

2026-05-03 Small Group Guide

Small Group Guide: The Ten Commandments and Living in the Light Opening Prayer

Begin your time together asking God to open your hearts to His Word and help you honestly examine your lives in light of His truth.

Ice Breaker

Share one thing you were taught as a child that you initially didn't understand but later came to appreciate as wisdom.

Key Sermon Points

God's commands are not restrictive but protective - They started with just one command in Eden and are given out of love, not as a taskmaster's rules.

The Ten Commandments structure:

First 4: Our relationship with God (worship, idols, God's name, Sabbath)

Last 6: Our relationships with each other (family, murder, adultery, stealing, lying, coveting)

Walking in the light requires honesty - We must confess specific sins, not just blanket apologies.

True faith produces action - James reminds us that even demons believe in God; our belief should transform our behavior.

The church needs accountability - We cannot walk this journey alone; we need each other.

Discussion Questions

Understanding God's Commands

Why do you think God's commands are often viewed negatively in our culture? How does understanding them as protective rather than restrictive change your perspective?

The pastor mentioned we often worship things instead of God (crosses, buildings, parking spots, etc.). What are some modern "idols" that can subtly take God's place in our lives?

Read 1 John 1:5-10. What does it mean practically to "walk in the light"? What does darkness look like in everyday life?

Confession and Honesty

The sermon emphasized specific confession rather than blanket prayers. Why is being specific about our sins important? How does this differ from what you were taught growing up?

The pastor said, "You won't own it until you are willing to own it." What makes confession difficult? What freedom might come from honest confession?

Read 1 John 2:1-6. How does this passage balance grace (we have an advocate) with obedience (keeping His commands)?

Faith and Action

"If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth" (1 John 1:6). How would you evaluate the gap between what you profess and how you live?

The pastor mentioned that the country's problems stem from Christians not being Christian. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Read 1 John 3:16-18. What does it mean to "lay down our lives for our brothers"? Give practical examples of what this looks like today.

Accountability and Community

Why do you think Christians often resist accountability? What fears or concerns keep us from being vulnerable with each other?

The pastor pointed to the recovery groups meeting in the church as an example of confession and accountability working. What can we learn from their model?

How can this small group become a safe place for honest confession and mutual accountability?

Key Takeaways

Commands reveal God's character and care - They show us how to live in harmony with how we were created.

Walking in light means ongoing honesty - Confession is specific, regular, and necessary for purification.

Faith without works is dead - True belief in Christ transforms our actions and relationships.

We need each other - Isolation leads to deception; community brings freedom.

Accountability is a gift, not a burden - It helps us become who God created us to be.

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

Specific Confession: Each day, confess one specific sin to God (not just

"forgive my sins"). Write it down if helpful, then acknowledge His forgiveness.

Accountability Partner: Ask someone in this group to be an accountability partner. Share one area where you're struggling and give them permission to check in with you.

Action Audit: Review 1 John 3:17-18. Identify one person in need you've seen but ignored. Take concrete action to help them this week.

Idol Inventory: Examine your life for "idols" - things that compete with God for first place. Choose one to intentionally de-prioritize this week.

Walk in the Light: Choose one relationship where you've been hiding something or being dishonest. Bring it into the light with appropriate confession or honesty.

Accountability Questions for Next Week

Which challenge did you choose?

What happened when you tried it?

What did you learn about yourself? About God?

What obstacles did you face?

How can we support you moving forward?

Closing Reflection

Read together: 1 John 3:1 - "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are."

Reflect: All of God's commands flow from His lavish love for us. He's not trying to restrict our joy but to lead us into true, eternal joy.

Personal Question: What is one specific way you sense God calling you to change based on today's discussion?

Closing Prayer

Pray for:

Courage to be honest about our sins

Willingness to accept accountability

Faith that produces genuine action

Hearts that love what God loves

Strength to walk in the light together

For Further Study

Read all of 1 John this week (only 5 chapters)

Study the Ten Commandments: Exodus 20:1-17

James 2:14-26 (faith and works)

Psalms 139:23-24 (invitation for God to search us)

Leader's Notes

Create safety: Model vulnerability by sharing your own struggles first

Avoid judgment: Remember the pastor's warning - we all have sin problems

Encourage specificity: Help people move from vague to concrete in both confession and application

Pray together: Consider ending with a time of silent confession followed by corporate assurance of forgiveness

Follow up: Check in with group members during the week about their chosen challenge