

Sermon Based Study - Gateway Groups, Merced

"Bond Together/Grow Together"

For the week of 1-29-2023

For You as the Teacher/Host

Remember to begin each Small Group session with a word of prayer. Please keep in mind that the purpose of this curriculum guide is to cultivate a deeper relationship with the Lord and each other through conversation that intentionally engages the weekly message.

Quick Review Discuss the message briefly. Did anything challenge or confuse you?

***Opener Question or Activity:** Have you ever played a game with someone who cheated? Have you ever been inclined to cheat in a game? Talk about either the cheater, or yourself and why you did it.

Sunday's Main Scripture Text: 1 Peter 3:8-16 - "Testimony"

Digging Deeper: *(Teachers/leaders, feel the freedom to not ask every question)*

1. Read aloud 1 Peter 3:8-16. Verse 8 lists five characteristics that contribute to your credibility. Which of them stirs you as something you want more of in your life? Explain why this is so important.
2. Verse 14 addresses your possible suffering for God. How does this affect your credibility as a Christian? With God? With Christians? With the world? Have you ever experienced this?
3. Verse 16 speaks about your conscience. This could be considered as your credibility with yourself, as your conscience will approve or condemn your actions. How would you describe your conscience and how has this impacted how you live?
4. Pastor Al spoke about our testimony this week. The Greek word is taken from the courts - being on the witness stand. What makes a believable witness in the courtroom? In what ways could you "stand on trial" for being a good witness as a Christian? Use this text to support your answer.
5. Read aloud 1 John 5:6-12. Particularly notice these words in the NASB version: *The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself(vs. 10)*. What does it mean that the testimony is "*within you*" or "*accepted by you*"(NIV)?

Apply it today: Looking back over this week's teaching, what is most important for you to remember and why? How will you grow in the area you have identified?