

PARTICIPANT GUIDE
Life Group Booklet



1 JOHN: PART 1
January 2024



Name: _____

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LETTER FROM KEITH

Dear WCC Family,

What a way to kick off 2024! In January & February of 2024, we will spend 8 weeks in the Epistle of 1 John, a small but powerful letter. Let's face it, the first few months of the year are the dead of winter! We are past the Christmas gatherings and New Year celebrations and left with the colder, darker months of the year. My hope and prayer is that as you spend time in this letter and other writings of John (*see reading plan*) that it will encourage your faith, bring light to your life, and truth, love, and grace to your heart, mind, and soul.

I think there are 3 really important questions we have to ask ourselves as we read 1 John:

1. Do we believe in the Jesus we see in Scripture?

One of the biggest issues John and the early church were facing was false teachers who were teaching ideas about Jesus that were not adhering to the Bible and to the early eyewitness accounts of the Apostles. These false teachings allowed for sin and immoral behavior and leads us to the next question.

2. Are you walking in the light of Jesus?

Are we obedient to the Word of God and seeking to no longer walk in darkness (the way of this world) but rather walking in the light (the way of Jesus)? Jesus gave the command in Matthew 28 for his disciples to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing and teaching them to obey everything that he (Jesus) had commanded.

3. Are you 'more loving?'

Believing in the Biblical Jesus and being obedient to God's Word should lead to us being more loving to those who are struggling with this world. More loving does not mean that we condone or affirm sin, but rather we show love in how we treat others, speak to them, and serve them; showing the same grace and mercy that Jesus showed to sinful people as he spoke truth and called sinners to repent.

So despite the cold, wintery, overcast days, grab your Bible (or Bible App), check out the reading plan, and spend time reading, studying, and meditating on God's Word to us from 1 John (and John's gospel and other letters). The Word is a light to our path, it shows us the way; in it we find light, life, and love- assurance of our salvation that we have in Christ Jesus!

Blessings,

Keith

JANUARY 7 | WEEK 1 | WORD OF LIFE [1 JOHN 1:1-4]

CONNECT QUESTION

1. What do leaders do to show support for people or to help galvanize them towards a goal?
2. If someone is hurting or going through a difficult time, what is the best way to communicate with them? How does this help us understand the Incarnation (God becoming flesh)?

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. Read 1 John 1:1, Genesis 1:1, and John 1:1. How are these scriptures related?
2. Read 1 John 1:1b. What does this verse teach us about the physical body of the Word? What are some reasons John chose to use the term “Word” to describe Jesus?
3. Read 1 John 1:2. How is the written word related to the Living Word?
4. Read 1 John 1:3-4. How does the Word coming to earth provide access for everyone to God the Father?

5. Reread 1 John 1:1-4. There is a big emphasis on Jesus coming to earth and having a physical presence among people. How does Jesus make his presence known today?

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. There is a sense in which the fact that God being among us did not stop with Jesus' ascension. How can I demonstrate that Jesus lives in me?
2. Are there any things in my life that I need to remove so that I can have better fellowship with Christ?

PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER & THE MISSION OF THE WEEK

[Spend some time praying with your Life Group. When asking for requests, try to keep the focus on personal praises/requests that relate to people in the group.]

Pioneer Bible Translators - Nathan and Amy Tuley

Pioneer Bible Translators® exists to disciple the Bibleless, mobilizing God's people to provide enduring access to God's Word. Their vision is to see transformed lives through God's Word in every language. Nathan and Amy work with all of PBT through the website, IT, and editing so the gospel can be shared with the world. pioneerbible.org.

JANUARY 14 | WEEK 2 | WALK IN THE LIGHT [1 JOHN 1:5-2:2]

CONNECT QUESTION

1. Were you afraid of the dark as a child? Why? What did you do to resolve your fear? (Nightlight? Kept a flashlight on your bedside table?)
2. Have you ever asked someone for forgiveness? Has anyone asked for forgiveness from you? How did it help in your relationship with others?

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. Read 1 John 1:5-7. If God is light, what does the darkness represent? What promise are we given if we walk in the light and what motivation does this give you? Is Jesus making here? What does this teach us on how we should live out our lives?
2. If we walk in darkness, what does that indicate about our lifestyle? How and why is this contradictory to living as a Christian?
3. Read 1 John 2:8-10 – Why is it dangerous to claim to be without sin?
4. How does saying we have not sinned deceive ourselves? How does confessing our sins help us in our walk with Jesus? How does it hinder us if we don't?

5. Read 1 John 2:1-2 Why is John writing this to his readers? Why is it important for us to not sin? If we sin, what happens? In what ways do we need someone to speak for us?
6. What is unique about Jesus being our advocate? What is the advantage we have in Jesus?

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. What do I need to change to live life in the light?
2. If I struggle with deeds of darkness, what are steps I need to take towards walking in the light? When can I start, where can I start and who can help me?
3. Living in darkness and a denial of sinful life can only lead to separation with Christ/God and ourselves. Since John teaches us that, what must we do? When can we do it? Who can we do it with?

