

Knowing and Following Christ – Forgiveness and Dealing with Sin

What Are the Questions?:

I John 1:5-10 and I John 2:1-6

LAUNCH

In our Christian lives, we soon find there is an internal battle going on within ourselves. On the one hand, we have a desire to know Christ and to please him. On the other, we have a sinful nature that would rather please ourselves. What should we do? Today's study aims to address this dilemma and encourage us to walk closer with Christ.

Turn to the person next to you. Share with each other to what degree you have been aware of this internal battle since receiving Christ.

EXPLORE

Read I John 1:5-10

- 1) John starts by saying that God is light. What is the purpose of light in everyday life, and what do you think it means here?
- 2) In verses 6-7, what does it mean to 'walk in darkness', and to 'walk in light'?
- 3) Read verses 8-10 and answer the following
 - I. Are we without sin?
 - II. What is true if we have confessed our sins to God?
 - III. How many of our sins did God forgive when we first believed and asked for his forgiveness?

The moment we responded to Christ in faith, we began walking in his light. God forgave all our sin right then. But for our ongoing walk with Christ, it's important we maintain a humble and responsive attitude to his light.

- 4) As a Christian, if we realize we have sinned in a particular way, what might be an appropriate response for us as we seek to walk in God's light?

APPLY

- 10) What areas of your life might you need to confess to God today?
- 11) In light of this, how can we as an action group help each other walk closer with Christ?

Read I John 2:1-6

- 5) From this passage, what do you think our attitudes towards sin should be?
- 6) Read verses 1-2
 - I. What is the fundamental basis for the forgiveness of our sins?
 - II. What should this remind us of when we are trying to please God through the way we live?
- 7) What do verses 3-5 have to say about us knowing God?
- 8) Verse 6 tells us that we must 'walk as Jesus walked'. How might this look like in our lives?

For the Leader:

- The aim of this study is to give a Biblical understanding of what it means to confess sin and to develop a healthy attitude for dealing with sin.
- For the first application question, encourage the group to be honest with each other.
- The point of the second application question is to encourage fellowship outside of the action group time. For example, they may like to swap numbers with each other.
- The reason we have this study here rather than later is to highlight the call to walk as Jesus walked. Knowing this early on helps us know where we're heading. It also helps with our goal of getting students out sharing and engaged in our vision to reach the lost. Following this study, we'll cover foundations of Christ's life, such as prayer, the Word, and obedience.
- The application questions should help the leader see that Action Group members have correctly grasped the main points of the study

What are the Answers?:

- 1) Light helps you see what is around you. In this context, God's light helps us see our sinful nature
- 2) To walk in darkness means to ignore God's light revealing our sin, and continue walking in our sinful ways. To walk in the light means to respond positively to God revealing our sin and turn away from it.
- 3)
 - I. No
 - II. God will forgive us our sins and purify us from them.
 - III. All of our sins
- 4) Ask for Christ to forgive us just as we would seek the forgiveness of any other person we may offend in our lives. But knowing at the same time that our sin had already been forgiven
- 5) We should want most of all to please God and to strive not to sin.
- 6)
 - I. Jesus Christ and his atoning sacrifice for the world.
 - II. That no matter how good we might be, it's only by God's grace that we are made right with him
- 7) We know we have really come to know Christ when we obey his commands. If we refuse to follow his commands, we are hypocrites and haven't really come to know him
- 8) Let the group discuss.

What's the Big Idea?

God has provided a way to restore believers to Himself after they sin. By confessing to Him we experience His forgiveness, are purified from sin, and can enjoy fellowship with God. It also enables us to enjoy real fellowship with one another.

What's the Problem?

Personal sin is an ongoing part of our lives – even as believers. Unconfessed sin destroys our ability to have intimate fellowship with God and can lead to more sin.

What's Our Response?

There are two very practical things you can do for application. First, you can ask people to keep a short accounting of sins they committed this week. When they become aware of sin, encourage them to go through the three steps of confession:

- 1) Agree [with God] that you've sinned.
- 2) Agree [with God] that the sin is forgiven because of Jesus' death.
- 3) Agree [with God] to turn your attitudes and actions toward Him and away from sin.

A second application with which you can end the study is to have everyone take a piece of paper and make a list of sins that God brings to mind. Then have them write out 1 John 1:9 across the list and rip up the list.