

I JOHN 1

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to I John chapter 1 as we continue our study through the Bible, and we begin this fascinating letter.

Keep in mind that towards the end of John's life Emperor Domitian sentenced John to be boiled in oil for his faith, for proclaiming that Jesus is Lord and Savior. That is what tradition tells us.

But the boiling oil had no effect on John, he survived and thus, Domitian ordered John to be sent to the Isle of Patmos, off the coast of Asia Minor. This place was nothing more than a barren rock that juts up out of the Aegean Sea and it served as a Roman penal colony where prisoners were sent to die.

It is there, on this barren island that God gave to John the Book of Revelation. We are told of this in Revelation 1:9, **"I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."**

Domitian died in 96 A. D. and John was released and allowed to return to Ephesus where he lived out the remainder of his life and ministry. John was buried in Ephesus.

Many believe that I John, II John and III John were written sometime between 80 A. D. to 95 A. D. from Ephesus. And thus, it would seem it was before his imprisonment on Patmos.

John, after his release from Patmos, at this point in his life, was probably around 100 and was probably the last surviving apostle. The others were martyred for their faith in Jesus but not John.

John does not mention himself as being the author but as you read this letter it obviously has to be someone who was close to Jesus, who walked with Him and saw the risen Lord.

Also, from the external evidence we see the early church fathers, like Polycarp who knew John, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian all speak of the apostle John being the author of this letter.

Also, John does not say who this letter is to, which church or churches he was writing to.

Again, we can infer that John was writing to the churches in Asia Minor, the churches mentioned in Revelation chapters 2 and 3 and, like I have said, he probably wrote this from Ephesus where tradition tells us John was at.

One of the problems John is dealing with is Gnosticism or those who knew.

The Greek word **GNOSIS** means “*knowledge*” and this group supposedly had some kind of special spiritual insight that went far beyond the Word of God. And please understand that there were various views within Gnosticism but one of their ideas was that the flesh is evil, and the spirit is good. Thus, a divine being could never inhabit a body of flesh.

And here is a main point in this false teaching and it is in regard to Jesus. Some said He was a spirit and just hovered over the ground, He never left footprints.

You see, Jesus could never inhabit a body of flesh, that was evil in their thinking, so He must be spirit.

Others said that when Jesus was baptized the Spirit of God came upon Him and left before He went to the cross.

And so, John will be hitting these things hard and heavy because they were just beginning to enter the church. Gnosticism was only going to spread more and more, and John did not want these believers to become confused by these false teachings!

John lists four reasons why he wrote this letter, and they are as follows,

1. YOUR JOY MAY BE FULL – I JOHN 1:4, “And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.” John wants them to be full, overflowing with the joy of the Lord. Thus, as you read this letter, may your joy be full!

2. YOU MAY NOT SIN – I JOHN 2:1, “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” John wants them to grow in holiness, to walk in the truth as any father desires of his children!

3. THAT YOU MAY NOT BE DECEIVED – I JOHN 2:26, “These things I have written to you concerning those who try to deceive you.” John wants them to know the truth because the truths of God will set them free from the lies of these false teachers. It is a warning to beware of false teachers!

4. THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE – I JOHN 5:13, “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.” John wants them to not only believe in Jesus, to receive that free gift of eternal life that is only found in Him, but to know that our salvation is secure in Jesus and we can know that we are saved!

Notice how this plays out.

John is writing these things so that your *JOY MAY BE FULL* and that is accomplished as we focus on Jesus.

John is writing these things so that you *MAY NOT SIN* and that is accomplished as we are led by the Spirit striving against sin.

John is writing these things so that *YOU MAY NOT BE DECEIVED* by the false teachers with their doctrines of demons and that is accomplished as we are in the Word of God and apply it to our lives.

And John wrote these things so that *YOU MAY BELIEVE* so you will not only come to know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, but you would know that your salvation is secure in Him and that is the heart of the Father.

You see, Jesus brings us joy, the Spirit keeps us from sinning, the Word keeps us from the lies of the Devil, and we are secure in Christ, it is the heart of the Father!

So as we go through this letter we will pick up on these things because that is what John is trying to instill in these believers who may have been complacent at this time.

How did that happen? What changed that they were becoming complacent in their walk with the Lord?

