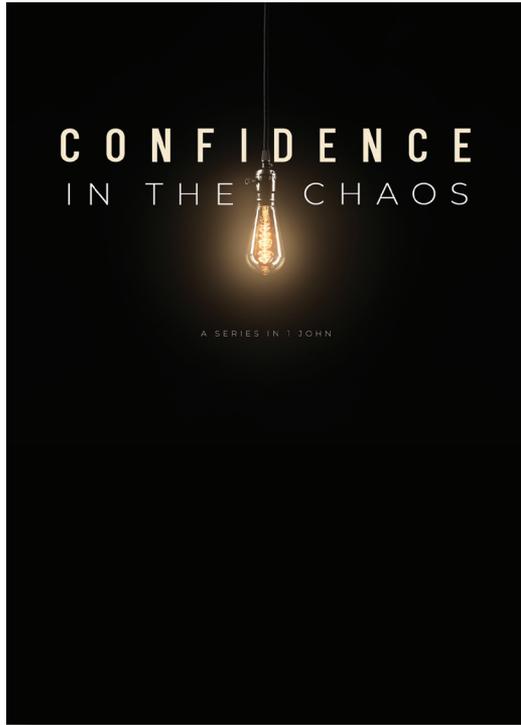




1 JOHN

JOURNAL



MY 1 JOHN JOURNAL

Name _____

HOW TO USE THIS JOURNAL

This 1 John Journal belongs to you! We created it to help all of us at Hopevale to dive deeper into our message series on 1 John called *Confidence in the Chaos*. The series starts on **Sunday, January 13**.

The *Journal* has a section for each of the 13 weeks of our study. It will help you think more about on the Scripture we're focusing on for that week through **five steps**:



LISTEN - Use this section on Sunday mornings to listen well to the sermon. Jot a few notes on what you learn and how God speaks to you about it. If you're away, watch or listen online.



READ - Read the verses in 1 John that Pastor Dan talked about on Sunday.



REFLECT - Make a few observations about what you see in these verses.



RESPOND - Think about how this Scripture speaks to your life and talk to God about it.



DISCUSS - Use the questions in this section to talk about what you're learning with others at Hopevale. Our whole church will discuss 1 John together in Community Groups and D Groups!

So write your name in this journal. ***It's yours!*** Take it to church every Sunday. Write your thoughts and questions in it. Highlight, underline, and star it. Use it as a tool to go deeper in 1 John, deeper with others, and deeper with the Lord. Here we go!

ABOUT 1 JOHN

Who wrote this letter?

The book's name gives it away, doesn't it? **John, a disciple of Jesus**, wrote this letter around AD 90. John doesn't mention his name in the letter like Paul and others do in theirs. Yet the earliest Christians noted "From John" on most copies of the letter. We won't second-guess those who were there.

What do we know about John?

John grew up on the Sea of Galilee, the son of a commercial fisherman named Zebedee. He and his brother, James, left the family business to follow Jesus. Not sure what their dad thought about that! His mom, Salome, also a believer, wanted great things for her sons in Jesus' Kingdom. Most importantly, Jesus changed John's life, and he lived the rest of his life inviting others to know and follow his Savior.

What else did he write?

John wrote two other letters called - you guessed it! - 2 John and 3 John as well as two longer New Testament books, the Gospel of John and Revelation. Yeah, he was the guy who got to write Revelation. How cool is that?!

Why did he write this letter?

John wrote this letter to give Christians like us confidence in who Jesus is, what He did for us, and how we should live for Him. Sandwiched between important opening and closing words, 1 John has two big ideas: 1) God is light, and those who know Him must live in the light as He does (1:5-3:10) and 2) God is love, and those who know Him must love others as He does (3:11-5:12). John could have written this letter last week. It speaks that specifically and that powerfully to us today.



LISTEN

**READ**

1 John 1:1-4

That 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. 2 The 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. 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. 4 We write this to make our joy complete.

