

BEFORE YOU TEACH

Remind Learners to Attend the Class

Since this is the last session for this study, be intentional in reaching out to learners to encourage them to attend the class. Send a brief summary about the study via text or email. Encourage them to bring a friend or family member with them as a special guest.

Evaluate the Session

Draft an evaluation for learners so you can get feedback about the effectiveness of the class. Include questions about the study and submit responses to the content editor of YOU to help with the development of more effective sessions.

LOOK BACK

Remind learners that we can be sure of God's love by loving others. Encourage learners to share how they applied "Live It" (p. 41) throughout the week. Reiterate that love is a command from God that is paramount for Christian discipleship.

TEACHING PLAN

INTRODUCTION

SAY: Begin by providing a review of 1 John 5. (Use **Pack Item 2: "Book of John"** handout to assist you.) Tell learners that the main focus of 1 John 5 is our faith in the incarnate Christ.

READ: Invite a volunteer to read the paragraph that begins "Many religions claim ..." and the bulleted list that follows (p. 44). Emphasize that we can only be sure we are saved if we have faith in Jesus. Emphasize that this session will help us as born again believers to be assured of our salvation.

DIGGING DEEPER: Read "Digging Deeper" (p. 45) to emphasize the three phases of our salvation. Invite learners to respond to the question: "How can the three phases of salvation help you daily?"

TRANSITION: Read the title of this session and

The Point: "We can be sure God saves us when we trust in Christ" to transition into the session. Also tell learners that this session will answer the **Question: "What proof do we have that we are saved?"**

DIG INTO THE TEXT

I Believe in Jesus the Christ

// 1 John 5:1-5

ASK: "How do you know you are saved?"

READ: Recruit a learner to read 1 John 5:1-5.

GUIDE: Lead a discussion about what it means to be "born of God" (v.1). Invite a volunteer to read the paragraphs that begin "It is impossible ..." and "On the other hand ..." (p. 44) to emphasize that our faith in God demonstrates our trust in the Almighty and assures us of our salvation.

ASK: "What evidence can people see in your life as a follower of Christ that you are saved?"

GUIDE: Recruit a volunteer to read the paragraph that begins, "Through the new birth..." (p. 44) to underscore that our faith in Christ Jesus guarantees our eternal victory and our eternal salvation. Use the bulleted list (p. 45) to identify the evidence that Jesus is the Christ. Those who trust in Christ receive the gift of salvation.

OBJECT LESSON: Use the "Object Lesson" (p. 126) to discuss our salvation as a gift and put it in perspective.

ASK: "What does it mean to overcome the world?"

EXPLAIN: Point out that because Jesus was victorious over death and the grave, those who believe in Him have overcome the world. Use the commentary for verse 5 (pp. 126-7) to define the word "world" to help learners understand what it means to overcome the world. Share with learners that to believe Jesus has been victorious is to have the power that enables us to overcome our battles.

THE POINT: WE CAN BE SURE GOD SAVES US WHEN WE TRUST IN CHRIST.

SUMMARIZE: Remind learners that because of our faith in the incarnate Son of God, we are assured of our salvation. Our assurance of salvation compels us to live in obedience to God. It is through our obedience that we demonstrate our love for God.

God's Word Says So

// 1 John 5:11-13

READ: Invite a learner to read 1 John 5:11-13.

GUIDE: Emphasize the theological confidence about salvation expressed by John in verse 11. Lead learners to discuss how to convey that confidence to followers of other religions without judging them.

PACK ITEM: Direct attention to **Pack Item 5: "Removing the Doubts"** poster. Overview some false beliefs people have about going to heaven. Invite learners to identify others they have heard and those they may have believed at one time.

GUIDE: Recruit a volunteer to read the paragraph that begins "John's whole point ..." (p. 46) then read the paragraph that begins "Jesus stated ..." (p. 46) to discuss other places in Scripture where salvation is confirmed.

SAY: Tell learners that in verse 13 John clarifies his purpose for writing this letter. Emphasize that John wants believers to be confident of their eternal salvation.

ASK: "What does it mean to have eternal life?"

EXPLAIN: Point out that eternal life is a life with God in heaven forever. Explain that whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life (v. 12).

ASK: "Is there someone in this class who is still unsure of his or her salvation?" Lead learners into a discussion about how they can be confident they have eternal life.

SUMMARIZE: Remind learners that those who believe in Jesus as the Son of God have eternal life. God's Word gives us confidence in our salvation so that we don't doubt having eternal life.

My Life Has Changed

// 1 John 5:18-21

READ: Enlist a volunteer to read 1 John 5:18-21.

ASK: "What does John mean when he says, 'We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin?'"

EXPLAIN: Point out that the Holy Spirit diminishes the sin appetite for those who are "born of God." That does not mean we are perfect, rather, we are being perfected until we "reach unity in the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13).

DID YOU KNOW?: Recruit a volunteer to read "Did You Know?" (p. 47) about Michelangelo. Invite responses to the question that follows this feature.

GUIDE: Emphasize that our desire for holiness and our pursuit of godliness does not prevent the enemy from attacking us. Lead learners to discuss the difference our salvation makes in protecting us from the evil one.

READ: Recruit a volunteer to read the paragraph that begins "Because believers are ..." (p. 47). Share that though the world is under the control of the evil one, Christians can have the confidence that their eternal souls are safe and secure in the Lord through Jesus Christ. Because we are born of God, we are in His Son Jesus Christ. Focus specifically on John's exhortation to keep ourselves from idols. Remind learners they have to work out their salvation with fear and trembling.