Think about it. It's been some 60 years since the Lord was crucified and we are into second and third generation Christians. And what was important to that first generation was not being passed down to future generations!

And John, a first generation Christian, an elder, wants to stir them up, awaken them and keep them from the errors that were creeping into the church.

Now, for a quick outline of this letter,

- 1. THE LIGHT OF GOD – I JOHN 1-2**
- 2. THE LOVE OF GOD – I JOHN 3-4**
- 3. THE LIFE OF GOD – I JOHN 5**

To sum up this letter, listen to how “Living Letters” from the Life Application Bible puts it. We are told,

John wrote about the most vital aspects of faith so readers would know Christian truth from error. He emphasizes the basics of faith so we can be confident in our faith. In our dark world, God is light. In our cold world, God brings the warmth of love. In our dying world, God brings life. When we feel a lack of confidence, these truths bring us certainty.

- Living Letters, The Life Application Bible, p. 260

With that as our background, let's begin reading in I John chapter 1, starting in verse 1 and see what this elder of the church has for us through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

I JOHN 1

VERSE 1

John opens up with a bang here in I John 1:1 as he speaks of Jesus as he tells us, **“That which was from the beginning . . .”**

John is not talking about the beginning of the world or creation, but before there was anything, when all there existed was God, Jesus was there, the Word was there!

It is as Micah 5:2 says, **“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”**

In other words, from beyond the vanishing point, as far back as you can go, God the Son existed.

John tells us the same thing in John 1:1-2, **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.”**

In other words, the Word, which became Jesus in the Incarnation, has always existed. He is equal with the Father and is eternal.

Remember what Genesis 1:1 says, **“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”** Those words are connected to the creation of the physical universe.

In other words, Genesis starts with the physical creation and moves us forward in time. But John speaks of something different there in John 1:1-2. His Gospel takes us back before time and the physical universe existed to teach the pre-existence of Christ to the creation.

In fact, when John says, “**In the beginning was the Word**” he uses the imperfect form of the Greek word *en* which expresses the idea of “*continuous timeless existence.*”

Then, in John 1:3 when he says, “**All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made**” he uses the Greek word is *egeneto* that means “*to come into existence*” or to “*begin to be.*” Here he is speaking of the creation of all things, the physical universe and all that goes with it.

But, in regard to the Word, no matter how far back in time you go, the Word has always existed because He is God!

Now the Bible never tells us how God came into being, it just tells us He has always existed, that He is eternal. I don't understand that with my finite mind, but I believe it by faith because I trust in God's Word!

And so we have seen that the eternal God, Jesus, became flesh and dwelt among us and John can attest to that with 100% confidence.

How can he be so sure?

Because John was there, he heard Jesus talk, he saw Jesus with his own eyes, he looked steadfastly at Jesus examining Him, he touched Jesus.

Thus, Jesus is not some ghost or spirit, but He was flesh and blood in the incarnation and He was fully God!

In spite of what the Gnostics were saying, John was there and thus, these things are true concerning the Word of life!

You see, they were eyewitnesses of the Lord, and thus, the Gnostics were not, and we can trust the accounts of John and the other disciples because they saw what transpired.

It is as one writer put it, ***“I am so glad my knowledge of eternal life is not built upon the speculations of the philosophers or even theologians but on the unimpeachable testimony of those who heard, saw, gazed at, and handled Him in whom it was incarnate. It is not merely a lovely dream, but solid fact, carefully observed and an accurately recorded fact.”***

So we have seen that Jesus is Almighty God, He is eternal and in the Incarnation God dwelt in a body of flesh. Fully God and fully man in the Incarnation.

Now you may be thinking, ***“How can that be? I don’t understand that?”***

Again, I may not be able to understand it with my finite mind, but I believe it by faith because that is what the Word of God is teaching us. And Jesus said that the Word of God is truth!

People are looking for life, abundant life, everlasting life but apart from Jesus, the Word of life, you will never find it!

It is as Paul tells us in Romans 6:23, **“For the wages of sin is death, but the [free] gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

Apart from Christ is death but in Christ is life, abundant life!

Warren Wiersbe sums this up for us like this. He wrote,

If you were God, how would you go about revealing yourself to men? How could you tell them about, and give them, the kind of life you wanted them to enjoy?

God has revealed Himself in creation (Rom 1:20), but creation alone could never tell us the story of God’s love.