1 John 5:13

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.



REFLECT

Are you confident that you belong to God and you're on the right path in following Jesus? John is sure he can help us with that!

- Read "About 1 John" on page 2.
- Why do you think John starts this letter by claiming that he and the other apostles' were eyewitnesses to Jesus? How important is that in your own confidence in the truth about your Faith?



RESPOND

- What is the best time and place for you to do this part of the *Journal* each week? It may help you to put a weekly appointment with God in your calendar.
- Have you connected with a Community Group or a 1 John D Group so you can discuss what you're learning with others? If not, check out the last page of this journal.

Prayer

Lord,

Thank you for this opportunity to grow in my confidence in You. Teach and change all of us at Hopevale as we go through 1 John together. Grow our fellowship with one another and with You so we can share the message of eternal life with others around us.

Amen.



DISCUSS

1. Share your name and your all-time favorite holiday food!
2. Think of a time you experienced something amazing and later tried to convince a friend it really happened. What did you have to say and do to convince them?
3. What do you think John is trying to convince us of in the beginning of his letter (1:1-4)? Who and what is he pointing to? How do you know?
4. Circle “life” and “eternal life” in these verses then read 1 John 2:25; 4:9; 5:11-13, 20. How would you define “eternal life” based on this letter?
5. Who are “we” in these verses? See also Acts 1:21-22 and 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. How can John make the audacious claim in verse 4 that to have fellowship with “us” equals having fellowship with the Father and His Son? In what way is that true of us today (if it is)?
6. We live in the chaos of competing opinions about what “life” is, who Jesus is, and even how “good Christians” live. What views about all this do you hear from others you know? How confident are you that you understand and are experiencing eternal life?



LISTEN



READ

1 John 1:5-2:2

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.

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. 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.



REFLECT

Sin is rejecting or ignoring God in the world He created, rebelling against Him by living without reference to Him, not being or doing what He requires in His law - resulting in our death and the disintegration of all creation. Tim Keller

- *God is light.* What does that mean? Highlight other words in these verses that shed light on this truth about God.

(Example - “truth” in verse 6)

- Underline the three false “claims” we can make about our sin. What is John’s response to all three claims?
- What two ways should we handle our sins according to these verses? How has God handled our sin?



RESPOND

- What sins bother you as you read these verses? What did you do? Who did you hurt?

Prayer

God,

You have never and will never think or say or do anything wrong. Help me not to dumb down what You expect of me or excuse why I often fall short of it. Instead, help me to confess my wrongdoing honestly and openly. I am putting my full confidence in Your forgiveness and cleansing of all my sins through the blood of Your Son Jesus.

Amen.



DISCUSS

1. How many names can you remember of others in your group? For serious bonus points, match favorite holiday foods to the right people!
2. What do you know about John, the writer of this letter? Who was he? What other books or letters did he write? Compare your answers to "About 1 John" on page 2.
3. Read 1 John 1:5-2:2. If you were writing this letter, what would you say *first* about the message of Jesus? Why do you think John starts with "God is light" and how we live in light of that truth?
4. What does it mean that "God is light"? What else does John say here that helps us understand it? Also read John 1:4-9 and 1 Timothy 6:15-16.
5. What are all the ways John refers to sin in verses 6-10? What else does this letter say to us about what offends God - 2:9; 3:4, 8; 5:17?
6. Explain from these verses how we should handle our sin. What should we say and not say? What should we do and not do? Note the ways that the Father and the Son deal with our sin - and thank them!



LISTEN



READ

1 *John* 2:1-11

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.

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.

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 in you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining.

Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister is still in the darkness. 10 Anyone who loves their brother and sister lives in the light, and there is nothing in them to make them stumble. 11 But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them.

**REFLECT**

Sin is a big deal. God is *always* offended by our wrongdoing, and He provided one and only one way of forgiveness - Jesus Christ the Righteous One. Good works are good signs that we know Him, not the reason that we do.

