

## STUDIES IN 1 JOHN

### STUDY NUMBER TWO: Fellowship is Broken by Sin

1 John 1:5-2:2

Key Verse 1:6: "If we say that we are having fellowship with Him and we are walking around in the darkness, we are lying and not doing the truth."

#### TEXT:

v. 5 And this is the message which we have heard from Him and we are proclaiming to you, that God is light, and in Him there is not one bit of darkness.

v. 6 If we say that we are having fellowship with Him and we are walking around in the darkness, we are lying and not doing the truth.

v. 7 But if we are walking around in the light as He Himself is in the light, we are having fellowship one with the other, and the blood of Jesus His Son is cleansing us from every sin.

v. 8 If we say that we are not having sin, we are leading ourselves astray, and the truth is not in us.

v. 9 If we are confessing our sins, faithful is He and just that He should forgive us our sins, and should cleanse us from every unrighteousness.

v.10 If we say that we have not sinned, we are making Him a liar, and His Word is not in us.

2:v. 1 My little children, these things I am writing to you in order that you may not commit an act of sin. And if anyone commits an act of sin, we are continually having one who pleads our case with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous one.

v. 2 And He Himself is satisfaction for our sins; not for ours only but also for the whole world.

## INTRODUCTION:

(I Lost Everything in the Post-Natal Depression  
by Erma Bombeck)

I have dieted continuously for the last two decades and lost a total of 758 pounds. By all calculations, I should be hanging from a charm bracelet.

Although I kid Weight Watchers a lot, it is the only organization in which I ever lost a great deal of weight. But I fought them.

Every Thursday morning, a group of us had to "weigh in" before the lecture. Our ritual was enough to boggle the imagination. We got together a checklist of precautions before we actually stepped on the scale.

Bathroom? Check. Water pill? Check. Have you removed underwear, wedding rings, nail polish? Check.

Set aside shoes, corn pads and earrings? Check. Are you wearing a summer dress beneath your winter coat? Check.

The first week I stepped on the scale and my instructor said, "You have gained." (Next week I cut my hair.)

The next week, she said, "You have lost eight ounces, but that is not enough." (I had the fillings in my teeth removed.)

The third week, I had dropped a pound, but my instructor was still not pleased. (I had my tonsils taken out.)

Finally, she really chewed me out. She accused me of not sticking to the diet and not taking it seriously. That hurt.

"I didn't want to tell you," I said, "but I think I am pregnant."

"How far?" she said coldly, clicking her ballpoint pen to make a notation on my card.

"Possibly three days," I said.

She glowered, "Any other excuses?"

"Would you believe I have a cold and my head is swollen?"

"No."

"How about I was celebrating the Buzzard's return to Hinkley, Ohio, and had butter on my popcorn?"

She tapped her pen impatiently on the card and stared at me silently.

"Lint in the navel?" I offered feebly.

"How about first one at the trough?" she asked dryly.

I learned quickly never to argue with a woman who had the scales on her side.

I saw my old instructor the other day and she eyed me carefully and asked, "When are you returning to class?"

"As soon as I have my appendix removed," I said, returning her gaze.

I'm not sure, but I think I heard her moan.

pp. 55-56

(Laugh Again by Charles R. Swindoll)

Surely God smiles with understanding when he hears prayers like the one Erma Bombeck says she has prayed for years: "Lord, if you can't make me thin, then make my friends look fat."  
p. 243

(Men Who Win: Pursuing the Ultimate Prize  
by Steven J. Lawson)

I am the last person in the world to talk about this. I eat from the three basic food groups--McDonald's, Wendy's, and Burger King. I have a personality clash with vegetables. They don't like me, and the feeling is mutual.  
p. 72

#### PENNY-PINCHING PAINTER

A man was painting the church building. Noticing that he would not have enough paint to finish, he added thinner. As the paint continued to run out, the painter added more and more thinner.

A rainstorm the next day washed away his paint job. The pastor met the painter on the job and demanded that he "repaint and thin no more!"

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

#### I'M OK, YOU'RE OK

A little boy prayed, "Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am!"

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

Van Gorder begins his exposition of these verses with the words of the following hymn:

I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
 "I am this dark world's Light;  
 Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise,  
 And all thy day be bright."

I looked to Jesus, and I found  
 In Him my Star, my Sun;  
 And in that Light of life I'll walk,  
 Till traveling days are done.