God has also revealed Himself much more fully in His Word, the Bible.

But God's final and most complete revelation is in His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9).

Because Jesus is God's revelation of Himself, He has a very special name: "The Word of Life" (1 John 1:1).

This same title opens John's Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1).

Why does Jesus Christ have this name? Because Christ is to us what our words are to others. Our words reveal to others just what we think and how we feel. Christ reveals to us the mind and heart of God. He is the living means of communication between God and men. To know Jesus Christ is to know God!

- Warren Wiersbe, The Wiersbe Bible Commentary – NT, p. 960

Exactly. And listen to what John goes on to say regarding his witness of Jesus.

VERSES 2-3

Now some Gnostics believed that if the flesh is evil and Jesus is flesh, then He must not be God. But John already showed that Jesus is eternal, that He is God.

But the majority of the Gnostics believed that Jesus is God but that He could not be flesh and that heresy was being brought into the Church. It was a doctrine against His humanity!

A. T. Robertson explains it like this as he tells us,

The Gnostic speculation concerned itself primarily with the origin of the universe and the existence of evil. They assumed that God is good and yet there is evil in existence. Their theory was that evil is inherent in matter. And yet the good God could not create evil matter. So they postulated a series of emanations, aeons, spirits, angels that came in between God and matter.

The idea was that one aeon came from God, another aeon from this aeon, and so on till there was one far enough away from God for God not to be contaminated by the creation of evil matter and yet close enough to have power to do the work.

- A. T. Robertson

That is the heresy that the Jehovah Witnesses hold on to! Jesus is not Almighty God but a lesser god! Not true, not even close. That would go against not only what Jesus said of Himself but what the Scriptures tell us of Jesus!

And yet, if Jesus is fully God, then, according to their reasoning, He could not have been flesh because He would then be evil!

And from that there were two ways that this was played out in a person's life.

First, if the physical body was evil, then it would have to be punished with starving yourself, punishing yourself, denying basic hygiene and the likes.

The second line of reasoning went like this, ***“Since only the spirit of man is important - the physical can be indulged with sex, food and other excesses - because it's irrelevant. It doesn't matter what you do to it - so indulge it with every form of debauchery because only the spirit of man matters.”***

I think you can clearly see what the most popular view was!

Thus, these false teachers would go around with their false doctrine and tell Christians that they could indulge themselves in whatever they wanted because it really didn't matter. You can be involved in sexual sin, get drunk, do whatever you wanted because only the spirit mattered, the flesh is of no value at all, it was not important. Thus, they could just give into the flesh and do what they wanted!

So these Gnostics claimed that Jesus only came in the spirit, he hovered over the ground, He was not flesh and blood. They were denying the humanity of Jesus.

But that goes against what the Scriptures clearly teach us. John tells us in I John 4:2-3, **“By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.”**

The Living Bible puts these verses like this, **“and the way to find out if their message is from the Holy Spirit is to ask: Does it really agree that Jesus Christ, God’s Son, actually became man with a human body? If so, then the message is from God. If not, the message is not from God but from one who is against Christ, like the ‘Antichrist’ you have heard about who is going to come, and his attitude of enmity against Christ is already abroad in the world.”**

That is some of the false teaching that John is coming against.

We also see this in II John 1:7, **“For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.”**

The Living Bible puts it like this, **“Watch out for the false leaders-and there are many of them around-who don’t believe that Jesus Christ came to earth as a human being with a body like ours. Such people are against the truth and against Christ.”**

I think that is very clear and yet, this false teaching infiltrated the early church, and it is still out there today.

How can people fall prey to these false teachings? Because those teaching them are very confident in the way that they teach them and secondly, people don’t know, or they reject what the Word of God is saying!

Make no mistake about it, John is speaking of the Incarnation or as he put it in John 1:14, **“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”**

And what John has seen he is declaring to others. He was a witness of all that Jesus did in His earthly ministry.

The word **“manifested”** in I John 1:2 is the Greek word *phanerao* and means *“to cause to become visible, to make appear, to cause to be seen.”*

Remember what Paul said in Colossians 1:15 about Jesus, that, **“He is the image of the invisible God . . .”** In other words, if you want to know what God the Father looks like, look to Jesus because He is a picture of what the Father looks like.