- If you sin, what has God provided for you (2:1-2)?
- According to these verses how can we be confident that we know Christ? Which reason gives you the most confidence that you know Him?

**RESPOND**

- Are you trusting in Jesus Christ as the only acceptable sacrifice for all your offenses against God?
- Write a short prayer of faith and gratitude to your Savior.



DISCUSS

1. Do you remember when you first learned something about Jesus? What did you learn and how did it strike you at the time?
2. Jesus claimed to be *the way to God* (John 14:6). Review the definitions and other verses below. How should we respond to friends and coworkers who doubt the exclusive claim of Jesus?
 - *One who speaks to the Father in our defense* (our advocate, mediator, intercessor) - Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:24-26
 - *The Righteous One* (the sinless, holy one) - 1 Peter 3:18; 2 Corinthians 5:21
 - *The atoning sacrifice* (the once-for-all payment that satisfied God's righteous wrath toward our sin) - Romans 3:23-25; 1 John 4:10
3. What do you believe about Jesus and His role in your relationship with God? What questions do you have about the forgiveness of your sins and eternal life?
4. How can we be confident that we truly know Christ according to verses 3-10? What is it about obeying His commands, living as Jesus did, and loving others that gives us assurance that we belong to God?



LISTEN



READ

1 John 2:12-17

I am writing to you, dear children,
because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name.
13 I am writing to you, fathers,
because you know him who is from the beginning.
I am writing to you, young men,
because you have overcome the evil one.

I write to you, dear children,
because you know the Father.
I write to you, fathers,
because you know him who is from the beginning.
I write to you, young men,
because you are strong,
and the word of God lives in you,
and you have overcome the evil one.

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. 16 For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. 17 The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.

**REFLECT**

Regardless of where you are in your spiritual maturity, you can be lured away from the Father and toward the destructive desires of the world.

- Most Bible teachers believe John uses “little children,” “fathers,” and “young men” to picture three stages of spiritual maturity in 2:12-14. He addresses these groups twice. Does he say exactly the same thing to each group both times? What changes?
- What spiritual strengths and potential weaknesses does each group have? What group would you put yourself in? Why?
- What do you think John means by “the lust of the flesh,” “the lust of the eyes,” and the “pride of life”? Think of examples of these worldly desires in action today.

**RESPOND**

- How are you doing with living in the world but not loving the world? What lust of the world is especially appealing to you right now?
- What can you do to break up with the world and warm up your love for the Father in this area of your life?



DISCUSS

1. What stage of life would you say you're in right now? What are the sweet spots and sticking points for you in this season?
2. In 2:12-14, "little children," "fathers," and "young men" most likely represent stages of spiritual maturity. What are the strengths of each stage? The potential weaknesses?
3. Where are you in your spiritual maturity? What group would you place yourself in? Explain.
4. John sometimes uses "world" in a neutral way - *the world of people* (2:2 and 4:9). More often he uses "world" in a negative way - *the value-system that opposes God* (3:1, 13; 4:5; 5:19). How does that help you understand God's warning to us in 2:15-16?
5. What are ways these days that our love for the Father can get misplaced? What does John say in verses 15-17 that motivates us to guard our hearts and do God's will?



LISTEN

**READ**

1 John 2:18-27

Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. 19 They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. 21 I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth. 22 Who is the liar? It is whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father and the Son. 23 No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

As for you, see that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. 25 And this is what he promised us—eternal life.

I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. 27 As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit - just as it has taught you, remain in him.



REFLECT

Be on your guard against false teachers, especially those that chip away at the Bible's teaching about Jesus. This kind of heresy is all the more subtle when it arises *within* the church.

- What do you learn about “the antichrists” in these verses? What did they do? What did they say?
- Compare verse 24 to 1:1-3. How does the Apostles' teaching protect us from false teaching? What do you think “the anointing” refers to?