What a privilege to walk hand in hand with Christ, our light! This chorus of a familiar hymn expresses the beauty of that relationship:

Friendship with Jesus,  
Fellowship divine,  
 O what blessed sweet communion!  
 Jesus is a friend of mine.

p. 21

Mitchell points out:

We have come now to the first main division of the book. There are three statements concerning the nature of God in this Epistle:

God is light. That is, God is absolute in holiness.

God is righteous. That is, He is right in everything He does and every act of His is right.

God is love. That is, love characterizes the energy of His nature toward men.

p. 31

Human nature, when contemplating sin and its consequences, usually limits the devastating effects of sin to:

the one who is committing it,

and the one who is the target.

There is, however, a far more serious consequence to sin that is often neglected, that is:

to realize that when we sin, we are sinning against God,  
 we are breaking fellowship with Him.

For instance, JOSEPH, when he was tempted to immorality by POTIPHAR'S WIFE, said, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" What troubled Joseph was not the possibility of sinning against the woman or against Potiphar but against God Himself.

Sin in my life involves my relationship to God. The same thing is true in DAVID's case. When he was making his confession he said, "Against Thee and Thee only have I sinned and done this evil in Thy sight."

The more serious consequence of sin in our lives, then, is the fact that our relationship is affected because fellowship is broken by this sin.

We are going to be considering these thoughts in the following verses in 1 John.

In our previous study, we looked together at the 4 FOUNDATIONS FOR FELLOWSHIP:

1. Jesus Christ came in human flesh as the eternal Son of God,
2. to bring life.
3. Once we have responded to Jesus Christ and received that life, we now have a base for foundation for fellowship--fellowship both on the horizontal and the vertical planes.
4. This fellowship issues in an abundant joy.

v. 5 And this is the message which we have heard from Him and we are proclaiming to you, that God is light, and in Him there is not one bit of darkness.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

In the prologue the author asserted that he was writing about things he had heard, seen, and touched. Here he began with something he had heard.

"FROM HIM" refers to the Lord Jesus Christ. This precise statement is not found in the recorded words of Jesus, but the author was an apostle who heard much more than was written down (cf. John 21:25). There is no reason to think that John did not mean just what he said. This is a truth he had learned from the Lord.

In describing God as "LIGHT" as John frequently did, he was, no doubt, thinking of God as THE REVEALER OF HIS HOLINESS. Both aspects of the divine nature figure in the discussion of sin and fellowship. As "LIGHT," God both exposes man's sin and condemns it.

"LIGHT," then, is the REVEALER OF HOLINESS--and as "LIGHT," God exposes man's sin and condemns it in the process.

#### Psalm 33:10-15

The Lord foils the plans of the nations;  
 he thwarts the purposes of the peoples.  
 But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever,  
 the purposes of his heart through all generations.  
 Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,  
 the people he chose for his inheritance.  
 From heaven the Lord looks down  
 and sees all mankind;  
 from his dwelling place he watches  
 all who live on earth--  
 he who forms the hearts of all,  
 who considers everything they do.

#### Hebrews 4:13

And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

#### (Making Sense out of Suffering by Peter Kreeft)

Dostoyevski says, "If God does not exist, everything is permissible."  
 p. 58

Van Gorder says:

God is absolute in holiness, for "in Him is no darkness at all." Because He is perfect in character, in Him is found no flaw, no darkness, no mistake, no weakness, no easygoing way regarding evil, and no overlooking of the least defiling element. And because Jesus Christ is the revealer of God the Father, He could say "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). It would be audacious for Him to make that claim if He were mere man--but how blessed the truth that He is God's Son!  
p. 23

If we were trying to outline these verses that we are considering, we would note together that the message is given in verse 5 that "GOD IS LIGHT."

Then in verses 6-10 we have 5 different responses to this message.

And in the 1st 2 verses of chapter 2, we have the prescription for those who have committed sin.

We can say then that there are 3 MAJOR POINTS:

1. "GOD IS LIGHT,"
2. THE 5-FOLD RESPONSE TO THAT MESSAGE,
3. THE PRESCRIPTION FOR THOSE WHO HAVE COMMITTED SIN.

John is saying that when he heard Jesus Christ speak, there was a message which He gave and now it is his purpose to proclaim that message to us.

That message is:

"GOD IS LIGHT, AND IN HIM THERE IS NOT ONE BIT OF DARKNESS."

What does it mean that "GOD IS LIGHT"?