Now here’s the thing. Sin has separated us from God. The Father had that eternal life to give to us, but our sin kept Him from doing that as Isaiah 59:1-2 tells us, **“Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.”**

The price for our sin had to be paid and it was, as God became flesh, He dwelt among us and went to the cross of Calvary to pay in full the penalty for our sins.

Now we can have fellowship with the Father because our Mediator or bridge builder, Jesus Christ has done that for us.

That is Peter's point in I Peter 3:18, **“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.”**

That word **“fellowship”** here in I John is the Greek word, *KOINONIA* and it is a deep rich fellowship.

Jesus came to bring us back to koinonia or fellowship with the Father because our sin had separated us from Him but now, in Christ, we can have fellowship with the Father and with others!

Morgan tells us, “The Greek word koinonia is derived from the word koinos, which very literally means common, in the sense of being shared by all. . . . Those who have fellowship one with another, are those who share the same resources, and are bound by the same responsibilities. The idea becomes almost overwhelming when it is thus applied to the relationship which believing souls bear to the Father, and to His Son Jesus Christ. . . . The Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and all believers have all things in common. All the resource of each in the wondrous relationship are at the disposal of others. Such is the grace of our God, and of His Son.”

Look at the message that John is delivering to them.

That Jesus Christ is Almighty God, He is eternal, and God became flesh and blood to dwell among us and give to us eternal life that is only found in Him. Our sins have separated us from God, but Jesus paid in full the penalty for our sins and has reconciled us back to God!

Thus, we can have fellowship with God once again and we can have fellowship with each other because He has brought us together as one.

That was the prayer of Jesus on the night before His crucifixion as John tells us. In John 17:20-23 we are told as Jesus is praying to God the Father, **“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.”**

And in knowing all this, in receiving all of this into our lives, what does that do for us?

Listen to what John goes on to say.

VERSE 4

Here is the result of fellowship with God, fellowship with believers, all that God has for us – ***OUR JOY WILL BE FULL!***

David said in Psalm 16:11 **“You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”**

And what we see here is that John clearly echoed an idea Jesus brought before His disciples the night before His crucifixion.

He wanted fullness of joy for them, even knowing that the cross was directly in front of them.

Remember what Jesus said in John 15:11, **“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.”**

Also, in John 16:24 we are told, **“Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.”**

And in John 17:13 we are told, **“But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.”**

That is what should be seen in our lives, this fullness of joy that is based in the Lord and not on outward circumstances.

One writer gives to us this insight. He wrote, *“How much Christians need to learn this. There is so much bickering in Christian circles, so much complaining, so much unhappiness. This was never meant to be. Christians were meant to be filled with love and joy and peace - in short, with all the virtues that are the result of the life of Christ within the Christian . . . To be filled with Christ is the secret of real Christian living. It is the secret of true happiness.”*

And yes, we as Christians can lose our joy and that is the point that John is making here, he wants our joy to be full!

But we see that external circumstances, sin, moods, emotions can take our joy away.

Christian joy is based in Jesus, others and then yourself. I think that joy is lost many times because we take our eyes off of Jesus and focus on the external circumstances. We take our eyes off of helping others and we focus on self a lot more than we should. And we become moody, emotionally unstable, angry, bitter, and we fall into sin.

Thus, John’s desire is that our joy would be full and that is the desire of Jesus for us as He said in John 15:11, **“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.”**

Notice, **“that My joy may remain in you”** which tells me it may not because of where you are focused!

VERSE 5

Make no mistake about it. John is not making this up, it is not his own personal opinion, it is not what he thinks about God, but it is God’s message that He spoke to John about Himself.

Again, **“This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you.”**

John has the authority to tell us these things because he heard them from Jesus and now he is declaring them to us!

What is this message that God gave to John?

“that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.”

What is his point?

His point is simple and very important. John is telling us that God is absolutely holy, absolutely righteous, and absolutely pure. We need to understand that about God, that in Him there is the complete absence of evil of any kind.

And yet, as you hear people talk about God, there is a myriad of ideas out there. The problem is that these are their ideas, their opinions, their views about God and they are worthless.

And, like I have said, John tells us the message that he is going to share with them is not his personal views or opinions, but what the Lord Himself shared with him and now he is declaring to us!

That is an important lesson for us today, that what we speak forth about God, the message we are declaring is coming from the Word of God and not our own personal views or opinions!

