

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

9th Session **THEME: A loved and loving family**

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

Some of you may have experienced that it was hard to motivate yourself to keep going to your church, just to be there, to continue to serve and love your fellowship. If so, what hindered/hinders you? And what helps?

2. Read twice I John 4:7 – 21 30 minutes to answer these questions

Look again at 4:7 - 8 (The reasons to keep loving your church family)

- Which are the three reasons that John mentions to not withdraw from the Christian fellowship?
- Is it possible to be a Christian, but without attending a Christian fellowship at all?

Look again at 4:9 – 11 (First reason: love is from God; God's love was made manifest)

- Some people say: looking at all that happens in the world, that happened in my life and that even happens in churches, I don't see the love of God. What would you answer?
- Verse 11 could also have continued in this way: *'Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love Him'*. What do you learn from the fact that John didn't put it in that way?

Look again at 4:12 (Second and third reason summarised)

- Take some time to look through the whole passage and to see where the word *'see/show/manifest (etc.)'* is used. Try to find out why John is mentioning the visible and the invisible.

Look again at 4:13 – 16 (Second reason: we are born of God; God's love abides in us)

- The one who has seen the love that is from God, has received the Spirit of God. This Spirit causes us to confess Jesus as the Son of God. And this indwelling Spirit strengthens us to go to our church family again and again, even in times that this was or is not so easy. Question: though it is natural, there are times and moments when it is not possible. Are you aware of people for who it was or is currently not possible to come to the fellowship? Is there anything we can decide today to do for one of them?

Look again at 4:17 – 18 (Third reason: we know God; God's love is perfected with us)

- Judgement day will come and Christ will judge the living and the dead. Why is there no need for the children of God to fear that day?
- How can our confidence for the future (*'we know God'*), help us to be motivated to keep on loving our church now, today?

Look again at 4:19 – 20 (Concluding summary)

- Why is the love for our visible brother/sister so important?

3. Apply and end with prayer. 15 minutes to make it personal and to pray

It is not always easy to go to be with your church family and even to commit yourself to serving them. Have you experienced this? Can you summarise what you learnt/received today in 1 or 2 phrases? Share and pray.