

God's Love
Alive
in You

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CONDITIONS FOR FELLOWSHIP



Fellowship is the fuel that drives relationships. Relationships thrive on time spent together, and without it, they tend to fall apart. This is true for both your relationship with God and your relationships with others. This week we will look at the first chapter of 1 John, and we will spend some time considering the idea of fellowship. Dedicate a page in your notebook to everything you discover about fellowship. By the end of the week you will have learned a lot about the topic.



DAY ONE

The best way to get a feel for a letter is to read it in one sitting. This helps you see the flow of thought and sometimes the author's purpose in writing.

Your assignment today is to read 1 John in one sitting. The letter has only five short chapters, so it is easily readable in a few minutes. Begin with prayer, asking God to give you an understanding of this book. As you read, mark in a distinctive way or with a distinctive color each reference to *writing* or *write*.

Now that you have finished, record (in your own words) John's purpose for writing this letter.



 DAY TWO

The rest of this week we will focus our time and energy on 1 John 1. Today read chapter 1 and mark *God* and *Jesus* the way demonstrated on page 8. Make sure you include the pronouns.

When you have finished, list in your notebook what you learned by marking these words. Be sure to answer the “who, what, when, where, why, and how” questions.

Now, for your last assignment today, turn to the gospel of John and read 1:1-5,14-18. List in your notebook what these passages teach you about Jesus. If you have time after this assignment, meditate on what you have learned about the Word of Life.



 DAY THREE

Your assignment is to read 1 John 1:1-10 again. This time as you read, draw an arch above the word *light*, and shade it yellow. Shade *darkness* black or gray. Draw a blue figure eight above the word *fellowship*. Make sure to include appropriate synonyms.

In your notebook, list what you learn about *light*, *darkness*, and *fellowship* from chapter 1.

Now, read the following passages and note what you learn about *light*, *darkness*, and *fellowship*.

∞ Matthew 5:14-16

∞ 2 Corinthians 6:14-15



 DAY FOUR

You have already noticed the two types of fellowship in 1 John 1: fellowship with the Father and fellowship with other believers. As we said earlier, fellowship is the fuel that drives relationships. That means that if something injures the fellowship, it will injure the relationship. Well, friend, John writes about something that injures fellowship. Today we will take a closer look at what that is and how it affects the relationship.


Read chapter 1 again slowly and shade each reference to *sin* brown. Mark *truth* like this: truth. Underline the phrase *if we say* in red.

In your notebook, list what you learn about *sin* and *truth* from chapter one.

Finally, before you wrap up for today, read the following passages to see what you learn about truth, especially since it involves our relationship with God. You will see very familiar verses in each passage. Pay close attention to the contexts where the familiar verses are found.

∞ John 3:16-21

∞ John 8:31-32



 DAY FIVE

Read 1 John 1. When you have finished, record the main idea of chapter 1 on 1 JOHN AT A GLANCE on page 49.

As you have noticed, we sometimes ask you to look at passages other than the primary one you are studying. This

is called cross-referencing. Cross-referencing is invaluable because the best interpreter of Scripture is Scripture itself. Looking at other places in the Word where an idea is discussed will shed light on the passage you're studying.

For this reason, your second assignment is to read the following passages and record everything you learn about fellowship in your notebook.

- ☞ Acts 2:37-42 (Peter has just preached his sermon on Pentecost day.)
- ☞ 1 Corinthians 1:9
- ☞ 2 Corinthians 13:14 (KJV and NKJV use the word “communion.”)
- ☞ Hebrews 13:16 (“Sharing” is a translation of the same Greek word as “fellowship.” The KJV uses the word “communicate.”)

DAY SIX

We will look at chapter 2 more in depth next week. For now, getting a feel for the chapter will be enough. Read chapter 2 and mark the word *abide* (and synonyms such as *lives*, *remained*, and *continued*) with a diamond.

In this passage, *lives*, *remained*, and *continued* are all translated from the same Greek word as *abide*. The NIV uses the word “lives.” When you have finished, list in your notebook what you learn about abiding.



DAY SEVEN



Store in your heart: 1 John 1:6-7

Read and discuss: 1 John 1:1-10

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR INDIVIDUAL STUDY

- ☞ What does John say his purpose is for writing this letter?
- ☞ Of all of the reasons John gives for writing, which one seems to override the others?
- ☞ Why is it important to know whether you have eternal life?
- ☞ What did you learn this week about Jesus, the Word of Life?
- ☞ What did you learn about fellowship?
- ☞ How do our actions support or deny our claims to be in fellowship with the Father?
- ☞ Whom are believers supposed to have fellowship with?
- ☞ What things injure fellowship with God? What things injure your fellowship with others?
- ☞ Have you ever injured your fellowship with others or with God? How?
- ☞ What are you personally responsible to do in order to have fellowship with God? With others?
- ☞ What did you learn this week about sin?

- ☞ What's true of someone who says he has no sin? Of someone who says he has never sinned? Of someone who admits (confesses) his sin?
- ☞ How do these truths apply to you?
- ☞ What did you learn about darkness, light, and your personal walk this week?

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

The first condition for fellowship with God is walking in the light. The second is dealing honestly with your sin.

The Greek word translated “fellowship” in the New Testament is *koinōnia*. The word means to share in, to participate together with. It implies the idea of having something in common. God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with Him, yet we walk in darkness, we have a problem. Why? Because God is light, and light cannot have fellowship with darkness. Darkness and light have nothing in common.

Walking in darkness is synonymous with walking in sin. Sin injures the fellowship we have with God. Has God ever seemed distant to you? Have you ever felt as if your prayers were reaching only as high as the ceiling? Have you been in worship services when you simply did not feel His presence and you were maybe even a little annoyed with worshippers around you who seemed to be in touch with Him? Friend, the trouble may be that you are walking in darkness.

Fellowship with God is not the only relationship injured by sin. Your relationship with others is also damaged. What fellowship does darkness have with light? When you walk in the darkness, other believers will seem

distant from you. Sin injures your walk with God, and because believers are His children (John 1:12) it also injures your walk with them. Fellowship fuels relationships. Walking in sin stops the fellowship and injures the relationship.

Where are you walking? In prayer, ask God to reveal any area of your life where you are walking in darkness. What do you do when He exposes some area of sin in your life? You go back to 1 John 1:9. He will cleanse you and place you back in the light.

Spend some time today with God. Let Him search your heart for anything that needs to be brought to the light.