LIFEGROUPS

Series: Christianity, Really? **Scripture: 1 John 4:1-10** **Date: May 6 & 7, 2017**

—[LET'S START]—

- Share with the group some of the "push backs" you have experienced or seen take place in regard to the Christian faith.
- Dale mentioned that all religions are exclusive, including atheism. With that in mind work together to come up with a definition of "exclusive" in regard to religion. (Is there a little irony in being asked to be inclusive in coming up with the definition of exclusive?)
- John 3:16 begins, "For God so loved the world…" Discuss how this is both exclusive and inclusive.

—[LET'S TALK]—

1 John 4:1-10

1. Have someone read 1 John 4:1-6 aloud. There is a spiritual yearning in people and there are spiritual influences behind religion, so the conclusion is that there will always be some form of religion(s). What does John say is the way to know which is the right one?

2. A recent survey indicated that a growing number of religious Americans (including evangelicals) believe that many religions can lead to eternal life. In light of verse 5, discuss what is happening within this trend and why.

3. It is estimated that the Muslim population will surpass the Christian population of the world during the second half of this century. What can we do to prepare for this mission field?

4. Have someone read 1 John 4:7-10 aloud. All other religions may say it differently, but when it comes down to it, they all tell us that we can attain salvation through our own efforts. How is Christianity different?

—[LET'S ACT]—

- Many religions today are all about trying to escape the flesh and spiritually evolve until we finally get absorbed into the divine energy that holds the universe together. The goal is to transcend consciousness. Jesus came to renew us spiritually and give us a glimpse of our future life. With that in mind, we are to transform the world. Where and how do you begin?
- A worldly viewpoint may see God as condemning people for not believing in Jesus. However, the Bible says in John 3:16-17, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." How do you get someone to see that the astounding thing is that God does not want to condemn us but rather He wants to save us through Christ Jesus – exclusivity filled with grace?

—[SERMON REVIEW]—

- Bible passage: 1 John 4:1-10
- Because of our spiritual longing there will always be religion(s) in the world to answer the big questions.
- All religions are exclusive:
  - Each is committed to a particular way of defining who God is.
  - They are not the same – they all do not point to God.
- Two ways the world is trying to stop religion:
  - Trying to weaken religion.
  - Legislating religion to be private.
- All other religions seem to hold that you need to do something to earn salvation. Christianity's distinctive is grace. God has done it all – providing our salvation out of His love for us.

—[NOTES]—