RESPOND

- Have you been influenced by false teaching in some way? What have you heard, and why do you think it may be wrong?
- What can you do to build up your discernment?

Prayer

Lord,

I hear a lot of opinions about Jesus and ideas about how I should follow Him. Help me to know the truth. Thank you that You want me to be confident in your truth and have given me the Holy Spirit to guide me.

Amen.



DISCUSS

1. What's the all-time scariest movie you've ever seen? What made it so bone-chilling?
2. Read 1 John 2:18-27. What is John saying here about the Antichrist? Is he pointing to the future or the present or both? Explain.
3. How does he describe "those trying to lead you astray" (2:26)? What was their role in the church? What did they believe?
4. What two antidotes does John give to guard believers like us against false teaching? What does "the anointing" refer to?
5. What are Hopevale's three "die for" beliefs? What should we do if a recognized leader or teacher at our church were to criticize these beliefs or teach something contrary to them?
6. What if a recognized leader or teacher at Hopevale teaches something else you disagree with - not one of the "die fors"? How should you handle it?



LISTEN



READ

1 John 2:28-3:10

And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming. 29 If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him.

See what great 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. 2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 3 All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. 5 But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. 6 No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.

Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. 8 The one 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. 9 No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God. 10 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 God's child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister.



REFLECT

- According to 2:28-3:3, how can we be confident and unashamed when Jesus comes again? How should His appearing *then* make a difference in our lives *now*?
- What do these verses teach about believers and sin? How do words such as “keeps on sinning” and “continues to sin” help you understand what God is saying here?



RESPOND

- Imagine that Jesus came today and you stood before Him. What would you want to say to Him in that moment? What do you think He would say to you?

Prayer

Lord,

Thank you that as your child I can be confident and unashamed when I stand before You. Help me to rest in your cross-payment for all my sins. And help me to face my sins honestly and purify myself so I don't continue in them. Give me your strength and grace to become more like You.

Amen.

**DISCUSS**

1. Share a time when a long-lost family member or friend contacted you. How did it happen? What made it good?
2. Sort out Jesus' "appearings" in these verses. Which are future and which are past? What will happen when Jesus appears in the future? What happened when He appeared in the past?
3. Imagine that Jesus came today and you stood before Him. What would you want to say to Him in that moment? What do you think He would say to you?
4. What does it mean to be "born of God" (verse 9 - and John says this 9 other times in this letter)? See 1 John 5:1, 4, 18 and St. John 3:1-8.
5. What reasons do you find in these verses that a person born of God cannot continue to sin? How have you found this working out in your own life?
6. What if we still wrestle with a particular sin? Why does it matter whether we are "lawless" about it - claim it's okay - or we battle against it? What *big* step could you take to overcome a sin like that in your life?



LISTEN

**READ**

Read through the whole letter of 1 John this week. You can do it!



We take a break this week from our regular study of 1 John. Collect your thoughts, and get ready for the next six weeks of our series!

- How are you doing so far in your study? What would help you finish strong over the next six weeks?
- If you haven't already, you can re-up or sign up for a Community Group or a D Group this week.

RESPOND



Psalm 1 says it's good for us to mull over/chew on God's Word. Take time this week to think about what you've learned so far and ways God is speaking to you through this message series.

- Write 2-3 things that have struck you in 1 John so far.
- How have these truths grown your confidence that you belong to God and are on the right path in following Jesus?

Prayer

Lord,

Thank you for the sweetness and power of Your Word in my life! Give all of us at Hopevale energy and focus to keep learning from 1 John and living it out every day. We love you!

Amen.



DISCUSS

Congratulations on completing the first half of our series!

- How about a potluck time this week? Organize some food and get-to-know-you conversation. You may have newcomers at this meeting - people who sign up for the second six weeks of the study.

- You could also take time to read through 1 John together and talk about any questions your group has at this halfway point.

