# Desiring God Lesson 5: Faith in the Son of God

## **LESSON OBJECTIVES**

## **Goals**

1. To remind students of John’s intention in writing
2. To convince students that Jesus is the fullness of God, worthy of their affection
3. To challenge students to spend time alone focusing on Jesus as the object of their worship

## Topics

Jesus, Faith, Believe

## Scripture Memorization

1 John 5:2

## **OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)**

## **GROUP BUILDING (10 minutes)**

Distribute pieces of paper to every student — 2-3 pieces each. Invite them to tear their papers in half or thirds, making smaller pieces. On each sheet of paper, have them write a compliment to someone. They should write the person’s name and then something kind about him or her. Encourage students to try and write one thing about every member of your group. As the leader, you participate too, paying special attention to those in your group who may not naturally get as many things written about them.

After they’ve had time to write, have the students crumple each sheet up into little balls. Tell them their job for 30 seconds is to constantly pick up and throw one of the paper balls at someone else. At the end of 30 seconds (which will be a little crazy), have them retrieve as many pieces as they can.

Lastly, have them read out loud the pieces they have in hand, even if the compliment is about them.

**GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)**

**General Discussion:**
• What was it like for you to try and write all those compliments? (Allow students to share.)
• What was it like to hear kind things being said about you? (For some students it might have been very difficult.)
• Why don’t you think we think of each other as kindly as this most of the time? (Allow students to share why they think we’re hard on ourselves.)

While this game doesn’t have a ton to do with our conversation today, I want you to walk out of this room knowing that you’re cared for by me, by your peers, and by God. Never doubt that you are loved and have value.

## **DIGGING IN (25 minutes)**

Today we’re finishing up our series on 1 John by studying 1 John 5.

**General Discussion:**
• What have you gained from this study so far, if you had to boil it down to one thing? (Allow students to share their take-aways, appreciating each one.)
• What is a question you still have about what John has written? (Acknowledge that questions remain, that there is much mystery in the Word of God and thank the students for being along for the journey.)
• What would you say is John’s main point in this letter? (That the reader would believe in Jesus as the God-in-flesh promise from a Father who loves us and calls us to live a life of love.)

1 John 5 is really two distinct sections of Scripture. We’re going to tackle them one at a time as we conclude our study.

**Read 1 John 5:1-12**

**Discussion Questions:**
1. Let’s make an attempt to sum up this section in one word. What word would you choose? (Jesus, belief, life, etc.)
2. The author continues his thoughts on love from 1 John 4. What does our love say about us? (It says what we value, it says who we belong to, it prompts us to overcome.)
3. What do you think it means to “overcome the world?” How do we do it, according to this passage? (To prevail, be victorious, etc.…it is by faith in Jesus that we overcome.)
4. John offers three different witnesses to the truth of what he is saying. Who are they? (The Spirit, the water, and the blood.)
5. It is Jesus who was born by water and blood — what does that mean? (He was born of a human and spiritual birth, perhaps — that He was baptized and crucified.)
6. From where do we receive the promise of eternal life from God? (Through His son, Jesus)

With most of the letter complete, John shifts to some concluding thoughts. Let’s look at those now.

**Read 1 John 5:13-21**

**Discussion Questions:**
1. Let’s try again to summarize the passage in one word. What word comes to mind? (Belief, life, death, proof, etc.)
2. John states the reason he has written in verse 13. What is it? (That they — and we! — would believe.)
3. Do you think he’s done an adequate job in this letter of proving his argument? Do you even think that’s his goal — to prove? (Allow students to share — maybe John is trying to persuade more than prove…maybe students think he’s made a tremendous case…maybe some still have doubts.)
4. There is also some confusing things in this passage — what do you think it means that “there is a sin that leads to death” and John’s advice not to pray about that? (Given this context, it seems to be those who continually reject the testimony of God and the love of Jesus and have total loyalty to the antichrist.)
5. According to verse 20, Jesus gives us understanding…what do you think that means? (Jesus helps us see and understand the Father, who God is, fully.)
6. What do you make of John’s final advice to “keep yourselves from idols?” (He has spent his whole letter coaching them on the authenticity, truth, and power of Jesus — he doesn’t want them to settle for a substitute.)

And thus, John concludes his first letter.

## **MAKING IT REAL (20 minutes)**

We’re going to do something a little different to end this lesson and this series on 1 John. We want to give you plenty of time to spend alone. My challenge is three-fold:

1. Go back through and scan 1 John. Pray that God would bring to mind a lesson you’ve learned from this great letter. Read back through the whole letter at least once or read a particular chapter 2-3 times.
2. I want you to respond to what you’re reading with a drawing or poem or other written reflection. (Have some basic art supplies and paper for students available to use). Don’t worry about how good it looks, but rather how honest it feels. Make this piece of art a prayer to God, based on what you’ve read that is really resonating with you.

3. Spend time in stillness asking God how He would like you to respond. Don’t worry too much about whether you’re listening good enough or if your mind is wandering. Instead, just try to sense what God might be calling you to, based on 1 John and your response during this time.

We’re going to give you full 10-15 minutes to spend this time in solitude. We can read and talk and discuss — and that has merit — but John has put forth an argument here about Jesus and the world and who we are, and you need to draw some conclusions for yourself.

If you need anything during this time — to talk more or pray or confess or to ask a question — I’ll be here for you and you can approach me one on one.

Take some time, and at the end of that time, I’ll close us in prayer all together.

## **CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)**

Pray this prayer over the youth:

“God, as we’ve read and talked and now sat in stillness and drawn and written and prayed, we’re mindful of your presence. We’re mindful of Your testimony. We’re grateful for Your faithfulness. May we live faithfully…persuaded…confident in who we are in You. Because of You. Thank You, Jesus, for Your faithfulness to us. Yours is the glory. Amen.”