



■ WELL-WATERED WOMEN CO. ●

# A Letter from Gretchen

#### DEAR SISTER,

First of all, I want to thank you for your willingness to lead a group of women through this study. Christ sees you, and he is greatly honored by your heart to serve him through serving others. Acts 2:42–47 is a beautiful picture of what fellowship among believers looked like in the early church. Verse 42 says, "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." Fellowship begins with worship and the Word. I pray that your group looks like this verse—devoted to Scripture, to serving one another, and to praying in Jesus' name. I believe God is going to do a mighty work in your group as you meet together weekly to share what you're learning and to encourage one another in the Lord.

Second, it's my goal to help equip you to lead your group through this leader guide. Coordinating a group can be intimidating. Maybe this is your first time leading a group and you're nervous just thinking about it, or maybe you're a seasoned Bible study leader and already feel comfortable in this setting. Either way, I pray you would come to the Lord with open hands and a humble heart as you seek to pour into the women around you. Recognizing how small we are and how great God is is the best place to start.

On the following pages, you'll find some practical encouragement for leading your group and questions to help spark conversation during your meetings. As you lead, prayerfully ask God to direct your time together in his Word, trusting the Holy Spirit to guide you into all truth (John 16:13) and to convict and transform your hearts. May this study of the Letters of John grow your love for God and his Word as you gather to discuss it with your group each week.

Before you begin, I want to pray for you.

Father, you are high and holy, yet you are also near and always with us. The treasures you have stored up within your Word are innumerable. We want to spend our days digging for treasure and dining at your table. Thank you for the woman leading this study. Thank you for her heart to serve you and to teach others the truth of the gospel. I pray you would first change her own heart as she studies, and in turn, that you would give her the strength to teach and lead the women around her. As they study your Word together, open their eyes to behold wondrous things from your law (Ps. 119:18). I pray Christ would be glorified through this study and in all their lives. In Jesus' mighty name I pray, amen.

#### YOUR SISTER,

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## Preparing to Lead a Group

Create a space that's inviting and welcoming. If you're meeting in your home, don't feel that everything has to look perfect each week. God might use the mess to bring freedom to another woman! The way you show hospitality and welcome women will show them the unfailing love of Christ. If you're meeting in a church or another local area, try to find a spot without distractions that will be a safe place for women to talk and participate in the group.

You set the level of vulnerability for your group. As you share from your own heart and personal experiences, other women will open up to share. As this happens, make sure your group is not a place to gossip. Set the standard from the start that group meetings will be confidential and that any conversation steering in the wrong direction will be redirected.

Pray to begin and end your time together. It's easy to rush through group meetings without first quieting our hearts to pray, but this is vital. Lead the group in prayer and ask other women to pray as well.

Protect your meeting time. It's good to have some structure and a time limit for your meetings. That way, each group member knows the allotted time and will feel comfortable leaving once the meeting time is over, even if some women decide to stay and fellowship.

# Introductory Session



### 1. Share the dates and times that you'll meet so your group members can commit to being there.

Pass out the study books if the women don't already have them and instruct them to complete the first week before the next meeting. There are five days of study each week plus a weekly reflection.

#### 2. Share the guidelines of the group.

Guidelines could include:

- This group is a confidential, safe place, unless there is any indication of harm or danger.
- This group is a commitment.
- This group is a place to ask questions, encourage one another, and seek Christ together. It's a place where we will speak life, hope, and freedom into others, not a place to gossip.

### 3. Consider beginning with an icebreaker game or question to introduce the women to one another.

You could ask get-to-know-you questions such as: If you were stranded on a desert island and could only have three items with you, what would they be and why? Or, if you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and why? Questions like these are designed to help women become comfortable with one other.

#### 4. Next, share your story.

As the leader, sharing your testimony will help the women in your group know and trust you. Tell them how you came to know Jesus and why you're leading the group. Remember, women will follow your lead about how to share. There will be plenty of opportunities to share more of your story throughout the following five weeks, so you can keep this just a brief introduction.

