

:: 1 John 1v5-2v6 ::

1. Conversation starter ::
→ Do you believe that sin in the life of a Christian is worse than sin in the life of a non-Christian?
2. Is there a difference between living in sin and occasionally sinning?
3. If a person is living in sin are they truly a Jesus-follower?
- 4. Refer to the text → Read 1 John 1v5-2v6 out loud as a group.**
5. According to John what is sin?
6. Is it possible to live without sin?
7. What is the difference between forgiveness and purification?
8. Why is it important for us to be honest with God, one another and ourselves? What is confession?
9. How did Jesus walk?
10. If all labels were eliminated how would people know you were a Christian?

:: 1 John 2v7-11 ::

1. Conversation starter ::

→ What is the difference between Christian love and non-Christian love?

2. Is it possible to love God and hate your neighbor/brother/sister?

3. Refer to the text → Read 1 John 2v7-11 out loud as a group.

5. What does it mean to hate your neighbor/brother/sister?

→ Read Matthew 5v21-24 out loud as a group

→ Read Colossians 3v12-14 out loud as a group

→ Talk about the difference between the person described in Matthew and the person described in Colossians.

→ What does it mean to bear with your neighbor/brother/sister?

4. Did John literally mean you cannot have fellowship with God and hate your brother?

5. When we maintain unhealthy relationships what type of God do we reflect?

:: 1 John 2v15-17 ::

1. Refer to the text → Read 1 John 2v15-17 out loud as a group.

2. What is John referring to as the world?

3. Have everyone write down these quotes by Warren Wiersbe ::

→ "The world in the Bible is Satan's system for opposing Christ's work on earth."

→ "Worldliness is not so much a matter of activity as of attitude."

→ "It is possible for a Christian to stay away from questionable amusements and doubtful places and still love the world. For worldliness is a matter of the heart."

4. Discuss these quotes.

→ How do they challenge your previous thoughts about the difference between following God and living in the world?

5. Everything around us today encourages us to **crave (want your own way), lust (want everything for yourself) and boast (want to appear important)**. These things are not of God. They isolate us from God and our neighbor/brother/sister. They distract us from God and our neighbor. **What does God's way of life encourage?**

:: 1 John 2v18-23, 3v7-10, 4v1-6 ::

1. Conversation starter ::

→ Up to this point, what have you been taught about the antichrist? What do you think about when you hear the word "antichrist"?

2. Refer to the text → Read 1 John 2v18-23, 3v7-10, 4v1-6 out loud as a group.

3. How does John define the anti-christ?

4. John sets a mirror in front of us in chapter 3 verse 10 when he says we are children of the devil or anti-christs when we do not love our neighbor. What is your response?

5. How do we tell the difference between someone who's teaching is from God and someone who's teaching is not from God?

6. Who do you go to for advice/guidance/direction? How did you determine who to take advice from?

7. Does this section in John cause you to re-think who you go to for advice?

:: 1 John 2v24-29 ::

1. Tell about the first time you heard and understood the Gospel.
 - How was it presented?
 - What was included?
2. What you were originally taught, does it align with what you now know about God and the Gospel?

3. Refer to the text → Read 1 John 2v24-29 out loud as a group.

4. 1 John 2v27 says, "You do not need anyone to teach you." John is not saying that it is not good to learn from one another but he is saying that God can teach you without man. You're connection with God is not determined by and/or dependant on a preacher. You're connection with God is dependant upon God drawing you near to Himself and you drawing near to Him.

- Read Psalm 119:102
- How does is this different from what you have experienced in the church up to this point?
- How do you learn from God?
- How do you strike a healthy balance between learning from one another and learning from God?

5. "And now, dear children, continue in him..." The process of faith is hard. There are times of doubt, questioning, silence, revelation, ups and downs. John encourages us to not give up.

- What makes faith and following the way of Jesus so difficult?
- How can we help one another not give up?

6. UNASHAMED → What does it mean to not be ashamed of God, what God is doing in your life and what God is doing in Impact?

7. God is righteous. He brings all things together. He is the creator and sustainer of all things. He is peace. Righteousness equals peace, wholeness, the world being redeemed. Since God is righteous he calls his people to be righteous, to live righteous lives.

- Read Galatians 5v22-23
- What does it mean to live righteous lives?
- What does it mean to do what is right?

:: Read 1 John 3v1-6 ::

1. What is the difference between the great love of God and the love we experience here on earth?

2. Refer to the text → Read 1 John 3v1-6 out loud as a group.

3. Read Matthew 3v13-17

→ God was pleased with Jesus, calling him His son. To this point Jesus had yet to accomplish anything of great significance. No miracles. No ministry. No followers. God loved him because of how great God's love is not because of something Jesus had accomplished. Jesus' identity was not determined by something he had accomplished but by God's love for him. The Father has lavished his love on us and because of that reality we are known as children of God. That is what we are because of His love for us not because of something we have accomplished.

What do you think about this?

4. John says, "The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him." We are called to look different, love different, live different. And because of this difference the world does not notice us. Are you un-recognizable to the world? Do they ask why you are different?