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LOVEtheLOU

LOVEtheLOU is a community development initiative that connects resources to the needs of St. Louis. During the constant process of growth and development, they strive to see St. Louis restored through transforming actions. LTL is proud of the progress in St. Louis and are excited about what will continue to happen as they grow and develop. lovethelou.org

JANUARY 21 | WEEK 3 | LIVE AS JESUS DID [1 JOHN 2:3-14]

CONNECT QUESTION

1. What does the statement, “They have really big shoes to fill” mean? Who is someone in your life that has had “really big shoes to fill”? How have you gone about trying to fill them?
2. Complete the following sentence: To be “Christ-like” is to...
“Spiritual formation is a process of being formed in the image of Christ for the sake of others.”
- M. Robert Mulholland Jr.

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. Read 1 John 2:3-6. What does it mean to know Jesus by keeping his commands? Which commands?
2. Read vs. 6 again. How did Jesus live? Give examples of how he lived. What are some things he did that we could imitate? How did he treat others?
3. Read 1 John 2:7-11. What is the “old command?” In vs. 8, this old command is seen in Jesus and also in John’s readers (including us!), how can we fail at this?

4. Read 1 John 2:12-14. In this part of the passage, John addresses all of the recipients of the letter as “dear children” and his statement to the “dear children” is meant for all. Then he addresses the “fathers” as the spiritually mature, and the “young men” as the spiritual adolescents. What are the big statements and understandings that come from this passage?

5. Someone once said, “the person you hate the most is how much you love Jesus.” How is this statement true? What actions should you take in light of this statement?

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. How can you grow in your love for your brothers and sisters in Christ (the church)?

2. How can you grow in loving your neighbor (Not just the people that live next door!)?

3. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give you an opportunity to make things right with someone.

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Righteous Rides

Righteous Rides’ Vision is that every international missionary has access to affordable and stress-free stateside transportation. Their Mission is to provide care and cars to missionaries on home assignment... in a manner worthy of God. righteousrides.org

JANUARY 28 | WEEK 4 | WHO DO YOU LOVE? [1 JOHN 2:15-27]

CONNECT QUESTION

1. What is a favorite dessert that you do not have very often, but love the opportunity to eat when it is available?
2. What was your favorite hobby as a teenager?

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. Read 1 John 2:15-17 and Galatians 2:20. How does the passage in Galatians explain the statements made in 1 John?
2. Read Galatians 2:20 again. Why is it so hard to keep that old selfish person we used to be dead, and live in Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit only?
3. What does 1 John 2:15-17 say about sharing our love between the world and God? Does He accept this compromise?
4. Read 1 John 2:18-27. What would you say was the main concern the author had when writing this passage?

5. In what ways do we see people denying Jesus as the Christ today?
What promise do we have if we proclaim Jesus as Christ?

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. How can you work towards letting your love for anything in your life be filtered through your love for God? To put your love for God above everything and everyone in your life?
2. What is one thing in your life God has asked you to remove, but you are unwilling? What are some steps this week you can take to be obedient to Him?
3. What is one thing that God has asked you to add to your life, but you are unwilling? What are some steps this week you can take to be obedient to Him?

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Show-Me Christian Youth Home

Going beyond the limits of traditional foster care, children living at Show-Me Christian Youth Home receive therapeutic benefits from specialized programs in a Christ-centered, family environment. Working together, they help each child—physically, academically, emotionally, and spiritually—overcome the struggles of their past and prepare for a successful future. showmehelpingkids.com

READING PLAN FOR JANUARY 2024

This reading plan takes us through the gospel and the letters that the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle John to write. Lots of connections throughout the letters: Jesus Christ both human and divine, truth vs. false teachings, the command to love one another, and many more! The reading plan is for Monday-Friday (using Saturday as a day to catch-up). There is some repetition for 1 John. That's intentional for the series; we want you to read it several times. We barely dip into Revelation so we kept it mostly to the chapters that speak of Christ's reign and sovereignty and the end of Revelation which inspires us to remain faithful!



1 JOHN PART 1 - JANUARY

Mon:	1 st - 1 Jn 1	8 th - 1 Jn 1	15 th - 1 Jn 2	22 nd - 1 Jn 3	29 th - 1 Jn 4
Tue:	2 nd - 1 Jn 2	9 th - Jn 1	16 th - Jn 5	23 rd - Jn 9	30 th - Jn 13
Wed:	3 rd - 1 Jn 3	10 th - Jn 2	17 th - Jn 6	24 th - Jn 10	31 st - Jn 14
Thur:	4 th - 1 Jn 4	11 th - Jn 3	18 th - Jn 7	25 th - Jn 11	1 st - Jn 15
Fri:	5 th - 1 Jn 5	12 th - Jn 4	19 th - Jn 8	26 th - Jn 12	2 nd - Jn 16