



# JOURNEY GROUPS

MAY 24 LEADER GUIDE

## LEADERS NOTES

A few notes for you as a leader as you meet again this week:

- Please fill out the survey Pastor Ryan provided via text, which will also be shared at the JG celebration night. This information provides helpful information for planning throughout the summer.
- Some groups are continuing to meet through the summer. It is not expected that all groups do so. Having a rhythm of rest is important and honors the Lord, as He can do more with you as you trust Him through rest. Whatever you choose to do, know that He sees your heart and is offering you rest for your souls.

## SHARE - ICE BREAKERS

- What's something you accidentally denied or insisted was true... until you realized you were completely wrong? (Examples: a wrong direction, song lyric, sports fact, recipe mistake, etc.)
- Have you ever had someone stand up for you, defend you, or encourage you after failure, or help restore you after a mistake? How did that affect your relationship with that person?

# STUDY

## Digging Deeper into the life of the Apostle John and 1 John 1:8–2:2:

1. On Sunday, we learned the Greek word 'parakletos,' which means to come alongside. Who is someone who 'came alongside you' and made a difference in your life at a critical moment? (Answers will vary.)
2. Read 1 John 1-2:2.
3. For review, why was John writing this letter again? One main reason is found in verses 3-4. (Many were denying the core truths about Jesus' humanity and His divinity; therefore, John wants to declare the joyful realities that he witnessed and the fellowship that he had experienced with Jesus and thereby the Father.)
4. God is by nature, LIGHT. What about who God is causes God to be light, and have no darkness in Him whatsoever? (perfect purity, blameless righteousness, holy, truth, etc.)
5. A big illustrative motif for John in the first half of his letter is the contrast between light and darkness. He says that truth = light, and that lies or lying is darkness. Have someone reread verses 6-7. Why is it all too easy to claim to live in the light, but then turn around and walk in darkness? (Sin makes us prone to darkness, and the residual effects of sin still reside in our flesh, which we must struggle to put off (Cf. Eph 4:20–32) every day.)
6. Read 1 John 1:8–2 John 2:2.
7. It's incredible to be saved out of darkness and brought into God's wondrous light. And it's amazing to be invited to join in the fellowship between God, Jesus, and our other brothers and sisters in Christ. But what do we often do when we sin, or stray and walk in darkness? What is a bad way to respond when we catch ourselves giving in to the flesh and sinning? (e.g., ignoring it and hoping it will resolve itself; assuming that it isn't that bad and making "little" of sin; rationalizing the behavior, as if it does not affect all of us and those around us; believing that God does not want to do something about it as a holy God)
8. Reread 1 John 1:9. Why are we blessed if we confess and come into the light? (We can find a faithful and just God who forgives).

9. Why do we exert so much energy to hide when we sin, when confession is the way to forgiveness and healing? (Answers will vary, but see some of the sinful reflexes mentioned in #7.)
10. After coming into the light, do you ever have a hard time coming close to God? Do you ever wait until you have had a 'good' day or two, before you feel like you can be close to God? (Answers will vary, but the purpose of this question is to show how we view God. Is God someone who wants us to draw near or not? Has He made a way or not?)
11. Does anyone remember what the word atone means? (In the sense of a relationship, it means to "make right" the offense that has broken or damaged the relationship)
12. Why is Jesus the ultimate parakletos (advocate/helper) when it comes to our weakness to sin? (He alone could stand in our place and deal with our sin as both faithful and just.)
13. What can wash away the stains of sin and shame from our soul? (Jesus' atoning sacrifice and the shedding of His blood for the forgiveness of our sins.)
14. Give thanks to God that we have such a helper (parakletos) who paid for us, forgives us, and cleans us up!
15. How could a small group or church culture practically live out the kind of confession described in 1:9? (By cultivating trust, humility, prayer, accountability, grace, and truthful relationships where people can confess sin without fear of condemnation. Cf. James 5:16; Galatians 6:1–2; Ephesians 4:25; Colossians 3:16.)
16. In what ways can pretending to be without sin (1:8, 10) damage Christian fellowship and authenticity within the church? (It creates hypocrisy, pride, isolation, judgmental attitudes, and shallow relationships that prevent genuine spiritual growth. Cf. Matthew 23:27–28; Luke 18:9–14; Romans 12:3; Proverbs 16:18.)

17. In what ways can denying sinfulness (1:8–10) distort a person’s relationships with God, others, and themselves? (It damages intimacy with God, weakens trust with others, and creates a false or inflated self-understanding. Cf. Genesis 3:8–10; Isaiah 59:2; James 4:6; 1 Corinthians 8:2.)
18. How does believing that God is “faithful and just” in forgiving sin (1:9) affect emotional struggles such as shame, fear, or guilt? (It brings assurance, peace, freedom from condemnation, and confidence to approach God honestly. Cf. Romans 8:1; Psalm 103:10–12; Hebrews 4:16; Micah 7:18–19.)
19. What evidence in your life suggests growing honesty and transparency before God compared to previous seasons? (Increased willingness to confess sin quickly, receive correction, ask for help, and walk in humility before others. Cf. Psalm 32:3–5; Proverbs 9:8–9; James 4:6; Philippians 3:12–14.)
20. How can you discern the difference between genuine confession and merely feeling bad about consequences? (Genuine confession includes repentance, ownership, and desire for change; worldly sorrow focuses mainly on embarrassment or outcomes. Cf. 2 Corinthians 7:9–10; Psalm 51:16–17; Luke 15:17–21; Ezekiel 36:26.)
21. What indicators show that a Christian community is growing in grace-filled accountability rather than performance-based spirituality? (People confess openly, extend forgiveness, encourage growth, speak truth lovingly, and prioritize transformation over appearances. Cf. Ephesians 4:15; Romans 15:1–2; Colossians 3:12–14; John 13:34–35.)

## PRAYER

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
-