



“The Gospel According To Love”

1 John 2

Small Group Plan

St. Augustine of Hippo has written:

“Light, even though it passes through pollution, is not polluted.”

In the beginning our planet was “formless,” “empty,” and “dark.” Until God said, “let there be light!” His first act was to illuminate, to reveal, to make things clear. And His light is always shining. It is never switched off. He has always been making life clearer. But this is only true if we will move out of the dark places and step more fully into His light.

OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...

- When people say one thing but do another, which of the two exposes the truth about them? Explain.
- What are the difficulties of trying to love someone you don't like?
- Why would a Christian want to do this?

LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...

— A FELLOWSHIP ALIVE WITH GOD'S LIFE —

1 John 2:1-2

¹ My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense — 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.

- Why is confidence in God's love our source of energy to love others?
- Why are some Christians unsure of God's mercy and grace?
- How would you describe a life that is confident of God's constant forgiveness, mercy and presence?

— A FELLOWSHIP CONFORMED TO GOD’S WILL —

1 John 2:3-8

³ We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. ⁴ The man who says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵ But if anyone obeys his word, God’s love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: ⁶ Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did. ⁷ Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old one, which you have had since the beginning. This old command is the message you have heard. ⁸ Yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and you, because the darkness is passing, and the true light is already shining.

- According to John, what makes it clear that we really know Jesus rather than simply claiming to know Him? How will it show in our lives?
- What is the difference between knowing facts about Jesus and knowing Jesus?
- Describe the day to day life of a person today who “walks as Jesus did” (v. 6).
- In verses 7-8 John focuses on one of the commands — How can this command be both “old” and “new?”

— A FELLOWSHIP COMMITTED TO LOVING GOD’S FAMILY —

1 John 2:9-11

⁹ Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness. ¹⁰ Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble. ¹¹ But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him.

- How is love for our brother a test of our love for God?
- How do you see “light” and “darkness” represented in our culture today?
- How does the “darkness” blind a person? Describe the process.
- What does it keep us from seeing?

USE IT / APPLY IT ...

- How can we make what we **do** match what we **say**?
- Why is the pain of shining light into darkness a “good pain?”
- What kind of heart will resist the light? What kind of heart will accept the light?
- What advice would you give to someone who wants to move from dark to light?
- Close by asking God to guide you into the light.