- 5. If you have time, give each woman three to five minutes each to share her own story with the group.
- 6. Close your time together by sharing contact information and praying for one another.



### WEEK ONE Light, Love, and Life

**OPEN IN PRAYER:** Ask God to open the eyes of your hearts as you study.

**WEEKLY MEMORIZATION:** Begin with the weekly memory verse. Offer to practice as a group or ask if a volunteer wants to recite it. Be willing and prepared to share yourself.

**DISCUSSION:** Walk through the following questions from each day with your group. Remember that answering the simple questions can help women feel prepared to answer the more difficult questions.

#### Day One | Looking for Light

What circumstances in our world feel particularly dark to you right now? (page 14)

What truth about God gives you hope in that darkness? (page 14)

What circumstances in your life feel particularly dark to you right now? (page 14)

What truth about God gives you hope in that darkness? (page 14)

#### Day Two | What Is 1 John?

Share what stood out to you about light and darkness from your 1 John theme charts. (pages 4–5)

Based on what you've read today, what book or books of the Bible does 1 John remind you of? Why? (There are no wrong answers!) (page 17)

#### Day Three | Who Wrote and Who Received 1 John?

Read John 19:25–27. What special job does Jesus give to John? (page 19)

Based on these encounters, how would you describe John's relationship with Jesus? (page 19)

Based on the themes you've studied so far—light, darkness, love, children of God, and the world—what do you think the audience of 1 John may have been experiencing? (page 20)

What truth from 1 John can you remember as you battle your doubt this week? (page 21)



#### Day Four | When and Where Was 1 John Written?

Share what stood out to you about **love**, **children of God**, and **the world** from your 1 John theme charts. (pages 6–8)

Review your charts on pages 4–8. What have you read in 1 John so far that refutes this gnostic understanding of redemption? (page 22)

Have you ever heard someone say that Jesus was just a good man or that he set aside his divinity to be a man? From who or where did you hear it? (page 23)

How do these heresies reject the gospel? (page 23)

#### Day Five | Why Was 1 John Written?

Share what stood out to you about life and belief from your 1 John theme charts. (pages 9–10)

Share your summary sentences about the themes of **light**, **darkness**, **love**, **children of God**, **the world**, **life**, and **belief**. Have a different woman share her summary for each theme. (pages 25–26)

Why should knowledge about God transform your actions? (page 28)

What actions or sin struggles in your life in the past week show that you're not letting something you know about God move from your head to your heart? (page 28)

Is there anything else from this week's study that stood out to you?



#### Weekly Application

Before you wrap up, share something new you learned about God or the gospel in your study this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

End your time together by using the weekly memory verse, 1 John 1:9, to guide your closing prayer.

God, thank you for making a way to cleanse us from all our unrighteousness through the blood of Jesus! Help us remember that we don't have to remain stuck in our sin or afraid to come to you, because you are faithful to your promise to forgive us and cleanse us when we humbly turn to you in confession. Forgive us for the ways we've sinned against you and others through our actions, thoughts, and desires this week. We praise you for the forgiveness and freedom we have through your Son! Amen.

### WEEK TWO God of Light



OPEN IN PRAYER: Ask God to open the eyes of your hearts as you study.

**WEEKLY MEMORIZATION:** Begin with the weekly memory verse. Offer to practice as a group or ask if a volunteer wants to recite it. Be willing and prepared to share yourself.

**DISCUSSION:** Walk through the following questions from each day with your group. Remember that answering the simple questions can help women feel prepared to answer the more difficult questions.

