

What is John's overarching goal with the book of 1 John? Why is this important to keep in mind as we go along? (1 John 5:13. The aim is to help with certainty and assurance, not cause doubt for Christians. It's important because people do get tripped up on John's black & white approach, but need to remember his goal)

The first evidence of knowing your sins are forgiven is outward: You walk in the light. How is fellowship harmed or weakened when you aren't consistently walking with Christ in love and obedience?

How have you seen fellowship with believers increase and deepen when your personal relationship with Christ is strong?

When people think of sin today, there is the "no shame" camp and the "full of shame" camp. Before you came to Christ, which camp were you in? How is the gospel so effective at speaking into both camps?  
(It illuminates people who don't see sin as a big deal to its massive reality and consequences. It shows people filled with shame that Christ removes that shame by his grace, so we live assured of his love and our forgiveness)

When we confess (agree with God about our sin), we are forgiven and cleansed. Why are both of those realities so important to celebrate?  
(We are legally forgiven of all the debt sin creates with us to God; the stain of sin is wiped away and we are completely righteous in his sight through Jesus)

Think personally about both of those realities – forgiven and cleansed. How can you testify to the power of these promises in your life? How does this (or how should this) affect our confidence in our salvation?

As our advocate, Jesus appeals to God's justice and not only his mercy for our forgiveness. Why is it "just" of God to forgive us and not only merciful?  
(Jesus paid our guilty sentence of all our sins, so we will not be punished twice for sin. It aligns with God's justice that we are forgiven)

Propitiation is the removal of God's wrath against sinners by the death of Jesus. How should the truth of Jesus being our propitiation both humble you and make you tremendously confident in your forgiveness?  
(“It is finished” / His payment was accepted in full for me / I couldn't do anything (humble) yet I only need to receive his grace for my assurance)

**Accountability**: Is there a specific area of your life (thoughts, beliefs, habits, actions, attitudes, motivations) that you know you need to confess as sin to God? Speak those things to one another and take them to God in prayer to experience his forgiveness and cleansing.