Enjoy your time together, and get ready for the second half of *Confidence in the Chaos!*



LISTEN

**READ**

1 John 3:11-24

For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. 12 Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. 13 Do not be surprised, my brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. 14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death. 15 Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. 17 If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? 18 Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence: 20 If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. 21 Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God 22 and receive from him anything we ask, because we keep his commands and do what pleases him. 23 And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. 24 The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.



REFLECT

We begin the second of two big sections of 1 John this week. The first section centered around the truth "God is light" (1:5) and instructed us to live accordingly. This second section focuses on the truth "God is love" (4:8, 16) and urges us to be like Him.

- Compare the wording of 1:5 with 3:11. Note the similarities and differences. Once again, John anchors our faith and life in the Apostles' eyewitness testimony about Jesus.
- *Love one another* - Why and how should we love others? In what way does loving others give us confidence in God's presence (verses 19-24)?



RESPOND

- How are you doing in loving others compassionately and practically? What in these verses especially struck you?

Prayer

Lord Jesus,

Thanks for loving me so much that you laid down your life for me. Let my gratitude translate into real and practical love for others. Help me not to only "talk love" but to "walk love" every day. Give me strength to keep your command and do what pleases You.

Amen.

**DISCUSS**

1. Share something you learned last week about another person in your group that you didn't know before. (Make sure it's okay with them that you share it.)

2. How does John describe the Devil in this letter? What is the Evil One's connection with our sin and lack of love ("hate") for others?
 - 2:13-14 -

 - 3:8-12 -

 - 5:18-19 -

3. Read verses 17-18 in a few different translations. Get real with what God is saying to us here:
 - How much do we need to have before we're willing to give to others in need?

 - What qualifies as "need" that we should give to?

 - Do those measures change when you think about fellow-believers in poor countries like Haiti or Zimbabwe?

4. How does compassionate, practical giving to others' needs grow our confidence in prayer? Compare 3:19-23 with 5:13-16.



LISTEN

**READ**

1 John 4:1-6

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 5 They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.



REFLECT

The Devil and his evil spirits hate God and all the people God created and loves. They twist truth, lure people away from God through worldly desires, and outright deceive. We need to be on our guard!

- According to these verses, who else are the “spirits” connected with? How does the Holy Spirit protect us from false teaching?
- Read 1 John 2:18-27. What more does this passage tell you about the “spirits” and about the Holy Spirit?



RESPOND

- Has someone caused you to question what you believe? What questions do you have right now about what the Bible teaches and how God wants you to follow Him?

Prayer

Father,

Thank you that your Holy Spirit lives within me to protect me and guide me into truth. I'm confused about

_____ . Will You help me get my questions answered? I want to know your Word so that I can live for You.

Amen.

**DISCUSS**

1. Have you ever encountered false teaching about Christianity? What was it? How did you know - or learn later - that it didn't align with God's Word?
2. What "spirits" is John talking about here? How do you know? What is their connection with "false prophets"?
3. How much do you think the Devil and evil spirits influence what people think and believe about Jesus today (1 John 5:18-19 and 1 Timothy 4:1-3)? What are some common - but false - ideas about Him that people you know believe?
4. How does the Holy Spirit protect us from false teaching according to these verses? See also 3:24; 4:13; 5:6, 8.
5. Have you heard someone claim to speak directly through the Holy Spirit? What two tests does John give us here for testing these kinds of claims?
6. How should we handle our relationship with a family member or coworker who insists on things that contradict Hopevale's "die for" beliefs?



LISTEN

**READ**

1 John 4:7-12

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.



REFLECT

We fulfill our purpose in life when we receive God's love and express it compassionately and tangibly to other people. As we grow in Christ, God intends to "perfect" His love in and through us. That begins with us understanding and trusting His love for us.

