

STUDY GUIDE

“For His Name’s Sake”

1 John 2:12

A Guide for Personal or Group Study

Key Text

“I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name’s sake.” —
1 John 2:12

Purpose of This Study

John writes to give genuine believers assurance of their salvation. In this verse he reminds us that our forgiveness is not primarily about us—it is for the glory of God’s name. This study explores four key truths about our salvation drawn from 1 John 2:12.

The Four Points of the Message:

1. **The Ground of Our Salvation** – Jesus Christ and the gospel
2. **The Grace of Our Salvation** – We are God’s little children
3. **The Gift of Our Salvation** – Forgiveness of sins
4. **The Goal of Our Salvation** – For His name’s sake

I. The Ground of Our Salvation

Summary

The ground (foundation) of our salvation is the holy life and substitutionary death of Jesus Christ, announced in the gospel. No one is saved apart from the gospel of Jesus Christ. The written Word of God is the means by which God brings sinners to new life and gives believers ongoing assurance.

Key Scriptures

- 1 John 1:1–4 – John writes of the historical person and work of Christ
- 1 John 2:1–2 – Jesus is our Advocate and the propitiation for our sins
- Romans 1:16 – The gospel is the power of God for salvation
- James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23 – We are born again through the Word of truth
- 1 John 5:13 – Assurance comes through what has been written

Reflection & Discussion

1. Why is the written gospel (Scripture) essential for both conversion and assurance?
2. In what ways do Christians sometimes look for assurance in experiences, feelings, or performance rather than in the gospel?
3. How does regularly “gorging your heart with gospel truth” strengthen your walk with Christ?
4. What practical steps can you take this week to keep the gospel central in your life and family?

Personal Application

The gospel is not only for unbelievers. Mature believers never outgrow their need of it. Identify one specific way you will deliberately feed on the gospel this week (e.g., memorizing a gospel passage, reviewing the cross in your private worship, or sharing the gospel with someone).

II. The Grace of Our Salvation

Summary

John affectionately calls true believers “little children” (Greek: teknon). This term of endearment points to a radical transformation: we who were once enemies and slaves of sin have been adopted as God’s own children by sovereign grace. We are His possession, purchased by the blood of Christ.

Key Scriptures

- Romans 5:10 – We were reconciled while still enemies
- Ephesians 2:13 – Brought near by the blood of Christ
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 – New creation in Christ
- Ezekiel 36:26 – God removes the heart of stone and gives a new heart
- Romans 8:15 – The Spirit of adoption by which we cry “Abba! Father!”
- 1 Corinthians 6:20 – Bought with a price

Reflection & Discussion

1. What does the title “little children” communicate about our relationship with God and with one another?
2. How does remembering that we were once enemies of God deepen your gratitude for adoption?
3. In what ways does the doctrine of adoption free us from a spirit of fear and slavery?
4. How should the knowledge that we are God’s purchased possession affect our daily decisions and priorities?

Personal Application

Spend time this week meditating on Romans 8:15–17. Write a short prayer of thanksgiving that specifically praises God for adopting you as His child.

III. The Gift of Our Salvation

Summary

The central gift is the forgiveness of our sins. On the cross, God made Christ to be sin for us; our sins were imputed to Him and He bore the full wrath of God in our place. In exchange, we receive Christ’s perfect righteousness. This justification comes by repentant faith—a faith that turns from sin to Christ.

Key Scriptures

- Isaiah 59:2; Colossians 1:21 – Sin separates us from God
- 2 Corinthians 5:21 – God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us
- 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:5–6, 10 – Christ bore our sins
- Romans 5:1–2 – Justified by faith, we have peace with God
- Proverbs 28:13 – Confession and forsaking of sin accompany true forgiveness

Reflection & Discussion

1. Explain in your own words the double imputation that occurs in justification (our sin to Christ; His righteousness to us).
2. Why is “faith without repentance” insufficient for salvation?
3. How does the finished work of Christ on the cross give lasting assurance when we still struggle with remaining sin?
4. What is the difference between informational faith and transformational (saving) faith?

Personal Application

Is there any sin you have been concealing rather than confessing and forsaking? Bring it into the light before the Lord today, trusting in the finished work of Christ for full forgiveness.

IV. The Goal of Our Salvation

Summary

The ultimate purpose of our salvation is not man-centered but God-centered. God forgives our sins “for His name’s sake”—to display and vindicate the greatness of His own glory, mercy, power, and grace. We are saved so that God might look good.

Key Scriptures

- Ezekiel 36:22–23, 32 – “It is not for your sake... but for My holy name”
- Psalm 23:3 – He guides us for His name’s sake
- Psalm 106:8 – He saved them for the sake of His name
- Romans 9:17–18 – God raised up Pharaoh to display His power and name
- Ephesians 1:5–6, 13–14 – Predestined and sealed to the praise of His glory
- Romans 11:36 – From Him, through Him, and to Him are all things

Reflection & Discussion

1. How does the statement “God saves us to make Himself look good” challenge or correct common views of salvation?
2. Why is a God-centered motive for salvation more comforting and more glorious than a man-centered one?
3. In what practical ways can your daily life more clearly display the glory of God’s name?
4. How should this truth shape the way we share the gospel with others?

Personal Application

Write a brief statement of purpose for your life that begins with God’s glory rather than your own benefit. Keep it where you will see it regularly this week.

Memory Verse

1 John 2:12

“I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name’s sake.”

Closing Challenge

Your salvation is God-centered—as is all His cosmos. If God is radically God-centered in His perfections, shouldn’t we be, because of our redemption?

“He saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus from all eternity.” — 2 Timothy 1:9

We have every reason to glorify Him. Amen.

Suggested Prayer

Father, thank You that my sins have been forgiven—not because of any worth in me, but for the sake of Your great name. Thank You for the ground of my salvation in Christ, the grace that made me Your child, the gift of full forgiveness, and the ultimate goal of displaying Your glory. Help me live this week in the joy of these truths and for the praise of Your glorious grace. In Jesus’ name, Amen.