of God or does not love his brother and proves he belongs to the Devil.
- End by reading the following quote from Warren Wiersbe and challenge the group to silently examine their hearts with the following questions.
 - **Warren Wiersbe on 1 John 3:1-10** These words were not written so that you and I might check on other people. They were inspired so that we may examine ourselves. Each of us must answer honestly the following questions before God.
 - Do I have the divine nature within me, or am I merely pretending to be a Christian?
 - Do I cultivate this divine nature within me, or am I merely pretending to be a Christian?
 - Do I cultivate this divine nature by daily Bible reading and prayer?
 - Has any unconfessed sin defiled my inner man? Am I willing to confess and forsake it?
 - Do I allow my old nature to control my thoughts and desires, or does the divine nature rule me?
 - When temptation comes, do I “play with it,” or do I flee from it? Do I immediately yield to the divine nature within me?