And if you don't understand this point, then when bad things happen, when life gets tough, you are going to blame God! You may feel that *"God doesn't love me!"* or *"How can God do that to me?"* or *"God is not being fair!"* and the list can go on.

And you may not think much about that, but it is out of the wrong concept of God that we then break fellowship with God because like the Sun, we see a dark spot in God.

Here's the thing, God is light, there is no darkness in Him at all and thus, the problem is not with God, but your perception of God based upon the situation or circumstances you are facing.

Let me also ask you this question.

What does light do?

It exposes things, it is pure, it speaks of holiness, it guides us, helps us to see while darkness speaks of sin, it speaks of evil, it speaks of being lost, not able to see where you are going.

Thus, God is light as James tells us, **"Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning."** James 1:16-17.

Thus, there is no fear of God having a dark side or doing something that is evil. That needs to be a foundational truth of God because if it isn't, as you look at this world your concept of God can be skewed. You won't understand how a loving God can allow these things to happen and you will lose sight of God being holy, that He is light!

And this concept of God, that He is light, that there is no darkness at all should affect our lives. You see, John is going to give to us two points about how this affects our lives. Listen to the first point in I John 1:6.

VERSE 6

In other words, you can't say that you are walking with God if you are living in sin. And the Greek word for "**walk**" is conveying a habitual lifestyle. How can you be walking in fellowship with God when you are moving in the opposite direction from God? You can't and that is the point! You just continue on in sin and you are ignoring the conviction of God in your life like David did after he sinned with Bathsheba and had her husband, Uriah, killed. It took David almost a whole year before he repented and got right with God, but there still were consequences to his actions.

Now, the big question is this. *"Is John speaking of salvation here, that we can lose it?"*

Not at all, he is speaking of fellowship with the Father, that is what he has been talking about.

You see, our sin can break that fellowship. And like I have said, John is not speaking of an occasional slip, but a lifestyle, a pattern of walking in darkness, of unrepentant sin.

You can claim you have fellowship with God but that is just a lie because your sin has broken that relationship! God is light, there is no darkness in Him at all and yet some were living in darkness and claiming to have fellowship with God and John says it is a lie because light and darkness don't mix!

Paul, in I Corinthians 5:9-13 tells us, **“I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner - not even to eat with such a person. For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? But those who are outside God judges. Therefore ‘put away from yourselves the evil person.’”**

He is warning us to stay away from unrepentant believers who were living in sin, but why?

So they may repent and come back to the Lord.

Also, their sin may bring us into their darkness, so avoid them.

Don't have koinonia with them. But before you break fellowship with them, confront them in love. If they refuse to repent then bring another with you and if they still refuse to repent, bring them before the church leaders and if they still refuse to repent, they are to then be disfellowshipped until they do repent!

Now, as we read on, we will see the second point that John is making regarding God being light and what it does in our lives. Listen to what John has to say.

VERSE 7

If we as Christians walk in the light, walk where God is, if we are obedient to Him, we not only have fellowship with God but with each other.

You see, first your relationship with God needs to be in line, and then and only then will our fellowship with our fellow man be in line.

That is how it is laid out in the Ten Commandments.

The first four deal with our relationship with God and then the last six deal with our relationship with our fellow man.

It is like this:

1. **THE UNIQUENESS OF GOD: Exodus 20:3**
“You shall have no other gods before Me.”
2. **THE WORSHIP OF GOD: Exodus 20:4-5a.**
“You shall not make for yourself a carved image - any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them.”
3. **THE HONOR OF GOD: Exodus 20:7.**
“You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.”
4. **THE BLESSING OF GOD: Exodus 20:8, 11b.**
“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. . . . Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.”

Now, if you reject God then your relationship with man will be off, you won't have your roots of morality based in God but in secular humanism, which is constantly changing and in opposition with God.

But if you follow God then this is what you will see:

5. **PROTECTION OF THE FAMILY: Exodus 20:12.**
“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.”
6. **PROTECTION OF HUMAN LIFE: Exodus 20:13.**
“You shall not murder.”
7. **PROTECTION OF MARRIAGE: Exodus 20:14.**
“You shall not commit adultery.”

8. **PROTECTION OF PRIVATE PROPERTY: Exodus 20:15.**

“You shall not steal.”

