



## Stay On Course

1 John 3

### Small Group Plan

It was Peter McWilliams who said that determination is simply a matter of shifting from “won't power” to “will power.” It was John who said that staying on course is a matter of shifting from “continue to sin” (3:9) to “continue in him” (2:28). God’s power makes it happen, but our decision taps His power.

#### **OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...**

- Where does the decision to change usually begin?
- What often bogs the decision down?
- What is most powerful in breaking the decision free?

#### **LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...**

### — THE FATHER LOVES US —

1 John 3:1-3

<sup>1</sup> How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. <sup>2</sup> Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. <sup>3</sup> Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

- What has the love of God meant to you? To your family?
- What are the consequences of “the world does not know”?
- How has the assurance of knowing God’s love changed your life?
- Explain the attraction of wanting to be “just as he is.”

## — THE SON DIED FOR US —

### 1 John 3:4-8

<sup>4</sup> Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. <sup>5</sup> But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. <sup>6</sup> No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him. <sup>7</sup> Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. <sup>8</sup> He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

- How do you reconcile (3:6) “No one who lives in him keeps on sinning” with (1:8) “if we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves”?
- How would you explain “the reason the Son of God appeared” (vs. 8) to an interested searcher?
- How would you connect the two times John says Jesus “appeared” (vs. 5, 8)?

## — THE SPIRIT LIVES IN US —

### 1 John 3:9-10

<sup>9</sup> No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. <sup>10</sup> This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.

- Explain the power of “God's seed” remaining in us (v. 9)?
- What is a major incentive for you to live a clean and holy life?
- As you get older, do you find sin easier or more difficult to resist?
- What does John mean when he says, “he cannot go on sinning”?

### **USE IT / APPLY IT ...**

- How would you encourage a new Christian to **Stay On Course** “continue in Him”?
- Why does spiritual transformation take time and patience?
- Are you usually patient the spiritual progress you see in yourself and others? Explain.
- Close by asking God to help us to stay on course.