- When you read these verses, what did you tend to focus on - how you should love others OR how *God* has loved you? Why do you think that is?
- Write four characteristics of love in these verses. Which stands out to you most?



RESPOND

- Plan 15 minutes in a quiet place free from distractions. Close your eyes for a few minutes, and *let God love you* .
- Write a couple sentences below about your experience with the Lord. Romans 5:5 says that God pours out his love in our hearts through his Holy Spirit. God intends for you to experience his love for you more and more!



DISCUSS

1. How do many people today think about love? How would they define it? How does John define love in these verses?
2. Read 1 John 4:7-21. This passage is the heart of this letter! Note all the ways that *God has loved you*. What did you find?
3. "Perfect/perfected" (Greek *teleios/teleioo*) means *fulfilling its purpose or meeting its goal*. How do we tend to think of "perfect"? How does this fact help you understand the ways God's love is perfected in us (2:5; 4:12, 17, 18)?
4. Share one way that God clearly communicated His love to you recently. What or who did He use?
5. How can we help each other understand and experience God's love for us? What about others we know who don't yet know Christ?



LISTEN

**READ**

1 John 4:13-21

This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. 15 If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. 16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. 17 This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. 18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

We love because he first loved us. 20 Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. 21 And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.



REFLECT

Like 1 Corinthians 13, 1 John 4 is a “love chapter” of the Bible! Early Christians took over the little used Greek word *agape* to express the out-of-this-world love that God has for us and that we should have for one another. John uses forms of *agape* **46 times** in this letter!

- Receiving God's love for us is our starting point for loving others. How does John express that in these verses? Why do you think God made it this way?
- How can we love others the way God loves us? How does this passage help us with grace and truth, compassion and boundaries?



RESPOND

- Who in your life is God calling you to love well? What does that mean practically for you this week?

Prayer

Father,

You call me to love others in the same way that You have loved me. How can I do anything less? Strengthen me through your Holy Spirit to love _____ well this week. Help me overcome my selfishness and give me wisdom to love them with actions and in truth.

Amen.



DISCUSS

1. Christians talk a lot about love. What do we typically have in mind? How is Christian love different from the love of people who don't claim to follow Christ?
2. What measure does John give of the way we should love one another? How does that look practically? Give an example.
3. What are the "truth boundaries" of this kind of love? Where do we draw the lines? How do these verses speak to that?
4. Rate your confidence on the day of judgment on a scale of 1-5 (1 = *I'm not excited at all!* and 5 = *I'm looking forward to it!*). Why did you choose that number?
5. How will believers in Christ be judged after this life? Will our sins or works (or both) be evaluated? What do these Scriptures tell us:
 - Matthew 12:36 -
 - 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 -
 - 2 Corinthians 5:6-10 -
6. How does God's love being perfected in us drive out our fear of judgment? What is John saying here?



LISTEN

**READ**

1 *John* 5:1-12

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. 2 This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. 3 In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, 4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. 7 For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. 9 We accept human testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. 10 Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony. Whoever does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because they have not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. 11 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.



REFLECT

John talks straight in this letter, doesn't he? "Whoever has Jesus has life. Whoever doesn't, *doesn't*." Don't miss these simple but eternity-changing truths that came straight from Jesus himself.

- Underline "everyone who," "only the one," and "whoever" in these verses and read what follows. *Who has life?*
- What do you think it means to "overcome the world"? Also read 1 John 2:13-17.



RESPOND

- Who has God put in your life who needs Jesus? How open are they to the truth about Him right now?
- What can you do to build the bridge to Christ by loving them well? When could you share the message of eternal life with them?

Prayer

Lord,

You died not only for my sins but for the sins of everyone in the world. I want _____ to know You and know that they have eternal life, too. Use me as your witness. Help me to represent you well and tell them about you. Open their hearts to the truth.

Amen.



