

Small Group Guide



Opening Prayer & Icebreaker (10 minutes)

Icebreaker Question: Share about a time when you realized there was a big difference between knowing *about* someone and actually *knowing* them personally. What changed when you got to know them?

Introduction (5 minutes)

This week we explored 2 John, one of the often-overlooked "dusty books" of the New Testament. Though brief, this letter contains powerful teaching about truth, love, and discernment in the Christian life.

Key Verse: "And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands." - 2 John 1:6

Discussion Questions

Part 1: Truth as a Person (15-20 minutes)

1. The sermon described truth not just as facts, but as a person—Jesus himself. How does this change the way you think about "knowing the truth"?
2. Read John 14:6 together. What's the difference between:
 - Agreeing with Jesus' teaching vs. aligning your life with it?
 - Can you think of an area where it's easy to agree but hard to align?
3. The pastor said, "If you agree with Jesus' teaching but don't align your life with it, you haven't accepted truth—you've rejected it." How does this challenge our modern understanding of tolerance and personal beliefs?

4. Reflect on this statement: "The study of the Bible is the means by which we come to know Jesus."
 - How does this differ from studying the Bible just for information or principles?
 - What would it look like to approach Bible reading more relationally this week?

Part 2: Love and Obedience (15-20 minutes)

5. Read 2 John 1:5-6 together. How does John define love? Why do you think obedience to Jesus' commands is connected to love?
6. The sermon stated: "Every command in scripture is an invitation to walk with Jesus and carry out your calling to release life and blessing to the world."
 - How does viewing commands as "invitations" rather than rules change your perspective?
 - Share an example of a biblical command that, when followed, actually blessed others in your life.
7. Read 1 John 4:7-8. If "God is love," and we align with Jesus when we obey Him, how does obedience to Christ become an expression of love to God and others?

Part 3: Discernment and Community (15-20 minutes)

8. John warns about false teachers who don't acknowledge Jesus properly.
 - How do we grow in discernment without becoming judgmental or suspicious of everyone?
 - What's the difference between welcoming people and platforming/endorsing teachers?
9. The pastor said: "We don't have to go heresy hunting. We just got to fall more and more in love with Jesus."
 - How does knowing Jesus deeply protect us from false teaching?
 - What practices help you grow in knowing Jesus better?
10. Discuss the church's approach: "How can I make you feel the love of God?" for all who enter, while still being discerning about leadership.
 - Why is this balance important?
 - How can we practice this in our personal relationships?

Part 4: Embodied Communication (10 minutes)

11. John chose to save certain conversations for face-to-face interaction rather than writing them down.

- When have you experienced miscommunication through text or social media that could have been avoided with a face-to-face conversation?
 - Are there any conversations in your life right now that need to move from screens to in-person?
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Key Takeaways

- ✓ Truth is not just facts—it's Jesus himself. Knowing truth means knowing Him personally and intimately.
 - ✓ Walking in truth means aligning our lives with Jesus, not just agreeing with His teaching intellectually.
 - ✓ Love is defined by obedience to Christ's commands, not by our feelings or cultural definitions.
 - ✓ Discernment comes from knowing Jesus deeply, not from hunting for heresy or becoming suspicious.
 - ✓ The church welcomes all while being discerning about leadership and who teaches/leads.
 - ✓ Some conversations need to be embodied and face-to-face, not conducted through screens.
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Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge - Choose One:

1. Know Jesus Better: Set aside 15 minutes each day this week to read through the Gospel of John (or portions of it) with this prayer: "Jesus, I want to know You, not just know about You. Reveal Yourself to me."
2. Align Your Life: Identify one area where you agree with Jesus' teaching but haven't fully aligned your life with it. Take one concrete step this week to bring your life into alignment.
3. Love Through Obedience: Choose one of Jesus' commands (love your enemies, forgive others, serve the least of these, etc.) and intentionally practice it this week as an act of love toward God and others.

4. Embodied Communication: Identify one important conversation you've been having through text/social media and schedule a face-to-face meeting (or video call if distance is an issue) to have that conversation properly.
 5. Grow in Discernment: Evaluate the teaching you're consuming (podcasts, books, social media influencers). Ask yourself: "Does this align with the Jesus revealed by the apostles in Scripture?"
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Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Prayer Focus:

- Thank God that truth is not just facts but a person—Jesus—who we can know and walk with
 - Ask for grace to align our lives with Jesus, not just agree with Him
 - Pray for discernment and wisdom in recognizing false teaching
 - Request help in loving others through obedience to Christ's commands
 - Ask for opportunities for meaningful, face-to-face connections this week
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