



Week 1 Message-Based Curriculum

Text: 1 John 1:1 – 2:6 ESV

Opening

- Begin with a brief welcome and prayer to set the tone for the group time.
- Introduce the theme: This week we started a series walking through the Epistle of 1 John. For the next 9 weeks, we'll be answering the question: How do we find certainty in the midst of uncertain times?

Discussion Questions

CONNECT

- When life gets crazy, do you have anything you hold onto for stability? (Ex. Habits, people, practices, etc)
- We're going to talk about this more in a bit, but does anyone have a story of a time in your life where you knew for a fact that God was real and He was with you?

DISCOVER

Read 1 John 1:1-4 together

- What words/phrases does John use to stress eyewitness reality (heard, seen, touched, manifested)? Why does that matter for our faith?
- Verse 3 links *testimony* → *fellowship* → *joy*. How have you seen sharing your story deepen community?

Read 1 John 1:5 – 2:2 together

- John contrasts *walking in darkness* vs *walking in the light*. How would you describe each in everyday terms?
- What gets in the way of confession today—fear, shame, image management? What helps confession become a grace-filled rhythm?
- What does it mean that God is **faithful and just** to forgive? How is forgiveness both mercy *and* justice at the cross?

Read 1 John 2:3-6 together

- According to John, what is the simple test of genuine knowing? How is obedience different from perfectionism?
- “Whoever claims to abide in Him must walk as Jesus walked.” What might that look like **today** in our relationships, time, and habits?

APPLY

- Reality check: Ask yourself: “*Do I look more like Jesus today than a year ago?*” Where do you see growth? Where are you stuck?
- Light practice: What’s one area you’ve kept in the dark (big or small) that you sense God inviting into the light? What would confession and a next step of obedience look like this week?
- Testimony practice: Who needs to hear a 2-minute version of your “Jesus is real” story? When and how will you share it?

RESPOND (Quiet Prayer + Guided Prompts)

- **Pause & Pray:** Invite 60–90 seconds of silence. Encourage people to name one sin or burden before God.
- **Guided prompts:**
 - *Confess:* “Lord, You are light; here’s what I’m bringing into Your light...”
 - *Receive:* “Thank You that Jesus is my advocate and atoning sacrifice.”
 - *Resolve:* “Empower me to walk as Jesus walked—show me my next step today.”

GROUP PRAYER

- Get in groups of 2 or 3 for mutual confession at an appropriate level and prayer for assurance, healing, and joyful obedience.
 - **Leader note:** *Don’t force anyone to share more than they’re willing to, but lovingly remind them of this truth: If you want the healing God offers, you have to pursue it God’s way. James 5:16 tells us that healing comes when we confess our sins to one another. On the flip side, remind your group that when someone confesses something to them, it needs to be a safe place where they are met with the grace of Jesus. If you have any questions or want guidance on walking through this exercise with your group, feel free to reach out to Ayren Nelson via email (ayren@gethope.net).*
- Pray specifically for boldness to share testimony and for integrity to practice ongoing confession.

CLOSING

- Re-read 1 John 1:9 together as a blessing.
- **This Week’s Practice:**
 - **Confession Rhythm:** Before bed 3 nights this week, pray Psalm 139:23–24 and confess anything the Spirit surfaces.
 - **2-Minute Testimony:** Share one recent way Jesus proved real to you with a friend or family member.
- **Memory Verse:** 1 John 1:7 or 1 John 1:9 (choose as a group).