9. **PROTECTION OF TRUTH AND INTEGRITY: Exodus 20:16.**

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

10. **PROTECTION OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS: Exodus 20:17.**

“You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.”

Make no mistake about it. If you are walking in the light as He is in the light your fellowship with God will be awesome, your joy will be full. And out of that relationship with God, your relationship with your fellow man will be in line as well.

But, if we are not walking in the light, then our fellowship with God is broken and we lose that fullness of joy that only God can give to us. And it is out of that we see that our fellowship with our fellow man will be way off, it will be ugly!

The solution is simple, and John will speak of it more as we read on, but he said here in verse 7 of I John chapter 1, **“... the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”** And in the Greek, it speaks of a continual cleansing.

We need that because we do sin but understand that John is not speaking of our salvation here, but again, our fellowship.

You see, the blood of Christ has cleansed us from all our sins in a positional sense.

But if we ignore our sins it can hinder our relationship with God, a practical sense.

You see, the more we ignore our sin the more we become accustomed to it and instead of walking in the light where God is, we are walking in the darkness and we don't have that fellowship with God as we once did.

Now please understand that God is gracious and patient with us. He desires a relationship with us so He will work with us to try and keep that relationship going, chastening us if it is needed because He loves us that much!

Now, as we read on, we might call the next three verses – ***CONFUSION, SOLUTION, DELUSION!***

VERSES 8-10

Here is the confusion – we think that we don't sin any longer!

Remember that John is coming against the false teachers and teachings of Gnosticism and they believed that the body is evil, and the spirit is good.

Thus, they believed they were not sinning, just their body was!

That would mean, in their minds, that they could sin without any concern, they could party hearty and not even care because it is the flesh and that is evil!

I know, it sounds crazy but when you reject the truth, that is all there is left!

Today people say things about their sin like this, "***Well, I'm not perfect!***" or "***I'm only human!***" or "***I got my temper from my parents!***" and there are all kinds of excuses for our sin, but they are just that, excuses.

God does not want you to justify your sin but to repent of it, to agree with Him regarding it.

John makes it clear, if you think you are sinless, if you think you are perfect, then the truth is not in you!

I think we all understand this truth. That all human beings are born with a sin nature and thus, we are in rebellion against God and we commit sin every day!

And now, like we don't have enough people telling us that we are good, we have many and really most mental health professionals that tell us we are not responsible for our bad behavior.

Our bad behavior is the result of external factors because we were born mentally healthy, or without sin!

And thus, when we do something wrong it is not our fault, we are just the victim of what others have done to us! Sound familiar? It should because we hear this so often today and it has come into the church as well! And let me be clear on this – ***IT IS NOT TRUE! IT IS A LIE OF THE DEVIL. WE WERE BORN IN SIN AND THAT SIN IS IN OUR LIVES!***

Christian author, T. A. McMahon put it like this, and he does nail it. He wrote,

Psychological counseling often promotes the belief that problems adversely affecting a person's mental and emotional welfare are determined by circumstances external to the person, such as parental abuse or environment.

The Bible tells us that a man's evil heart and his sinful choices cause his mental, emotional, and behavioral problems. "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man" (Mark 7:21-23).

Psychotherapy attempts to improve the self through concepts such as self-love, self-esteem, self-worth, self-image, self-actualization, etc.

The Bible teaches that self is humanity's main problem, not the solution to the ills that plague mankind. And it prophetically identifies the chief solution of psychological counseling, self-love, as the catalyst to a life of depravity. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves . . . (2 Timothy 3:1).

- T. A. McMahon, The Berean Call, March 2006

So we see here all this *CONFUSION*, but what is the *SOLUTION*?

Listen again to what John tells us in I John 1:9, "**If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**"

Before we can receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior we must confess before Him that we are sinners, that is our nature, and ask Him to cleanse us from all our sins, to be our Lord and Savior, to give us a new nature in Christ.

When we do, at that moment, all of our sins are forgiven, cast as far as the east is from the west to be remembered no more.

That is where we are at positionally speaking, cleansed as white as snow, our salvation is secure in Him because He has paid in full the penalty for our sins, the work is finished, salvation wise!

But I don't believe John is speaking of the unsaved here, I believe he is speaking of those who are saved and are confused about things and they need to remember the solution!

