

# DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

*Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.*

April 2016

## *True Christianity*

### INTRODUCTION

Why do you think that so many “Christians” only attend church at Christmas and Easter?

### OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read 1 John 1:1-4

*Note: John is laying down some basics about Christianity because false teachers had appeared among their ranks. Gnostics (one who has knowledge) claimed to have special information (a deeper understanding) that changed the nature of Christianity. Docetists (one form of Gnosticism) denied the incarnation of the Son of God. <sup>1</sup> They refused to believe that God could ever soil himself by taking human flesh and blood upon himself. <sup>2</sup>*

1. How does John’s initial statement assert Jesus’ deity? Vs 1, Jn 1:1
2. John uses the term “we” throughout these verses. Who is “we”?
3. Why does John feel that he has a right to speak?
4. What physical senses does John use to prove his relationship with Christ? Vv 1-3
5. Why does he make a point of his firsthand experience with Christ? Jn 1:14
6. Why is it important that John mention that he physically touched Jesus? Vs 1; Lk 24:39
7. Why is fellowship with other Christians *and* God important? Vs 3

*Note: In short, John declares that as the apostles were adopted by Christ as brothers, being gathered into one body so they might be united together with God, so also Christ does with other colleagues. Though they are many, they are made partakers of this holy and blessed union. <sup>3</sup> “His Son Jesus Christ” — is exploding with theological meaning. The Greek grammar stresses that Jesus is distinct from the Father; yet there is one shared essence with the Father which Christians partake of in fellowship. **Son** — marks out Jesus as the divine Son of God. **Jesus** — is his human name, which means “the Lord is salvation.” **Christ** — is the Greek word for Messiah, which means God’s anointed King and Deliverer.<sup>4</sup>*

### APPLICATION

How (like John) would you explain your own firsthand experience with Christ?

*Today many people claim to be Christians. In fact, a 1986 Gallup Survey revealed that ninety-four percent of adult Americans believe in God, and that seventy-six percent believe that Jesus is either God or the Son of God. The problem, of course, is that actions speak louder than words. Only forty percent reported that they had attended church in the last week, and a mere ten percent claimed to read the Bible on a daily basis. (Adapted from Intervarsity Press Study of 1<sup>st</sup> John.)*

<sup>1</sup> Cabal, T., Brand, C. O., Clendenen, E. R., Copan, P., Moreland, J., & Powell, D. (2007). *The Apologetics Study Bible: Real Questions, Straight Answers, Stronger Faith* (1865). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

<sup>2</sup> *The letters of John and Jude*. 2000 (W. Barclay, lecturer in the University of Glasgow, Ed.) (23). Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.

<sup>3</sup> <sup>4</sup> Calvin, J., & Henry, M. (1998). *1, 2 & 3 John*. The Crossway Classic Commentaries (pp 19, 24). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

<sup>4</sup> Kress, E. E. (2002). *Notes for the Study and Exposition of 1st John* (20). The Woodlands, TX: Kress Christian Publications.