

Lesson 1

Small Group Discussion

1 John 1:1-10



Context of the Letter

The Apostle John is writing to a group of believers in the late first century who were plagued with false doctrine and teachers that were leading them astray. As a result, the Holy Spirit spoke through John to establish the church in the core doctrines of the Christian faith. In the center of this letter is the importance of understanding the doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ and His demonstration and command of love.

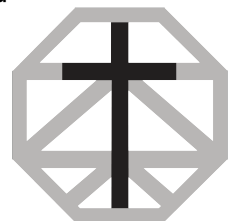
The word “**know**” is used 35 times in this letter. Alongside establishing who Jesus is, this letter defines how we know if we are truly following Jesus or if we are being led astray. An essential part of this process is the promise of the Holy Spirit. In this letter the believer is encouraged to rely on the conviction and guidance of the Holy Spirit through the teachings of Scripture to ensure fellowship with the perfect love of God. This letter demands honest self-reflection to discern if we are truly fellowshiping with God, or if we are being deceived by our own sinful passions, false teaching, or the spirit of the antichrist.

Context of the Chapter

1 John begins by emphasizing the availability of eternal life and fellowship with God. In order to combat the false teaching of the time, the Apostle John emphasized that he and the other apostles had a physical relationship with Jesus and saw His life, death, and resurrection. Jesus was not merely a spirit, but He was God in the flesh as a physical man. This is essential if we want to fellowship with God. We cannot walk with Him unless we embrace the truth of both the deity and manhood of Jesus Christ.

The ministry of Jesus described above opens the door for us to have an intimate relationship with God. Jesus is the Word of God (**John 1:1-5**) and has brought to us the Word of life. The Word of life is the truth of Scripture that brings us into a personal relationship with God.

Our relationship with God through Jesus comes by practical steps. Genuine Christianity is not merely philosophical but requires specific action. We must be doers of the Word and not hearers only (**James 2:26**). The first step of this is not to be afraid of the Light but to welcome it. The Light both exposes our sin and rewards our actions done for the glory of God.



Questions/Sermon Study

1 John 1:1-4

1. Why do you think it is important to have a personal encounter with Jesus instead of merely an intellectual or philosophical understanding of Him?

Cross References: A personal encounter with Christ leads to intimacy, and intimacy leads to a powerful witness.

- **Acts 4:19-20** • *The Apostles*
- **John 4:7-42** • *The Woman at the Well*
- **1 Corinthians 6:9-11** • *A personal encounter with Jesus was not only for those who saw His physical life.*

2. The Bible is the Word of life! Below are Scriptures on the power of Scripture and how it brings life and light into our life. Discuss what sticks out to your group about these Scriptures:

Isaiah 66:2

Hebrews 4:11-13

John 4:13-15

Psalms 19:7-14

Psalms 119:130

Philippians 2:16

John 6:68

1 John 1:5-10

3. Verse 5 states that there is “no darkness” in God, meaning He is completely holy. What does this mean? How does His holiness impact our relationship with Him?

- **Exodus 34:6-8** • *God cannot overlook sin*
- **Psalms 5:4** • *God can not fellowship with sin*
- **Isaiah 59:1-2, Micah 3:4** • *Sin separates us from fellowship with God*
- **Psalms 96:9 & 1 Samuel 2:2** • *God’s holiness*

*Holiness is a word that means “to be set apart, singled out, awesome, consecrated for special use.” This means that God is not “common;” He is not like us. He is separated and singled out as the perfect expression of everything that is good. Part of this is that God hates evil. **Amos 3:3** states that two cannot walk together unless they agree. God is separate from sinners. He cannot walk (or fellowship) with them because He does not agree with them. In the same way God asks us to be “equally yoked” in marriage and fellowship with other believers. If an oxen and golden retriever are yoked together the only place they can go is in circles. This is why the Word about Jesus is the Word of life.*

4. Due to the sacrifice of Jesus, we can move from people separated from God to people sanctified, or set apart, to be with God. We, too, are made holy by the blood of Christ, so that we can have fellowship and experience God’s love. What has been your personal experience of the Word of Christ bringing you life?

- **Colossians 1:19-21**

5. The evidence of walking in God's love is that we embrace His Light. Even though God has made us holy, we all still sin and fall short. So what is the difference between someone who is walking in darkness (sin), and someone who is walking in the light and has fellowship with God's love?
 - **John 3:16-21** *Those in darkness want to stay in darkness, they do not want to confess their sin or receive help from others. Those who have fellowship with God's love welcome the light and enjoy the Word of life bringing light to the dark areas of their life. They welcome confession and trust the work of Jesus to make them holy as He is holy.*
6. Are you hungry for God to bring light into the dark areas of your life, even though it may be painful? Or do you find yourself hiding from hard truth and accountability?
7. What does it mean to confess? Say the same thing as God says. Come into agreement with God about a specific thought, word, or action.

Discipleship Focus & Challenge

At Mitchell Berean, we are a church on mission to raise up disciples-makers who share the Gospel where we live, work and play.

A disciple's heart posture is to be a lifelong follower, student, example, and teacher of Jesus Christ.

Luke 9:23 - Follower

John 15:1-8 - Student

John 13:34-35 - Example

Matthew 28:18-20 - Teacher

Fall Campaign Challenge #1- Be a student!

1 John 1 makes it clear that God wants us to encounter Him and have a relationship with Him. A big part of this is understanding who He is through "*The Word of Life.*" In other words we must be a "student" of God's Word.

Below are Scripture references that talk about the "Light." Read the below Scriptures each day this week and praise God for one specific way He has brought "Light" into your life (overcoming sin, finding joy, finding peace, having good friends, healing in your family etc.)

Day 1: **Matthew 5:14-16**

Day 2: **John 1:1-4**

Day 3: **John 8:12-20**

Day 4: **John 12:27-36**

Day 5: **Ephesians 5:1-21**

Memorize: 1 John 4:7-8
