



“God’s Dream For You”

1 John 1

Small Group Plan

From Shel Silverstein’s, *Where The Sidewalk Ends*, comes the poem “No Difference”

<i>Small as a peanut, Big as a giant, We’re all the same size When we turn off the light.</i>	<i>Red, black or orange, Yellow or white, We all look the same When we turn off the light.</i>
<i>Rich as a sultan, Poor as a mite, We’re all worth the same When we turn off the light.</i>	<i>So maybe the way To make everything right Is for God to just reach out And turn off the light!</i>

But He hasn’t. Air, sunshine, beauty, choice. In spite of our selfishness, despite the walls we have built, God has kept the creator/creation relationship open. When will we learn His patience? How can our heart become as large as His?

OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...

- How does the world define fellowship?
How does the religious world define fellowship?
- How does God define fellowship?

LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...

— KNOWING JESUS —

1 John 1:1-2

¹That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched — this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. ²The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.

- John knew Jesus. For him, Jesus was no myth. He was real.
- Do most people today think of Jesus as “fact” or “fable”? Why?
- Why is it important to have a “real” picture of Jesus?
- What has helped you most to build a “real” picture?
- Really knowing Jesus involves more than accumulating facts. How can a person move from knowing the facts to the deeper level of experiencing and trusting Jesus?

— FINDING OTHERS WHO KNOW HIM —

1 John 1:3

³ *We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.*

- The Christian life is not meant to be solitary. It is community. It is fellowship.
- According to verse 3, what is it that brings people into “fellowship” with each other? How does this happen and why is it important?
- Why does John make a point to say that fellowship never excludes God or Jesus?
- Describe what happens to a fellowship that drifts away from God and His Word.

— THE POWER OF KNOWING JESUS —

1 John 1:4

We write this to make our joy complete.

- There was so much sorrow and suffering in the life of Jesus — What does He have to teach us about Joy?
- Sometimes “joy” brings to mind laughter and excitement — but is this the only kind of joy? How would you describe the deeper levels of joy?
- Why did writing this letter bring joy to John?
- How can Christian relationships be both a source of joy and pain?

USE IT / APPLY IT ...

- What blocks our fellowship with God and other Christians?
- How can we enhance our fellowship?
- What would make your “joy” complete ... or more complete?
- In the spirit of Paul, pray for God to help us to “*make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace*” (Eph. 4:3).