

Small Group Guide

"Confidence" | 1 John 1:1-4 | Week 1

BEFORE YOU MEET

Encourage group members to read 1 John 1:1-4 before gathering. If possible, read it in two different Bible translations and come prepared to share what stood out to you.

OPENING QUESTION

Think of a time when you had complete confidence in someone or something. What made that confidence possible? How does that kind of confidence compare to what you experience in your faith?

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

John wrote this letter around 90 AD as the last living apostle, addressing a church being confused and misled by false teachers. A growing philosophical movement was teaching that salvation came from hidden spiritual wisdom found within oneself rather than through faith in Jesus Christ. These teachers denied that Jesus was truly God in the flesh. John's response was simple and direct: we were there. We heard him, saw him, and touched him. You can have confidence in our testimony.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- You can have confidence in Jesus, that he is fully God in the flesh.
- You can have confidence in your place and relationship with God.
- You can have confidence in the Bible as the complete and sufficient word of God.
- You can have confidence in knowing God personally, without needing any hidden or special knowledge.
- Living in that confidence produces genuine joy that overflows to others.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Understanding the Text

1. In 1 John 1:1-4, John emphasizes that he and the other disciples heard, saw, and physically touched Jesus. Why was it so important for John to establish that he was an eyewitness? What does that mean for us as we read his words today?
2. John connects his opening words to the beginning of his Gospel, where he describes Jesus as the Word who was with God and was God from the beginning. Why is it significant that Jesus existed before creation rather than simply appearing at a point in history?
3. The pastor explained that John uses the Greek word "eido" in 1 John 5:13, meaning you can know with confidence that you have eternal life. How does that word "know" differ from a feeling or a hope? What does it mean to truly know something?

Digging Deeper

4. The false teaching John was addressing claimed that salvation came from a special hidden knowledge found within yourself rather than through faith in Jesus. In what ways do you see similar ideas being promoted in our culture today?
5. The pastor pointed out that Paul writes in Colossians 2:3 that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ, not within ourselves. How does that truth challenge the way our culture tends to look inward for meaning, identity, and purpose?
6. The pastor said, "It is your responsibility to sift through the information with this," referring to the Bible. What habits or practices help you evaluate what you hear and read against the truth of Scripture? Where do you feel least equipped to do that?
7. The pastor described fellowship using the Greek word "koinonia," meaning a shared common bond and communal life together. How does that definition expand or challenge the way you normally think about church community?

Personal Reflection

8. The pastor said that many believers are paralyzed in their walk with God because they are not trusting him, not walking in faith, and not spending time in his word. Would you say that describes any area of your life right now? What is one step you could take this week?
9. The pastor encouraged the group to stop hiding from God, saying that God does not hide from us and does not make himself hard to find. Is there an area of your life where you have been hiding from God rather than bringing it to him? What would it look like to step into the light in that area?
10. John says in 1 John 3:1 that the Father has lavished his love on us so that we are called children of God. How does understanding your identity as a child of God change the way you approach your daily life, your struggles, and your relationship with him?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

This Week, Choose One or More:

Read and Reread Commit to reading through all five chapters of 1 John at least once before the next group meeting. If you want to go further, read it in a second translation and note any differences in wording that stand out to you.

Journal Through It Pick up a scripture journal or use a notebook. Read a section of 1 John, then write down what you observe, what questions you have, and what you sense God is saying to you through it.

Memorize a Verse Write one verse from 1 John on an index card and carry it with you this week. The pastor suggested 1 John 5:11-13 as a strong passage to begin committing to memory.

Evaluate What You Are Taking In Make a short list of the teachers, podcasts, books, or online voices that most shape your thinking about faith. Bring one of those sources to Scripture this week and ask honestly whether what is being taught lines up with the word of God.

Have a Conversation Think of one person in your life who does not know Jesus. Pray for them by name every day this week and ask God for one natural opportunity to share something of your own story with them.

CLOSING THOUGHT

John was not writing to people who had never heard the gospel. He was writing to believers who were being pulled away from what they already knew to be true. The answer he gave them was not a new teaching or a deeper mystery. It was a return to confidence in what had already been given. The word has been spoken. Jesus has appeared. The testimony is sure. You can know him, and in knowing him, you have life.

CLOSING PRAYER

Close your time together by praying as a group for three things: confidence in the truth of God's word, courage to step out of hiding and into the light, and a genuine desire to invite others into the life that is found only in Jesus Christ.