Thus, once we come to Christ, we need to have that cleansing in our life, not for salvation but for fellowship.

You see, practically speaking we still sin, and sin can break our fellowship with God, it can keep us away from Him.

It is as Proverbs 28:13-14 tells us, **“He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy. Happy is the man who is always reverent, But he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity.”**

Look at the Kings of Judah and Israel and you can see what happens as they harden their hearts to God. They ignored their sin. And because of that they moved farther away from God.

Why?

Because the light exposes their darkness and thus, for them to continue in their sin, to ignore their sin, they walk in darkness.

But our God is so gracious, He is so merciful that if we will confess our sin before Him, those sins we committed today, He will forgive, that fellowship won't be hindered!

Listen to the point that William MacDonald brings out regarding this. He wrote,

The forgiveness John speaks about here is parental, not judicial. Judicial forgiveness means forgiveness from the penalty of sins, which the sinner receives when he believes on the Lord Jesus Christ. It is called judicial because it is granted by God acting as Judge.

But what about sins which a person commits after conversion? As far as the penalty is concerned, the price has already been paid by the Lord Jesus on the cross of Calvary.

But as far as fellowship in the family of God is concerned, the sinning saint needs parental forgiveness, that is, the forgiveness of His Father. He obtains it by confessing his sin.

We need judicial forgiveness only once; that takes care of the penalty of all our sins - past, present, and future. But we need parental forgiveness throughout our Christian life.

- William MacDonald

And please understand that the Greek word for “**confess**” is HOMOLOGEO, (hom-ol-og-eh’-o) and it is literally telling us that we are to say the same thing, or we are to agree with God regarding sin, to hate sin and not to just hate it, but to avoid it, forsaking sin.

The problem comes when we don’t agree with God and then we don’t forsake the sin, and we break fellowship with God because of it.

But notice what we need to do. We need to confess or agree with God regarding sin, forsake it.

And God is faithful and just, He will forgive us of our sins. Not only that He will also cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

It is speaking of the sanctification process as God is molding and shaping our lives to be like Him!

So we have seen the – *CONFUSION* and then the – *SOLUTION* and lastly the ***DELUSION!***

John put it like this in I John 1:10, “**If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us.**”

There has only been One Person who has never sinned, and it was not me and it wasn’t you, it is – *JESUS!*

Yes, Paul tells us in II Corinthians 5:17, “**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.**”

The flesh has been crucified with Christ, the old man has been put to death, but in these bodies of flesh we still do battle. We have a new nature, we are no longer controlled by the flesh, but by the Spirit but, like I said, that flesh tries to resurrect itself with all of its passions and desires.

Thus, don't play with it, but crucify it, don't feed it, but feed the spirit!

That is what Paul is telling us in Galatians 5:16-18, **“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”**

And John's point is simple. If you think you no longer sin, you are wrong and in saying that you make God out to be a liar because He has told us we are going to do battle with the flesh nature because it will war against our spirit that wants to live for God.

Now, in regard to a person's salvation, if they truly believe they are perfect, without sin in a practical sense, then you are not saved because Jesus, the Word, is not in you.

It is as Trapp said, *“No man was ever kept out of God's kingdom for his confessed badness; many are for their supposed goodness.”* How true that is!

If you don't think this is a battle, a battle of the flesh and the spirit, then what is Paul's point in I Corinthians chapter 9.

Listen to what Paul wrote in I Corinthians 9:24-27 as he speaks of this battle we face.

He says, **“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.”**

May we take this battle seriously and may we also remember, **“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”** I

John 1:9.

You see, in a positional sense, we are saved, cleansed from all our sins.

In a practical sense, we still sin, and our confessing isn't to make God aware, but to make us aware of where we are at, to keep our heart sensitive to God! To keep those doors of fellowship with God open!

Listen to these words from Paul in I Corinthians 1:4-9 as he thanks God for all He has done in their lives.

He said, **“I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.”**

Yes, He is faithful and all He asks us to do is to walk in the light, to dwell in His presence, to be where He is at and we can enjoy fellowship with Him.

John said in I John 1:4, **“And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.”**

Don't you just want to shout for joy because of all that God has done for you? I hope so! I pray that you leave here this evening full of the joy of the Lord, you have a passion to serve others, and you walk in the light as He is in the light!