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Study Series: Unfailing Love in Uncertain Times

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Lesson Title: “Christ and Sin” (pp. 7-20)

Session 1

March 5, 2023

The main point of this lesson is: Jesus, the Word made flesh, is the answer to our sin problem.

Focus on this goal: To help adults look to Jesus as the answer to their sin problem

Key Bible Passage: 1 John 1:1–2:2

Before the Session

Gather a roll of duct tape, a container of dish soap, a black permanent marker, and an index card with JESUS written on it. (Step 1)

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

**Say:** I’ve brought with me today several items that solve problems. Let me hold these up and if you’ve used them to solve a problem, raise your hand. Hold up each of the items, one at a time, and call on a few volunteers to share how that product helped them solve a problem.

Challenge learners to consider how they might use the products in unconventional ways. (For example, a black marker can be used in a pinch on black leather that’s scuffed. Dish soap removes stains in clothes. Duct tape can pull out a splinter.) Hold up the “JESUS” card last and say: This is our lesson today; what problem does Jesus solve?

Step 2. Cherish Christ, the Word Made Flesh, Part 1

Invite a volunteer to read 1 John 1:1-2 aloud.

Use the Day One paragraph (p. 7) that begins with the words, “No one knew better than the apostle John . . .” as well as the paragraph (p. 8) that begins with the heading “His Humanity” to paint a picture of the relationship between Jesus and John. Help learners see not only John’s love for Jesus, but his love for his readers also.

Point out the verbs from these opening verses: heard, seen, observed, touched, revealed, testify,anddeclare*.* Invite a volunteer to restate these first two verses in one simple sentence.

Step 3. Cherish Christ, the Word Made Flesh, Part 2

Invite a volunteer to read 1 John 1:3-4. Point learners to the word “fellowship” (v. 3)*.* Read the second paragraph of Day Two (p. 9) regarding koinonia. Using the Day Two content (pp. 9-11), help learners understand that “fellowship” in the early church was much more than sharing a meal.

Consider the ability to see ourselves—and all believers—as part of the eklessia (“the local and universal church,” p. 10) as our impetus for fellowshipping with other Christians.

Point out the word “joy” in verse 4, inviting a volunteer to share a time when he or she had this very joy in spite of a terrible situation. Emphasize to learners Christ’s joy in us, completing our joy in Him.

Step 4. Confronting the Problem of Sin, Part 1

Invite a volunteer to read 1 John 1:5-7 aloud. Share a story from your own life in which you were overwhelmed by either bright light or intense darkness (such as moving from a darkened room out to a bright sunny day or being in a cave with all lights off). Draw a parallel with your own experience and the author’s explanation (pp. 11-13) of God being light and our instructions to walk in the light.

Point learners to the Scriptures referenced in the Day Three paragraph (p. 11-12) that begins with the heading “God Is Light” and help learners see that God exposes sin because He is perfect truth and holiness.

Use the second part of Day Three (pp. 12-13) to encourage learners to consider their own lifestyles: do they walk in the light? Or are they saying they walk in the light but actually hide in the darkness?

Step 5. Confronting the Problem of Sin, Part 2

Invite a volunteer to read 1 John 1:8-10. Use the opening paragraph of Day Four (p. 13) to discuss the pervasive teaching of moral relativism. Engage learners in considering moral relativism’s danger: when we don’t acknowledge our sin, we do not align our beliefs with what God teaches us in His Word.

Ask: How can we be more honest with ourselves about our own sin? Stress the spiritual disciplines of solitude, prayer, fasting, and Bible study will help our self-honesty.

As a group, consider the Scriptures in Day Four (p. 14). Invite volunteers to evaluate how honestly they believe that they are great sinners in desperate need of a Savior.

Step 6. Confronting the Problem of Sin, Part 3

Invite a volunteer to read 1 John 2:1-2. Use the first paragraph (pp. 15-16) of Day Five to help learners understand the grief that John felt over the sins of his brothers and sisters.

Emphasize believers are not powerless to sin: we have Christ as our Advocate. Read the second paragraph of Day Five (p. 16) to paint the picture of Christ as a defense attorney who can guarantee acquittal.

Draw attention to the paragraph (pp. 16-17) with the heading, “Christ, Our Propitiation” and help learners understand that Christ’s death was monumental because it satisfied the wrath of God; His death on the cross finished the debt we owed for sin.

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

Say: We’ve seen two problems here: moral relativism and sin. But we also see the solution: Jesus Christ, the light of the world. He defeated sin on the cross, defeated death when He rose from the grave, and He gives us the ability to walk as lights in our sinful or sin-denying world.

Close in prayer, inviting people to group into pairs or threes to pray for each other’s walk of faith this coming week, that we would all walk in the light of Christ.

