

OVERCOME!

with I John

'Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God'



Handouts to help you read & understand –
for personal Bible study, reading the Gospel with a friend or with a group

8th Session **THEME: A listening family**

1. Start with prayer. Then look at this icebreaker question. 10 minutes to get started

Maybe all of us sometimes feel uncertain about certain things. About what have you recently felt uncertain?

2. Read twice I John 3:19 – 4:6 25 minutes to answer these questions

Look again at 3:19 – 20 (The restoration of certainty)

- What does John mean by 'by this' (See verse 19)?
- Our heart can condemn us. How are we to deal with that? (See verse 20)

Look again at 3:21 – 22 (The enjoyment of certainty)

- The privilege of the Christian goes beyond forgiveness. It includes adoption as children of God. The children now listen to God and God listens to them. Through Jesus we may approach God with confidence. Another beautiful passage about this is: Hebrews 4:14-16. How would you describe the difference between a person who prays without having confidence and a person who prays with confidence? (See verses 21-22)

Look again at 3:23-24 (The preservation of certainty)

- 'because we keep his commandments (vs. 22)' – But God does not love us, accept us and listen to us on the basis of our merits – or does he? What happens if it would depend on that? (See verse 23)
- Someone says: we are free from the condemnation of the law, so let's no longer talk about commandments. What do you say? (See verse 24a)
- Someone says: if you lack assurance, you can give yourself assurance again, by telling yourself the truth. What do you think? (See verse 24b)

Look again at 4:1-6 (The maintenance of certainty)

- To maintain our certainty in Christ, we do not just need preaching, we need the right preaching (See verses 1-3). And not just fellowship, but the right fellowship (See verses 4-6). Why are these both important?

3. Apply and end with prayer. 25 minutes to make it personal and to pray

Visualise yourself in your daily life, first as one who is a true child of God, loved by God, but very uncertain and without assurance. Then do that again, but as one who enjoys assurance from God. Take enough time to meditate on this in silence. Then share about what you saw and learnt; and take time to pray for each other.

4. Digging deeper.

The most important message of the Bible is that through faith in Jesus Christ we will be saved from our sins. The second most important thing is that we will be assured of our salvation. In some churches the doctrine of assurance is denied. But when you miss that, you miss a lot. A good chapter to study if you want to learn more about assurance is Romans 8.