"LIGHT" in the word of God always speaks of 1 OF 3 THINGS:

1. HOLINESS
2. PURITY
3. PERFECT RIGHTEOUSNESS

Ephesians 5:8

for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light

2 Corinthians 4:6

For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

1 Peter 2:9

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

1 Timothy 6:16

who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.

1 Thessalonians 5:5

for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness;



John 1:4-9

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.  
 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. He came for a witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came that he might bear witness of the light. There was the true light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.

Colossians 1:12, 13

giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,

Acts 9:3

And it came about that as he journeyed, he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him;

Acts 9:8

And Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus.

Because "GOD IS LIGHT," He knows the innermost heart of man. LIGHT always reveals:

THE HIDDEN FLAWS,  
 THE STAINS,  
 AND THE IMPERFECTIONS.

LIGHT reveals where we are wrong.

There are no secrets with God because He is light. Everything is visible. Our thoughts lie open to His sight and all of our actions are beheld by Him.

John 3:19-21

And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.

Our normal human tendency is to cover our problems and our inadequacies. It is a painful thing in the divine relationship to become transparent and to walk before the God of the universe in light.

As LIGHT speaks of God and all that is good,

DARKNESS naturally speaks of the opposite--that which is evil and that which is opposed to God.

Martin Luther refers to Satan in his hymn:

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

He is:

The Prince of Darkness grim,  
We tremble not for him;  
His rage we can endure,  
For lo, his doom is sure;  
One little word shall fell him.

(From The New Church Hymnal, 1976, Lexicon Music, Inc., #5)

2 Corinthians 4:3, 4

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

"AND THIS IS THE MESSAGE WHICH WE HAVE HEARD FROM HIM AND WE ARE PROCLAIMING TO YOU, THAT GOD IS LIGHT, AND IN HIM THERE IS NOT ONE BIT OF DARKNESS."

The "DARKNESS" stands for ignorance apart from Christ.

John 12:35, 36a

Jesus therefore said to them, "For a little while longer the light is among you. Walk while you have the light, that darkness may not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. While you have the light, believe in the light, in order that you may become sons of light."

1. It stands for IGNORANCE.
2. It stands for IMMORALITY APART FROM CHRIST.

Romans 13:12-14

The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

1 Thessalonians 5:4-9

But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Ephesians 5:11

And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them;

Ephesians 4:18, 19

being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

The fruit of the Spirit will not grow in the darkness.

The 3RD THING we observe about the "DARKNESS" is:

3. The "DARKNESS" speaks of the ultimate destiny of those who do not wish to know Jesus Christ as Savior.

Matthew 22:13

Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Jude 13b

for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.

Who is capable of describing what eternity will be like without God? To be abandoned from His presence is to be abandoned from all that is light, and therefore eternity is spent in complete darkness.

The tragedy of hell itself is not just the pain but also the fact of no presence and no light.

The message has been given in verse 5 that:

"GOD IS LIGHT, AND IN HIM THERE IS NOT ONE BIT OF DARKNESS."

Now we are going to come to a consideration of a 5-fold response to this message in verses 6-10.

v. 6 If we say that we are having fellowship with Him and we are walking around in the darkness, we are lying and not doing the truth.

This is the "paint and pillows in the Santa Claus suit" approach to fellowship with the Father.

It is profession of fellowship without possession.

This is the hypocritical or phony response to the message. This is saying one thing with our lips and experiencing something quite different with our lives.

We make a profession of fellowship but have not the possession of that experience.

The possibilities here could be of a person saying something with his lips about a relationship to Jesus Christ, and he could be a non-Christian--never having experienced a relationship; or this could be a Christian who says he's having fellowship and he's really out of fellowship because of some sin in his life.

Since this is written to Christians and the message is one of FELLOWSHIP, this latter must be the case.

This is our KEY VERSE to Study #2:

"Fellowship is Broken by Sin."

(The Body by Charles Colson with Ellen Santilli Vaughn)

George Gallup has found that while almost half the country attends church services, only 6 to 10 percent of all Americans are what he terms "highly spiritually committed."

Gallup compared the behavior of church and unchurched in a variety of categories--people who called in sick when they weren't, people who puffed their resumes, people who cheated on tax deductions--and found "little difference in the ethical views and behavior of the church and the unchurched."

Astonishingly, another survey found a deterioration in behavior among those who professed to be born again.

Gallup also found little difference in charitable habits. Only 25 percent of evangelicals tithe. While 40 percent say faith in God is the most important thing in their lives, those who make between \$50,000 and \$75,000 a year give only an average of 1.5 percent to charity, religious or otherwise. This same group spent 12 percent of their income on leisure pursuits.

