



## A Guide for Spiritual Formation

Series Theme: Life, Light, Love; A Series on 1 John  
Text for the Week: John 2:3-17  
Message for the Week: Walking in the Light

**Week Three**  
**Sunday, September 25**

### Opening:

What is one low (a bad thing) and one high (a good thing) that happened to you this past week? Write them down and take turns sharing them with the others in your group.

Where have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life this past week?

Pastor Doug says, we become like the people we love. Do you ever hear your mother's or father's voice come out of your mouth?

### Preparation:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with God to center and prepare yourself for your time with God today.

### Read:

Read / Have two people in your group read [1 John 2:3-17](#) out loud.

[Clicking this link will bring you to multiple translations.]

As you read and/or listen to the text being read, circle, take note of, highlight, or underline what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention and heart in these verses?

Write them down below and/or share them with those who are with you.

## Respond / Reflect:

John, in 1 John 2:6 says that "Whoever claims to live in him (Jesus) must live as Jesus did. How did Jesus live? What words or phrases or characteristics would you use to describe how Jesus lived?"

What does it mean and look like "...to love the world?" Why does John command us to not love the world?

What does it mean for us as followers of Jesus to love in a world and culture that accepts, promotes, and celebrates the hatred and ridicule of other people and viewpoints?

What voices (news casts/feeds, people, podcasts, books, magazines, songs, TV shows, movies) of the kingdom of this world are you listening to on a consistent basis and therefore emulating? What voices (pastors/teachers, podcasts, devotionals, songs, Scripture passages, spiritual mentors/directors, times of prayer) of the kingdom of God are you listening to on a consistent basis and therefore emulating?

In addition to dying on the cross, how did Jesus demonstrate his great love for us?

Does love for God or obedience to God come first? Why?

What are you investing in that is not going to last? Are you building sandcastles or treasures in heaven?

## "Try It!"

This week, try giving up listening to the voices that represent the kingdom of this world. Instead, spend this time listening to voices of the Kingdom of God. Notice what difference this makes in your heart and life.

## Prayer:

Spend time in prayer with/for the other people who are with you. Pray this prayer together:

*Father, we long to live in the Light as you are in the light. Teach us to walk in Jesus' love so we might learn to love as he loves. Teach us to keep our eyes fixed on you, to grow daily in knowledge and obedience, to reflect your love in a love-deficient world, and to fight daily against its delusions and enticements. May we again be known for our love for one another so the world will see how much we love you and you love us. Father, give us the strength, courage, and wisdom to face the daily challenges of life and remain faithful "preparing for our mansion in heaven with you rather than building castles on earth for us. In Jesus' name – our life, light, and love – we pray. Amen.*

## Missional/Spiritual Practice for the Month: Cultivating Loving Kindness

During the month of September, you are encouraged to cultivate loving-kindness, well-being, happiness, and peace toward ourselves and others. Speaking words of blessing out loud or inwardly does more than reflect our thoughts—they shape our feelings and behaviors. Each day receive and extend loving kindness. Take a few moments to quiet yourself. When you feel a sense of calm, begin by repeating the following blessing, giving the words time to resonate in your heart and mind: "May I be blessed with loving kindness. May I be blessed with health. May I be blessed with true happiness. May I be blessed with peace."

When your heart feels full of loving compassion - move from yourself to those around you, family, friends, co-workers, those who have hurt you. Visualize each person as you pray this blessing on them: "May they be blessed with loving kindness. May they be blessed with health. May they be blessed with true happiness. May they be blessed with peace."

### Love and Hatred for Fellow Believers

<sup>3</sup> We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. <sup>4</sup> Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. <sup>5</sup> But if anyone obeys his word, love for God<sup>(a)</sup> is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: <sup>6</sup> Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.

<sup>7</sup> Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old one, which you have had since the beginning. This old command is the message you have heard. <sup>8</sup> Yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and in you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining.

<sup>9</sup> Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister<sup>(b)</sup> is still in the darkness. <sup>10</sup> Anyone who loves their brother and sister<sup>(c)</sup> lives in the light, and there is nothing in them to make them stumble. <sup>11</sup> But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them.

### Reasons for Writing

<sup>12</sup> I am writing to you, dear children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name.

<sup>13</sup> I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning.

I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one.

<sup>14</sup> I write to you, dear children, because you know the Father.

I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning.

I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

### On Not Loving the World

<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father<sup>(d)</sup> is not in them. <sup>16</sup> For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. <sup>17</sup> The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.

### 1 John 2:3-17 The Message

<sup>2</sup> <sup>1-2</sup> I write this, dear children, to guide you out of sin. But if anyone does sin, we have a Priest-Friend in the presence of the Father: Jesus Christ, righteous Jesus. When he served as a sacrifice for our sins, he solved the sin problem for good—not only ours, but the whole world's.

### The Only Way to Know We're in Him

<sup>2-3</sup> Here's how we can be sure that we know God in the right way: Keep his commandments.

<sup>4-6</sup> If someone claims, "I know him well!" but doesn't keep his commandments, he's obviously a liar. His life doesn't match his words. But the one who keeps God's word is the person in whom we see God's mature love. This is the only way to be sure we're in God. Anyone who claims to be intimate with God ought to live the same kind of life Jesus lived.

<sup>7-8</sup> My dear friends, I'm not writing anything new here. This is the oldest commandment in the book, and you've known it from day one. It's always been implicit in the Message you've heard. On the other hand, perhaps it is new, freshly minted as it is in both Christ and you—the darkness fading away and the True Light already blazing!

<sup>9-11</sup> Anyone who claims to live in God's light and hates a brother or sister is still in the dark. It's the person who loves brother and sister who dwells in God's light and doesn't block the light from others. But whoever hates is still in the dark, stumbles around in the dark, doesn't know which end is up, blinded by the darkness.

### Loving the World

<sup>12-13</sup> I remind you, my dear children: Your sins are forgiven in Jesus' name. You veterans were in on the ground floor, and know the One who started all this; you newcomers have won a big victory over the Evil One.

<sup>13-14</sup> And a second reminder, dear children: You know the Father from personal experience. You veterans know the One who started it all; and you newcomers—such vitality and strength! God's word is so steady in you. Your fellowship with God enables you to gain a victory over the Evil One.

<sup>15-17</sup> Don't love the world's ways. Don't love the world's goods. Love of the world squeezes out love for the Father. Practically everything that goes on in the world—wanting your own way, wanting everything for yourself, wanting to appear important—has nothing to do with the Father. It just isolates you from him. The world and all its wanting, wanting, wanting is on the way out—but whoever does what God wants is set for eternity.