DISCUSS

1. Do you think a person can go to Heaven apart from trusting in Jesus? If so, how? If not, where does that leave any person who doesn't know Christ?
2. Verses 11-12 capture one of the many straight-forward statements in 1 John. How would you explain these verses to your nephew in high school?
3. What does it mean to "have" or "not have" the Son and so to "have" or "not have" life? Consider 5:1-4 and other verses like this in 1 John.
4. What does keeping God's commands have to do with loving others (verse 2)? How does obeying His commands help us love others the way God intends?
5. How do the water, the blood, and the Spirit bear witness ("testify" NIV) to who Jesus is? See 1 John 1:7; John 3:5-7; 19:34; and Acts 1:21-26.
6. In what ways does God use you to testify to who Jesus is and what He has done for you and everyone else?



LISTEN



READ

1 John 5:13-21

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. 14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

If you see any brother or sister commit a sin that does not lead to death, you should pray and God will give them life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that you should pray about that. 17 All wrongdoing is sin, and there is sin that does not lead to death.

We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God keeps them safe, and the evil one cannot harm them. 19 We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. 20 We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.



REFLECT

John returns to the reason he wrote this letter - to give confidence that we have eternal life in Jesus, who is Eternal Life. We should accept no substitutes.

- Think of other times John pointed to reasons for writing this letter. Note 2-3 of them (Example - 2:1 "so that you will not sin.>").
- How does John wrap up his teaching in verses 18-20? Does he repeat himself or say something new? Explain.



RESPOND

- How has your confidence grown through this series? What has changed in your understanding of your sin, Jesus' sacrifice, God's holiness and love?
- How has your understanding and practice of loving others changed for good?

Prayer

Father,

Your Word gives confidence and life. Thank you for this series - that our entire congregation had the opportunity to go through 1 John together. Cement what we've learned in our hearts, and help us to live like Jesus did in this world. Give us the grace to receive your love more and more and express it more and more to others - all for the glory of your Son, who is our God and Eternal Life!

Amen.

**DISCUSS**

1. Why does John say he wrote this letter (verse 13)? Remember what *eternal life* is - see your response to Question 4 in Week 1.

2. How has your confidence grown through this series? Can you say with assurance that you know you have eternal life? Are you sure you're on the right path in following Jesus?

3. Read verse 20 aloud together and replace "we" with "I". Repeat it. How does it feel to confess Jesus in this way?

4. Think about what you have learned about life, death, and sin in this letter. Based on that, what do you think "sin that leads to death" may be?

5. Why do you think John ends his letter the way he does - *Keep yourselves from idols*? What do idols have to do with what he just said about Jesus in verse 20? What idols today can shake our confidence in Him?

THANK YOU AND WELL DONE!

JOIN A 1 JOHN DISCUSSION GROUP!

Hands down, connecting and talking with others about God's Word is one of the best ways for you to grow in Christ in real, everyday ways! That's why we're organizing *Discussion Groups* for our *Confidence in the Chaos* series.

WHAT ARE 1 JOHN D GROUPS”?

They're small groups of 8-14 adults NOT already part of a Community Group that meet weekly to discuss 1 John.

- Although our *Confidence in the Chaos* series runs for 13 weeks (Jan 13-April 7), you can commit to a D Group six weeks at a time and step out when you want.
- D Groups meet anytime Monday-Saturday and anywhere that works - in homes, restaurants, or businesses or at Hopevale.
- All D Groups and Community Groups will use our *1 John Journal* for the series. Be sure to pick up a journal on Sunday, January 6 or 13.

HOW DO I JOIN A D GROUP?

You can join a D Group by:

- Signing up at hopevale.org/dgroups to let us know who you are and when you can meet with others. We'll get you connected from there!
- Using Find-a-Group on the Hopevale app or website to find a D Group that fits your schedule. Email the facilitator to tell them you'd like to join.
- Respond to an invite from another person. Go with a friend!

CONFIDENCE IN THE CHAOS



A SERIES IN 1 JOHN