#### Day One | Don't Miss Jesus

Who is the "we" in 1 John 1:1–4? Why does their experience lend credibility to the message given in 1 John? (page 32)

How might our joy be incomplete if we don't understand the truth that Jesus is fully God and fully man? (page 33)

What might be missing from our gospel if we neglect either of these truths? (page 33)

What distractions in your life cause you to miss Jesus? (page 35)

#### Day Two | Light of the World

Read the Old Testament verses and discuss how light (or the absence of light) is used as a metaphor to convey intellect, morality, or glory in these specific verses. (page 37)

Why is the Word glorious? (page 38)

What aspect of the gospel do you see in 1 John 1:5? Read Romans 3:10 and 3:23 if you need help. (page 38)

Which aspect of your God of light resonated with you today? (page 39)

#### Day Three | Walk in the Light

If your words don't match up with your actions, what is the result? (page 41)

Share how you rewrote 1 John 2:6 in your own words. (page 41)

What is the difference between the condemned and those not condemned in John 3:18? (page 42)

Where in your life are your actions not lining up with your stated beliefs? (page 44)

#### Day Four | True Light

Read John 8:31–32 and compare it to 1 John 2:4–6. What words are repeated in both passages? (page 45)

What is the common message between these two passages? (page 45)

What dark corners of your heart make loving others difficult? (page 47)

What truth about your Savior would help transform your response? (page 47)

#### Day Five | Lights in the World

What is Jesus teaching about himself in John 8:12-19? (page 49)

Read Philippians 2:14–16. What can keep us from shining like lights in the world? (page 50)

Which of the assurances from the poetry in 1 John 2 feels important to your current circumstances? (page 51)

In what area of your life (work, family, friendships, neighborhood, outreach) would you like to see your spiritual transformation overflow as light to the world? Share what that might look like. (page 51)

Is there anything else from this week's study that stood out to you?



#### Weekly Application

Before you wrap up, share something new you learned about God or the gospel in your study this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

End your time together by using the weekly memory verse, 1 John 2:1, to guide your closing prayer.

Jesus, we praise you for being our advocate! We confess that we are fallen and sinful but you are holy and righteous. Apart from you, we would not be able to stand in God's presence. We need your righteousness credited to us, and because of your perfect life and your loving sacrifice on our behalf, we can be forgiven and restored to relationship with the Father again. Teach us to abide in you and keep your commandments through the power of the Holy Spirit at work in us. In your name we pray, amen.

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OPEN IN PRAYER: Ask God to open the eyes of your hearts as you study.

**WEEKLY MEMORIZATION:** Begin with the weekly memory verse. Offer to practice as a group or ask if a volunteer wants to recite it. Be willing and prepared to share yourself.

**DISCUSSION:** Walk through the following questions from each day with your group. Remember that answering the simple questions can help women feel prepared to answer the more difficult questions.

#### Day One | Loving the World

Read 1 John 2:15–17. What two types of love are in this passage? Can they coexist? (page 55)

Read Jesus' words in Matthew 6:19–21. What action demonstrates a love of the world? What shows that your treasure is in heaven? (page 56)

What hope is there for the woman who feels like she has been giving in to temptation to love the world? (page 57)

What are your biggest temptations right now? How might loving God instead of the world transform your actions? (page 57)

#### Day Two | Tough Love

How do the antichrists prove they aren't true believers? (page 59)

How might being distracted by those who are deconstructing from Christianity keep us from a full reward? (page 59)

Look again at 1 John 2:20, 27. Why would an anointed believer have no need to be taught? (page 60)

Has this age of deconstruction or a personal experience with suffering or trauma caused you to doubt God or reject his church? Explain why or why not. (page 61)

#### Day Three | Abide

What connection do you see between bearing fruit in John 15 and keeping God's commands and walking in the light in 1 John? (page 63)

Based on what you've studied today, is it possible to abide in Christ if you don't immerse yourself in God's Word? (page 63)

Look again at 1 John 2:28–29. Why do you think abiding in our advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous, keeps us from shame at his coming (which includes judgment day)? (page 64)

When you meet with God through his Word and in prayer, do you stand in confidence or shrink back in shame? Why? (page 65)