So while the church may seem to be experiencing a season of growth and prosperity, it is failing to move people to commitment and sacrifice. The hard truth is that we have substituted an institutionalized religion for the life-changing dynamic of a living faith. For most of us church is the building where we assemble to worship; its ministries are the programs that we get involved in; its mission is to meet the needs of its parishioners; and its servants are the professional clergy we hire to shepherd us. Church growth has come to refer more to such things as location, marketing, architecture, programs, and head counts than to the maturity of the body of Christ.

When compared with previous generations of believers, we seem among the most thoroughly at peace with our culture, the least adept at transforming society, and the most desperate for a meaningful faith. Our raison d'etre is confused, our mission obscured, and our existence as a people in jeopardy. Worst of all, our leaders know it--but seem unable or unwilling to do anything about it.

p. 31

(The Hidden Value of a Man by Gary Smalley and John Trent)

Abraham's nephew Lot got himself and his family in trouble because he pitched his tent too near the gates of Sodom. Today, Sodom is a satellite dish. It pitches its electronic tent in far too many homes.  
p. 99

Have you ever been using an electric Weed Eater or hedge trimmer when you walk beyond the range of your cord? Suddenly you're disconnected. Without power. You can't accomplish anything. Suddenly that helpful tool in your hand becomes useless; it's just a hunk of metal and plastic.

That's what happens to the gold sword of personal power when we become preoccupied with ourselves. The golden light of its blade fades away. The power drains out in an instant. The once-productive, powerful sword becomes a useless, dead thing in our hands--just a dull hunk of metal.

Could that be why you're having trouble wielding the gold sword in your home? in your church? in your business? Could you have inadvertently "unplugged" it by drifting into self-preoccupation?  
pp. 97-98

Ephesians 4:30

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

We always seem to want the shortcut to peace:

"Lord, make everything okay, but don't ask me to face what's wrong."

You will notice that there are 2 THINGS that this person is guilty of:

1. HE IS LYING WITH HIS LIPS,
2. HE IS LIVING FALSELY WITH HIS LIFE.

It is human nature to want to cover sin when it is committed, but there are so many serious consequences to this pattern of conduct. You cannot help but be affected:

EMOTIONALLY,

PHYSICALLY,

and SPIRITUALLY by such actions.

We want to COVER,

we want to COMPROMISE,

we are unwilling to pay the price of CHANGE.

#### Psalm 32:3-5

When I kept silent,  
 my bones wasted away  
 through my groaning all day long.  
 For day and night  
 your hand was heavy upon me;  
 my strength was sapped  
 as in the heat of summer.  
 Then I acknowledged my sin to you  
 and did not cover up my iniquity.  
 I said, "I will confess  
 my transgressions to the Lord"--  
 and you forgave  
 the guilt of my sin.

The best thing we can do for the sake of the body of Christ and for our own personal walk with God is when we have sinned, to come immediately to the Lord--the One whom we have really offended--and deal with the matter openly and honestly and experience the cleansing and forgiveness available to us.

When we have dealt with the matter on the VERTICAL then we turn to the HORIZONTAL and acknowledge to our brothers and sisters where we have injured them or failed to be the kind of people who are pleasing to our Lord.



Isaiah 5:20, 21

Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight.

Psalms 26:2, 3

Test me, O Lord, and try me,  
examine my heart and my mind;  
for your love is ever before me,  
and I walk continually in your truth.

Psalms 139:23, 24

Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my anxious thoughts.  
See if there is any offensive way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting.

2 Corinthians 13:5

Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you--unless indeed you fail the test?

The hymn writer has it right when he prays:

Search me, O God, and know my heart today;  
Try me, O Saviour, know my thoughts, I pray;  
See if there be some wicked way in me:  
Cleanse me from ev'ry sin, and set me free.

I praise Thee, Lord, for cleansing me from sin:  
Fulfill Thy word, and make me pure within;  
Fill me with fire, where once I burned with shame:  
Grant my desire to magnify Thy name.

Lord, take my life, and make it wholly Thine:  
Fill my poor heart with Thy great love divine;  
Take all my will, my passion, self and pride;  
I now surrender: Lord, in me abide.

O Holy Ghost, revival comes from Thee;  
Send a revival, start the work in me:  
Thy Word declares Thou wilt supply our need:

For blessing now, O Lord, I humbly plead.

