

Getting Started With God:

Two questions that separate those who've actually started the journey from those who've never left base camp.

1 John 1:1 – 2:2

JOHN'S *HANDY DANDY* SPIRITUAL LIE DETECTOR BOOKLET

1 John 1:3 / 2:1 / 2:26 / 5:13

- *Purpose: Written so we can tell the difference between a genuine Christian and a bogus Christian.*
- *10 Spiritual Tests: Scattered through 22 different passages*

THE PASSAGE:

1 John 1:1-2:2

IF WE WANT A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD, THERE'S ONE THING WE MUST NEVER FORGET

1 John 1:5/ Genesis 3:1-5/ Hebrews 11:6

- *"God is light, in him there is NO darkness at all."*
- *The moment we start to doubt God's goodness, we're headed for spiritual trouble.*

TWO QUESTIONS THAT SEPARATE SPIRITUAL POSERS FROM GENUINE CHRISTIANS

- ❶ **The *Basic Morality* question: *Am I walking in the light?***
1 John 1:6-7/ Galatians 5:19-21, Matthew 5:14-16/ John 3:19-21 & Ephesians 5:8-16/ 2 Peter 1:3-11

- ❷ **The *Spiritual Humility* question: *Do I see myself as a sinner?***
1 John 1:8 – 2:2/ Romans 3:23 & 6:23/ Romans 7:14-25/ Galatians 2:21/ Romans 5:6-10

Growth Group Homework

For the week of January 7, 2007

Welcome back to the winter quarter of Growth Groups! This quarter will conclude on March 17. At this week's meeting, along with the homework, you'll share a potluck meal and review your Growth Group Covenant together. With that in mind, the homework has been abbreviated. Have a great quarter!

MY STORY

1. If you had to travel 500 miles, which mode of transportation, terrain and person on the journey would you choose and why?

TRANSPORTATION

Limousine

Convertible Sports Car

Dirt Bike

Road Bike

NASCAR

Dune Buggy

4X4

Bicycle

Other

TERRAIN

Mountain Road

Freeway

Desert

Coastline Road

Back Wood Dirt Road Or Trail

Raceway

Other

PERSON

Mother Theresa

A Famous Entertainer

Jeff Gordon

Oprah Winfrey

George W. Bush

Bono

A Famous Athlete

Other

2. How do you think the average person on the street would respond to the idea that God is ALL good?

3. From this weekend's sermon, which one statement, point or insight was most helpful, challenging or even confusing to you personally?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. As we saw, John's big picture purposes for writing 1 John were to widen the circle of people who shared fellowship with him and with the Lord (see 1 John 1:3-4) and to make it easier to tell the difference between a spiritual poser and a genuine Christian (see 1 John 5:13).

1 John 1:3-4

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. [NIV]

It's important to note that he equates fellowship with other Christians as a key by-product of genuine fellowship with God. Yet despite the importance of being in good relationships with other Christians, we sometimes find ourselves isolated and withdrawn from both God and other Christians. Read what the writer of the book of Hebrews says about combating tendencies toward isolation.

Hebrews 3:12-14

See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. [13] But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. [14] We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first. [NIV]

Hebrews 10:24-26

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. [25] Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

[26] If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, [NIV]

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. What is the best way for someone to encourage you spiritually and the best way for you to personally stay connected to others?

2. This week we saw the importance of both *Basic Morality* and *Spiritual Humility*. Admitting that we've sinned and need forgiveness is an absolute essential step for anyone wanting to get started with Jesus. It also greatly impacts how we treat others. Read Matthew 5:3-11. Here Jesus gives a list of attitudes and actions that lead to His blessings. How do you think a strong sense of *Spiritual Humility* would impact the way a person lives out these attitudes and actions? Be as specific as possible.

Matthew 5:3-11

"Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[4] Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

[5] Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

[6] Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

[7] Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

[8] Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

[9] Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.

[10] Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[11] "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you
because of me. [NIV]

TAKING IT HOME

What do you hope to get out of your time spent in Growth Group this quarter?

Bonus Challenge: As we begin our new series in 1 John, you might want to consider reading the entire book in one sitting. There are only five chapters.