SUMMARIZE: Remind learners that because we are saved, we are safe from the evil one who controls the world because of our faith in Christ.



PACK ITEM 5

CLOSE THE SESSION

Invite learners to use “Live It” (p. 47) to help them be assured of their salvation. Remind learners of the six assurances from this unit of study; Forgiveness, Relationship, Truth, Victory, God’s Love, Salvation. Invite them to share which one of the assurances speaks more meaningfully to them individually. Encourage them to read 1 John whenever they need to be assured of any of the six assurances discussed in this unit. Emphasize that the Christian life is grounded in these.

PRAY: Close the session with prayer, asking God to give learners the courage to reflect the light of Christ in their sphere of influence.

OBJECT LESSON

Before class, obtain enough wrapped pieces of candy for every learner. Place the candy in a box and wrap the box in gift paper.

GUIDE: Focus attention on the gift and ask learners how they feel when someone gives them a gift. “What does this teach about God’s gift of salvation through Christ Jesus?” Invite a learner to open the gift and share its contents with everyone.

EMPHASIZE: Share that God offered His only begotten Son as a propitiation for our sin so we can be saved. Remind them they have to believe in Jesus Christ to receive the gift of salvation. When we simply trust what Christ has done, we can live with the confidence of salvation and have a right relationship with God. Encourage learners to share the message of salvation with others.



COMMENTARY

1 JOHN 5:1-5

Verse 1. “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God.” The new birth demonstrates believers have committed themselves to God through Jesus Christ. John referred to the new birth to show how faith enables a person to experience a child-to-father relationship with God. What if you have not been born of God? John described how one can become a Christian in the first chapter of this book: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

Verse 2. To love God without loving His children is impossible. Genuine love for God is revealed by obedience. If we truly love God, we will both love His children and keep His commands. Love for others is expressed by action; love for God is expressed by obedience. Both of these require a decision that demonstrate love is a choice.

Verses 3-4. John defined love for God as keeping His commands. Further, God’s commands are not a heavy, exhausting burden; they do not crush the freedom love brings. Jesus stated: “For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matt. 11:30). God’s commands are the will of an all-wise, all-knowing, and all-loving Father who seeks our highest welfare. If we are tempted to think the love and obedience demanded of Christians are beyond our powers, these two verses come as a welcome source of strength and encouragement. Believers have been given the power by God to overcome temptation that would prevent obedience. Jesus overcame the devil by destroying his works (1 John 3:8). Therefore, those born of God overcome the world by their faith in Jesus.

Verse 5. John used the term the “world” to refer to the limited, temporary powers opposing God and making obedience difficult. Whatever form the world’s assault upon believers takes, the victory has already been won. Knowing Jesus

as the Christ who came to bring salvation and life enables us to triumph over the world.

1 JOHN 5:11-13

Verses 11-12. John specified God's testimony in two parts: (1) "God has given us eternal life" and (2) "this life is in his Son." First, the truth that God has given us eternal life is extraordinary. Eternal life, also rendered "everlasting life," can mean life without beginning or end. However, in the New Testament it most often refers to quality of life as it is meant to be, life with God in His kingdom, heaven. The fact God has given us this life is based on the truth that only the One who created everything has the ability and authority to present that gift. The tense of the verb "has given" reveals a past completed action with a continuing result. When we were saved, God gave us the gift of eternal life. Nothing we could ever do would earn us that gift. Second, this life God gives us is in His Son. We can receive this gift of eternal life because it is present in Jesus Christ and in no other. Eternal life is a gift that God gives to all who trust in His Son.

Eternal life is a present possession for those who are saved. John stated: "The one who has the Son has life." To have the Son refers to Christ's indwelling presence in the believer's life. John also stated this truth in negative terms: "The one who does not have the Son of God does not have life."

Verse 13. Perhaps more than any other verse in 1 John, verse 13 sums up John's purpose in writing this letter: assurance. The truth that Jesus Christ completed the work of salvation inspired John to write about assurance. We can be sure God saves us when we trust in Christ. The words "these things" likely refer to the entire letter of 1 John.

1 JOHN 5:18-21

Verse 18. John listed three truths for believers. First, John wrote "everyone who has been born of God does not sin." Every person who has experienced the new birth remains God's child with permanent privileges and obligations. One of these

obligations is that the believer does not continue to live in sin. The Greek grammar indicates that John did not mean believers never slip into acts of sin, but that sin is not a habitual characteristic of the child of God.

Second, John revealed "the one who is born of God keeps him." Christians are assured of being kept safe by Jesus, "the one ... born of God." Christ "keeps" (guards, protects, preserves) every believer. In this context "keep" means that Jesus Christ will protect those born of God by giving them eternal life and preserving them (John 10:28-29).

Third, John wrote that Satan, the devil, "the evil one does not touch him," referring to the Christian. In this context, the word "touch" carries the sense of fastening oneself to or clinging to something. John acknowledges that believers will face satanic attacks, but they are defended by One greater than Satan: Jesus Christ.

Verses 19-20. Finally, John revealed the two powers who control people in this world. John wrote that Christians "are of God" and those who aren't Christians are "under the sway of the evil one." Believers live in conflict because they live in two worlds: the present evil age, under the control of Satan, and the age to come, under the control of God.

Verse 21. In this final verse John warned his readers not to let themselves be deceived by something evil: idols. John used the words "guard yourselves" to warn Christians to accept only God's truth and avoid the idolatrous teaching of the false teachers.



“True Love FOR GOD
IS EXPRESSED NOT IN
SENTIMENTAL LANGUAGE OR
MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE BUT IN
MORAL OBEDIENCE.”

JOHN STOTT