5. John continues to pound away at this truth that sin and God cannot co-exist. That in him is no sin. And no one who lives in him keeps on sinning. Sin keeps us from seeing him and knowing him. What in your life keeps you from seeing God? What fights for your eyes? For your mind? What in your life needs to be put death?

6. "We shall see him as he is." (v2). Pursuing God is a life-long pursuit. We will never know Him completely. We cannot comprehend him fully. He is continually teaching us and revealing himself to us. What is he teaching you right now? What part of him is he revealing to you?

:: 1 John 3v11-24 ::

1. John, the writer, uses from inclusive language. He uses words like we, one another, children, brothers/sisters and friends. John's audience seems to be God's people, the Church. **Does the type of love John has been calling us to, exist in our church, Impact and your Community Group?**

2. **Refer to the text → Read 1 John 3v11-24 out loud as a group**

3. The Proof is in the Puddin' :: Verse 24 says, "Those who obey his commands live in him and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us." John says we will know when God is in us and we are in him when we see the Spirit of God overflowing from our lives. **What does that Spirit look like?** (Refer to Colossians 3v12-17 & Galatians 5v22-26)

4. John starts off this section by saying, "This is the message you heard from the beginning." He is referring to the story of Cain and Abel...a story this audience would have heard at some point. A story that shows us the way of God. Go back and read Genesis 4v1-8. The Lord was displeased with Cain before he committed the act of murder. He was displeased with Cain and Cain's offering was not acceptable because of his heart...which was angry and full of hate, envy and jealousy. When our hearts are full of these things we have already committed murder. We think that the world would be a better place without that other person. This is not love. This is hate. This is the difference between life and death. This is the difference that John is pointing out. **What do you think?**

5. Re-read 1 John 3v17-18 :: It is not enough for us to only love with our words and tongues but our actions must follow suit. Since John is writing to an audience of Christians, **what does it look like for you to live out love within this community?**

:: 1 John 4v7-16 ::

1. Conversation starter. Define love using popular TV shows, songs and books from our culture.
2. How are these definitions the same as or different than the definition of love in Scripture?
- 3. Refer to the text → Read 1 John 4v7-16 out loud as a group.**
4. John says, "This is love..." What is his definition of love? How does that translate to your relationships?
5. What does John say are the two purposes for Jesus' death on the cross?
6. What does it mean to live in God and God in us?
- 7. According to John there is no separation between a Christian's inner life and his outer life. What does that mean for our everyday life?**
8. Is there a difference between "God is love" and "love is God"?

:: 1 John 4v16-19 ::

1. Conversation starter. How much do you still rely on your parents? What do you rely on them for?
2. **Refer to the text → Read 1 John 4v16-19 out loud as a group.**
3. John says, **“We rely on the love God has for us.”** What does it mean for you to rely on the love God has for you? What areas of your life are you not relying on God and still relying on yourself?
4. **“Love is made complete among us.”** What do you think that means?
5. Have you ever experienced Christianity based upon fear? What effect does that have on your relationship with God?
6. **“We love because he first loved us.”** God makes the first move. God pursues us first. God loves us first. God wants us first. **Is this different from the way you understand a relationship with God?** In what ways?

:: 1 John 4v20-5v5 ::

1. Conversation starter. Talk about a time in your life when you were angry with someone. Why were you angry? What did it accomplish? Was your anger justified? Did you over-react? Looking back would you do anything differently?
2. **Refer to the Text → Read 1 John 4v20-5v5 out loud as a group.**
3. Loving God and loving your brother are one in the same. Why? This seems a bit unrealistic...**How are we supposed to love everyone?**
4. "His commands are not burdensome." Sometimes following God can seem burdensome, a job to be done, an obligation. **What does it mean to follow God, live out the way of God, obey God with joy?** What's the secret to joyful obedience?
5. What does it mean to be born of God?

:: 1 John 5v6-20 ::

1. Are there multiple ways to God? Is Jesus the only way to God? Are you afraid to believe that? Why?

2. Refer to the text → Read 1 John 5v6-20 out loud as a group.

2. John gives us 5 absolute statements in this section. Spend some time talking about the following five statements.

1. Jesus is God [v6-10]
2. Believers have eternal life [v11-13]
3. God answers prayers [v14-15]
4. Christians do not practice sin [v16-19]
5. The way of Jesus is the true way of life [v20]

3. How can we be sure that God hears our prayers?

4. What does it mean to prayer according to God's will?

5. What does it mean for us to hold one another accountable to living the way of Jesus? How can we begin to do that? Why is this scary?

:: 1 John 5v21 ::

1. Conversation starter. What do you spend most of your time doing?

2. Refer to the text → Read 1 John 5v21 out loud as a group.

3. What is an idol?

4. Most believe that all sin boils down to the worship of idols? Do you agree?

5. What has the possibility of becoming an idol in your life?

6. We know that God's entire law can be summed up in these two statements: 1) Love God with your whole being. 2) Love your neighbor in the same way. Idols remove our focus from these two things. An idol becomes a god. An idol causes us to envy our neighbor and become jealous of our neighbor. How do we protect ourselves from this happening? Do we need to remove some things? Do we need to rearrange our schedule? Do we need to reevaluate what we spend our money, time and energy on?