

Beloved – A Series on 1st John

1st John I

Take turns reading a few verses each of chapter I of First John.

1. What normally comes to your mind when you think of Christian fellowship?
2. What verses or truths in this chapter reveal aspects of who God is?
What verses or truths in this chapter reveal aspects about our identity in Christ?
3. In 1 John 1:1-4, John begins this letter with some his qualifications to write. What reasons for writing or qualifications catch your attention in these verses?
4. In 1 John 1:5-10, John describes a ‘fellowship with God test.’ How can we know if we have fellowship with God? How is this test challenging or thought-provoking to you?
5. John describes the way we live as a ‘walk.’ What is the relationship between our conduct (how we live) and our claim to have fellowship with God (what we believe)?
6. Our attitude toward sin is also a key part of the test John describes (see vs. 8-10). What does our denial or confession of sin say about the quality of our relationship with God?
7. As you consider this whole chapter: what do you recognize are ways we enjoy a greater fellowship with God and also with other believers (those who know the Father and the Son)?

Prayer: Close by praying for each other to take steps toward deeper fellowship with God and the fellow believers.

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1st John 2

Take turns reading a few verses each of chapter 2 of First John.

1. When was a time that you got caught saying one thing, but doing the opposite of what you said?
2. What verses or truths in this chapter reveal aspects of who God is?
What verses or truths in this chapter reveal aspects about our identity in Christ?
3. What does it mean to you when you read that Jesus is advocating and defending on your behalf (Hint: think lawyer in a court of law), whenever you sin or any accusations are raised against you?
4. I John 2:3-10 describes the supernatural trajectory of a believer's life. How can we tell whether we truly know Christ or merely claim to know Him?
5. How are you encouraged by what John says to the three groups who are addressed in verses 12-14?
6. I John 2:15-17 contain strong warnings about the world and worldliness. How are you challenged by the truths in these verses?
7. How does being born into God's family and being given the Holy Spirit lead us into truth and protect us from lies (see vs. 24-29)?

Prayer: Close by praying for each other to take steps toward consistently living as children of God.

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1st John 3

Take turns reading a few verses each of chapter 3 of First John.

1. Have you ever questioned whether you were a member of God's family? Explain.
2. What verses or truths in this chapter reveal aspects of who God is?
What verses or truths in this chapter reveal aspects about our identity in Christ?
3. Read. John 3:1-3. What is so astounding about being called a child of God? How does realizing that you are God's child help you understand the depth of His love?
4. What is the difference between a person who falls into sin (on occasion), and a person who persists in sinning?
5. Read 1 John 3:16. How does Christ's example reveal and model for you what true love is? How have you seen this in action in people around you?
6. According to 1 John 3:21-22, how could obedience to God's commands affect our confidence in prayer?
7. Based on this chapter, how would you counsel or help someone who lacked assurance that he or she was a Christian?

Prayer: Close by praying for each other to rejoice in your status as God's child and the assurance that brings.

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1st John 4

Take turns reading a few verses each of chapter 4 of First John.

1. What was one of your childhood fears?
2. What verses or truths in this chapter reveal aspects of who God is?
What verses or truths in this chapter reveal aspects about our identity in Christ?
3. What is the connection between discerning the truth (vs. 1-6) and our ability to love and be loved by God (vs.7-21)?
4. According to 1 John 4:7-8, what is the motivation for Christians to be diligent to love one another? What does John mean when he says “God is Love”?
5. How is our experience of God's love related to our ability to love others? (1 John 4:16-19)
6. How have you experienced the connection between fear and love? How have you experienced or struggled to experience the truth that “perfect love drives out fear”?
7. How does verse 19 suggest the root of our problem, when we have difficulty loving other Christians? What is a solution?

Prayer: Close by praying for each other to experience God's love deeply and to be empowered to love people deeply.

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1st John 5

Take turns reading a few verses each of chapter 5 of First John.

1. Did you have any memorable 'victories' in your early years?
2. What verses or truths in this chapter reveal aspects of who God is?
What verses or truths in this chapter reveal aspects about our identity in Christ?
3. I John 5:3 doesn't always strike us as an 'easy to swallow' verse. Why is that? Why is it true that obedience to God's commands is not burdensome for a child of God?
4. Review I John 2:15-17 and I John 4:1-6. What are two major characteristics of the world described in these passages? What then does it mean for us to "overcome the world" and have victory in I John 5:4-5?
5. I John 5:13 summarizes this whole letter in one sentence. What then are those "things" which assure us that we have eternal life? How does your experience confirm the truth that eternal life is found in Jesus?
6. How can we get to the point where we want and pray what God wants/wills (vs.14-15)?
7. What is particularly encouraging to you about the assurances that we find in I John 5:18-19?

Prayer: Close by praying for each other to experience victory, assurance and hope as you walk with God.

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1st John - Wrap-up and Reflection

Take 20 minutes to do the following: Each person pick one chapter of First John (or the leader can assign chapters) to read and review slowly. Make sure each chapter is being covered by at least one person.

Take notes (write down specific verse numbers and phrases as reminders) on the following questions and be ready to share what you discover.

- 1.) What verses or truths in this chapter say something about who God is?

- 2.) What verses or truths in this chapter say something about your identity in Christ?

- 3.) Which verses in this chapter focus on what it means to be God's beloved?

- 4.) Which verses in this chapter focus on how to be loving toward others?

- 5.) Which of the verses or truths that you wrote down are the most meaningful or encouraging to you?

- 6.) Feel free to share any other thoughts, ideas or truths that were meaningful, encouraging or challenging from our 1st John study or the sermon series.

Prayer: Close by praying for each other to grow in your experience of being loved by God and loving other people.