

Sermon Discussion Guide

“The Authentic Life” Series

Part 1: Walking in the Light (1 John 1:5–2:6)

Icebreaker Questions: (*Option #1*): What is one possession of yours that probably means more to you than most people? Why does it mean so much to you? (*Option #2*): If you could grab lunch with one person (literally anyone, past or present), who would you go with and why?

Prayer: Take a few moments at the beginning of your group time to pray for God’s presence and blessing on your discussion. At the end of your gathering, pray for one another and ask God to use your time together to strengthen your faith and make you more like Jesus.

Read: 1 John 1:5–2:6

Big Idea: God is light. If we have fellowship with him, we will walk in the light. This means both pursuing obedience, and honestly confessing our disobedience and trusting in Jesus’ atoning work on the cross. By walking in the light, we find freedom and fellowship with one another.

Discussion Questions

1. What was the most encouraging, convicting, confusing, or thought-provoking part of the sermon or Scripture reading to you this week, and why?
2. Read 1 John 1:5. What do you think John means by “God is light”? What does light represent? Why is it good news that God is light?
 - a. Read 1 John 1:6. Is this passage teaching that if we’re truly saved, we won’t sin? Why or why not? Point to other verses in the passage to support your answer.
 - b. What does it mean for *us* to walk in the light? How does this lead to “fellowship with one another” (v. 7)?
3. Read 1 John 1:8. How are we tempted to “claim to be without sin”? (Most of us don’t say this overtly, but how do we say or believe this in subtle ways?)
 - a. Read 1 John 2:3. How much should we look to our good works for assurance that we are saved? None at all? A lot? A little?
4. Read 1 John 1:9. Do you think this verse is calling us to confess to God, one another, or both? Is it enough to confess only to God (and not to one another)? Is it enough to confess only to one another (but not to God)? Why?
 - a. Is confession of sin punitive (a punishment for our sin)? Why or why not?
 - b. Read 1 John 2:1. What does it mean for Jesus to be our “advocate”?
5. Where do you see the gospel in today’s passage? How does today’s text and discussion make Jesus/the gospel more precious to you?
6. What is one specific way you would like to apply today’s Scripture readings or small group discussion this next week? Which side of walking in the light—turning away from evil and walking in obedience, or honestly confessing our sin to God and one another—do you feel the Holy Spirit putting on your heart from today’s discussion? How specifically do you want to apply this in the next week?

Scripture Reading

1 John 1:5–2:6 (NIV)

Light and Darkness, Sin and Forgiveness

5 This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. 6 If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

2 1 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. 2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Love and Hatred for Fellow Believers

3 We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. 4 Whoever says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. 5 But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: 6 Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.