#### Day Four | Child of God

What difference in tone does it make to have the terms great love, lavished, and even behold, along with the exclamation points, in other translations of this verse? (page 66)

Read 2 Corinthians 3:12, 18. What are we being transformed into even now? (page 67)

What similarities do you see between these verses and 1 John 3:2-3? (page 67)

What is different in your life because you are a child of God? (page 68)

#### Day Five | Marks of a Child

Now read 1 John 3:4–10. What definition for sin is given in verse 4? How would you explain sin based on this definition? (page 69)

Look at the use of the word *abides* in verse 6. How does remaining in Christ make it impossible to keep sinning? See verse 5 for help. (page 69)

Based on this understanding, can those born of God still sin? Why or why not? You might also use 1 John 3:2 from yesterday's study in your answer. (page 70)

How is Jesus Christ, the firstborn Son of God, the perfect example of what it means to be a child of God? (page 71)

Is there anything else from this week's study that stood out to you?

#### Weekly Application

Before you wrap up, share something new you learned about God or the gospel in your study this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

End your time together by using the weekly memory verse, 1 John 3:1, to guide your closing prayer.

God, we come to you amazed and humbled to be called your children. Give us eyes to see and minds to comprehend just how lavish your love truly is! As we study your Word, show us the tender care, wisdom, grace, mercy, and love you bestow on us as our Father. As we go out into the world, help us remember that our identity is found in being your children, that we may be secure in your love and transformed to love others as you love us. Amen.



### WEEK FOUR God of True Love



**OPEN IN PRAYER:** Ask God to open the eyes of your hearts as you study.

**WEEKLY MEMORIZATION:** Begin with the weekly memory verse. Offer to practice as a group or ask if a volunteer wants to recite it. Be willing and prepared to share yourself.

**DISCUSSION:** Walk through the following questions from each day with your group. Remember that answering the simple questions can help women feel prepared to answer the more difficult questions.

#### Day One | Defining Love

Look at your notes on **darkness** and **the world** on pages 5 and 8. How does Cain represent these themes according to what you read in both Genesis 4 and 1 John 3? There's not just one right answer here. (page 76)

Now look at your notes on **light** and **children of God** on pages 4 and 7. How does Abel represent these themes? There's not just one right answer here. (page 76)

Return to 1 John 3:16–18. These verses offer an application of how the love of Christ transforms our lives. How should we respond to a brother or sister in need? (page 76)

What does it look like to love someone in deed and truth based on what you studied today? (page 78)

#### Day Two | God Is Love

Read 1 John 3: 19–24. What attributes of God do you see displayed in these verses? (page 81)

Why are condemning hearts reassured by a reminder that God is omnipotent and omniscient (and also loving)? (page 82)

How does keeping God's commandment to love him and love others inform our prayer lives? (page 82)

Which attribute of God is hard for you to reconcile with God's love? (page 83)

#### Day Three | Loving in Truth

What confessional test do we apply? (page 84)

How is this an example of loving in truth? (page 84)

How can you apply discernment to the things of this world that you're allowing yourself to enjoy? Consider books, podcasts, movies, and TV. (page 86)

How can you apply discernment to the Christian content that you're allowing yourself to enjoy? Consider sermons, podcasts, social media, and even Christian movies. (page 86)

#### Day Four | God's Love on Display

What did the Son do (v. 10)? What is the result (v. 9)? (page 87)

How is God's love perfected (made complete) when we love others? (page 87)

What description of love from 1 Corinthians 13 feels difficult to you? (page 89)

How did Jesus Christ fulfill that kind of love? (page 89)



#### Day Five | Confidence in Him

Read 1 John 4:13–21. What ideas that you've previously studied are in this passage? (page 90)

How can we experience the day of judgment when we are assured that we remain in God (v. 17)? (page 91)

Why do the origins of our love make it impossible to love God and hate our brothers and sisters? (page 91)

When you struggle to have confidence before God, how does it impact your relationship with him? What truth from today's passage increases your confidence before God? (page 92)

Is there anything else from this week's study that stood out to you?

