

life groups

NLC Life Group Through the Bible Study

Week of November 19, 2017

Sermon: 1 John—The Confidence We Have



NEW LIFE
CHURCH

Life Group Schedule

15 MIN Eat, Meet & Greet

15 MIN Ice Breaker Game: **Two Truths and a Lie.** **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask everyone to write down three things about themselves which may not be known to the others in the group. Two are true and one is not. Taking turns, they read out the three 'facts' about themselves, and the rest of the group votes which are true and false. There are always surprises. This simple activity is always fun, and helps the group and leaders get to know more about each other.

OPENING PRAYER

45–60 MIN **1 John—The Confidence We Have**

- Last week was a great reminder that nothing compares to a life lived in the presence of God, as we are constantly being lured away by temptation, distractions, and pride.

Q1. Have you ever had a moment when you were just 100% confident something was going to go your way? How did it end for you?

- 1 John 5 is a reminder that God loves you—with confidence!
 - › His pursuit of you—His confident love for you—is not dependent on your response.
- The believers John wrote to were in a confidence crisis: People were breaking away from the faith, distorting the truth, denying Christ.
- Today the world is asking: Who is God? Is there really absolute Truth? Can we do whatever we feel and make it right for us?
 - › These questions have left many Christians in a crisis of confidence.

HAVE OTHERS TAKE TURNS READING | JOHN 5:13-15

- Symptoms of a lack of confidence include insecurity, an inability to overcome temptation, depression, being easily angered, and lack of vision.

How Do I Build Christ Confidence?

1. Know that God loves you first.
 - The origin of our confidence is knowing that God *loves* us first, not “*loved* us first.”
 - › Past tense only propagates the false notion that God loved us first by sending His Son to die for us, but that it’s now up to me to pursue Him and initiate a relationship.

JOHN 4:10 “This is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us. That he came to us and that He pursued us.”

- We have the only religion on earth where we believe in a God who believes in us—we love a God who loves us back!
- Everything that we do on the faith journey is a *response* to God.
 - › You don’t worship or tithe to get God’s attention. You’re responding to what God has already done. Everything you do—your faith, your discipline, your integrity, your character, your joy, your service—is a response to God’s grace. **God is the initiator. You are the responder.**
 - › If you don’t know your role, you will never have peace in your soul. Too many believers are living with no peace and no confidence, because they either don’t know or they’ve forgotten their role!
- We must be confident in God’s love. In fact, when we question God’s immense love for us, we are questioning God’s name. We are questioning His character:
1 JOHN 4:8B “...God is love.”
- If love was a river, its source would be God. In the same way that the sun radiates light, God radiates love. Love is His nature, His character, His identity.
- There are four different words for love in Greek:
 - › **Storge** (“stor’ - gay”): Family love—“you’re my mom; love ya!”
 - › **Phileo**: Friendship-type.
 - › **Eros**: Romantic. Where you get the word, “erotic” from. Emotional-type love.
 - › **Agape**: Different because it’s an unconditional love. “I choose you” type of love, not based on feelings, not on whether you deserve it, not based on circumstances.
 - › When John said “God is love,” he meant “God is agape.”
- God does not love you based on what you have or have not done. His love is unconditional.
 - › God can’t stop loving, because God can’t start denying Himself. For God not to love would be for Him to not be who He is.
 - › He has chosen you, picked you, died on the cross for you, and He continues to pursue you! He won’t make you love Him, but He will continue to pursue you.
- Everything you do as a believer is a response! You can’t do anything to **get** God’s attention; you already **have** his attention.
 - › There is immense confidence in living life this way!

Q2. Read 1 Corinthians 13 together, walking through this beautiful description of the identity, character and nature of God. (Example: “God is patient. God patiently waits on you...”)

2. Know that God is listening to you.
- It is vital to *know* that God is listening.
 - › Believing in a God who loves us but doesn't listen to us is just as impossible as a marriage that claims to have love but no communication. It doesn't work.
 - › Many believers struggle with the question of does God listen to me? Does He hear me?
 - We MUST have confidence that YES, he hears us and listens.
READ I JOHN 5:15 AGAIN.
 - This is simply a promise that God is listening. He hears and cares about everything.
READ 1 JOHN 5:14 AGAIN.

Q3. What does it mean to ask "according to His will"?

- God loves spending time with you.
 - › He hears and cares about everything in our lives—our desires, our interests, our thoughts, our words, our fears, our excitement, everything! We have a God who not only loves us...He likes us and wants to listen to us. Let Him in on your life.

Q4. Do you have confidence that God listens to you? Why or why not?

3. Know that with Christ, you overcome.

ASK SOMEONE TO READ I JOHN 5:4-5

- This verse is saying we can walk around with holy swagger, knowing that we win simply because we believe in Christ.
 - › This isn't a self-help point about having more confidence in yourself. You cannot overcome without Christ in your life!
- Whatever you're struggling with—anger, hurt, frustrations, betrayal, discouragement, injuries, your health—you can't overcome these things alone.
- We overcome when we enable Christ-confidence!
- Every time struggles hit us, we have an opportunity to call on the confidence we have in Christ, *in who He is in us*.

TAKE TURNS READING HEBREWS 4:14-16

- God wants to help us, yes! But He also *understands* what we're up against and *empathizes* with us, *ready* and *able* to help us overcome any and all obstacles.

PHILIPPIANS 4:13 "For I can do everything through Christ who

gives me strength.”

- God loves, God listens, and God helps us overcome.
- God wants to do something *in* us, so He can do something *through* us.

TAKE TURNS READING 1 JOHN 5:18-20

Q5. How does this truth affect your approach to God?

Q6. How does this truth affect challenges you are currently facing?

PRAYER

- Take some time praying over any issues or challenges that surfaced during this time.

LIFE GROUP LEADER NOTES:

- It is common for people to feel like God doesn't hear them or listen to them. As the Spirit leads, you can ask one or more questions:
 - › “Is there anyone who, when you think of them, you have negative feelings toward or you know you're just mad at them?” (Note: It is common to not be able to hear God clearly when we may be holding unforgiveness against someone). “What does the Lord want you to do about that?”
 - › Another common challenge people have is feeling like God is distant from them or that there is a wall between them and God. Before the group meets, spend time meditating on Revelation 3:20 for insight into how the Lord operates to break through barriers. You may gently ask them to ask God something like this, “What is the wall made of?”, “God, why does it feel like You are distant from me?” or “God show me what has come between You and me.” Then wait for them to let you know what they're hearing, seeing, or sensing. Walls represent self-protection and safety, often put in place to protect the heart from being wounded again.
 - › 2 Corinthians 10:5 reminds us to “take every thought captive and make it obedient to Christ.” Sometimes we can't hear God because our minds are full of other thoughts, things that distract us. Invite the person to pray daily this week something like this, “Jesus, I invite You to help me think about what I'm thinking about. Show me how to yield my thoughts to You. Replace my thoughts with your thoughts.” And ask them to journal throughout the week and share it with you next time the group meets.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Please refer to your local campus worship guide for relevant announcements.