#### Weekly Application

Before you wrap up, share something new you learned about God or the gospel in your study this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

End your time together by using the weekly memory verse, 1 John 4:10, to guide your closing prayer.

God, we stand in awe of your grace—that you would choose us, love us, and call us your own. Thank you for making a way for us to be reconciled to you by sending your Son to suffer and die for our sins, taking on the punishment that we deserve. You pursued us in love even in our sin and we are completely undeserving of your grace. We praise you for your great love! Amen.

### WEEK FIVE God of True Life



**OPEN IN PRAYER:** Ask God to open the eyes of your hearts as you study.

**WEEKLY MEMORIZATION:** Begin with the weekly memory verse. Offer to practice as a group or ask if a volunteer wants to recite it. Be willing and prepared to share yourself.

**DISCUSSION:** Walk through the following questions from each day with your group. Remember that answering the simple questions can help women feel prepared to answer the more difficult questions.

#### Day One | Life-Giving Faith

What does everyone who has been born of God do according to verse 4? (page 96)

What do you think Christians are able to overcome in light of the verses you just read and John's definition of the world? (page 97)

What commands of Scripture do you find difficult to obey? (page 99)

What belief about God would empower your obedience? (page 99)

#### Day Two | Life-Giving Testimony

Read Mark 1:9–11. What happens with water in these verses? Who descends on Jesus? Who testifies that Jesus is the Son of God? (page 100)

Look back at 1 John 2:27 and 4:13. Then read John 14:15–17. What does the Holy Spirit do? (page 100)

Return to 1 John 5:11–12. What do we receive when we have faith in the testimony of the water and the blood and the Spirit that Jesus is the Son of God? (page 101)

Which of your current habits demonstrate that you treasure God's Word? What habit could you add to strengthen your dependence on God's Word? (page 102)

#### Day Three | Life-Giving Prayer

Read John 14:12-14. How should we ask? (page 104)

Does this mean that God will grant us anything we wish? Why or why not? (page 104)

Return to 1 John and read 3:21–22. How do these verses affirm what you've studied today? (page 105) Do you believe deep down that God hears your prayers and answers them? Why or why not? (page 106)

#### Day Four | Life-Giving Confession

What should we do if we see a fellow believer committing sin? (page 107)

How is God faithful to respond to such a prayer? (page 107)

Read 1 John 5:16-17 again. What part of these verses is most difficult to understand? (page 107)

Now turn back to Hebrews, this time to 6:4–6. What part of these verses is difficult to understand? (page 107)

#### Day Five | Life-Giving Freedom

Read Jude 1:20-21. What should we keep ourselves in? Who else is involved in this keeping? (page 111)

Read Jude 1:24-25. What does God keep us from? What is the purpose of his keeping? (page 111)

What is one area you're prone to look for life apart from God? (page 114)

What deeper desire are you seeking to fulfill from that idol? Refer back to the "**in our search for...**" statements in bold on the previous pages to help you identify your longings. (page 114)

Is there anything else from this week's study that stood out to you?

#### Weekly Application

Before you wrap up, share something new you learned about God or the gospel in your study this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

End your time together by using the weekly memory verse, 1 John 5:20, to guide your closing prayer.

God, thank you for making yourself known to us through your Word and through your Son! The ways you've been working to make yourself known to your people all throughout history prove your faithfulness and goodness, and we praise you for the way all your plans and promises are fulfilled in your Son, Jesus Christ! As we close out our study on the Letters of John, remind us of the light, love, and life offered to us in Christ and empower us to walk in your light and truth as we continue to grow in relationship with you. Amen.





# Gathering a group of five or more to study God's Word together?

Contact hello@wellwateredwomen.com for a special group discount on The Letters of John: God of Light, Love, and Life.