(From "Cleanse Me," The New Church Hymnal, 1976, Lexicon Music, Inc., #187)

v. 7 But if we are walking around in the light as He Himself is in the light, we are having fellowship one with the other, and the blood of Jesus His Son is cleansing us from every sin.

## 2 John 4

I was very glad to find some of your children walking in truth, just as we have received commandment to do from the Father.

## 3 John 4

I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.

The picture here of one "WALKING AROUND IN THE LIGHT" is of one who is walking in the truth and everything is okay.

Whereas in verse 6 we have the FALSE or HYPOCRITICAL APPROACH,

here in verse 7 we have the HONEST RESPONSE TO THE LIGHT.

This person is "WALKING AROUND IN THE LIGHT." He does not have anything to hide.

To "walk around in the light" would mean that we would follow Guy King's suggestion that:

We have a 3-FOLD RESPONSIBILITY:

1. TO GROW IN GRACE,
2. TO GLADDEN OUR FRIENDS,
3. TO GLORIFY GOD.

Do you ask what it means to walk in the light? I believe the answer is a very simple and a very practical one: It just means to walk in obedience. Do you recall how as a little child, if you were guilty of some act of disobedience the sun seemed to go behind a cloud? That was how it was with Adam and Eve after their first disobedience. The beautiful sunshine of Eden's fellowship of God was overcast. Disobedience always casts a shadow.

So having said in John 8:12, "I am the light of the world," our Lord adds, "he that follows Me (which again is just plain obedience) shall not walk in the darkness"--no shadow then--"but shall have the light of life."

To walk in the light, therefore, is to live in detailed obedience to the revealed will of God day by day and step by step.

#### Psalm 89:15

Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you,  
who walk in the light of your presence, O Lord.

#### Proverbs 8:34

Blessed is the man who listens to me,  
watching daily at my doors,  
waiting at my doorway.

#### Proverbs 4:18

The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn,  
shining ever brighter till the full light of day.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Christians sometimes feign spirituality while engaging in acts of disobedience. Spurious claims to fellowship with God have been a tragic reality throughout the history of the church. Walking in the darkness is disobeying Him. But the refreshing contrast is here in verse 7. We have the picture of one who is walking in the light as He himself is in the light.

To be "WALKING IN THE LIGHT" is to be walking in openness and responsiveness to the light.

The statement in verse 7 in its entirety affirms that 2 THINGS are true of the believer who walks in the light:

1. THEY ARE IN FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD
2. THEY ARE BEING CLEANSED FROM EVERY SIN

Van Gorder says:

To walk in the light is to live in complete openness toward God. The psalmist said, "He who dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Psalm 91:1). Every Israelite knew that "the secret place of the Most High" was the holy of holies in the tabernacle and temple--the place where God manifested His presence.  
p. 28

Notice, please, that this verse does not say, "If we walk according to the light." It lays down no conditions. If it did, no Christian would be in fellowship with God--for none of us can live a perfect, sinless life. The question is not how we walk but where we walk. And where is that? "In the light." When our hearts are open to the Light, we are willing to judge as wrong anything that is not in keeping with that light. If some action, word, or thought is not right, we will expose and confess it, then put it away.  
p. 29

Stott says:

'Walking in the light' describes 'absolute sincerity . . . to be, so to speak, all of a piece, to have nothing to conceal, and to make no attempt to conceal anything'.  
p. 75

Blaiklock quotes:

As The Expositor's Greek Testament remarks: "When we walk in the light, that demonstration of the length to which God has gone in sacrifice for our sakes, is ever before us, and the amazing spectacle subdues our hearts, takes possession of them and drives out evil affection."  
p. 24

Mitchell points out:

There is a difference between relationship to Christ and fellowship with Him. Here John is not talking about relationship with God. That has been forever settled. There is only one place where a Christian can walk and that is in the light, in the kingdom of God. Here he is talking about fellowship with God who is light. The Christian who fails God breaks fellowship with God. This does not take him out of the kingdom of God. It does not change his position before God. He is still a member of God's family.  
p. 36

J. Vernon McGee illustrates this verse by saying:

I went squirrel hunting several years ago when I was holding meetings in my first pastorate in Middle Tennessee in a place called Woodbury. After the morning service a doctor came to me and asked me if I would like to go squirrel hunting, and I told him there was nothing I would rather do. After lunch he brought me a shotgun, and we drove out to his farm and parked in the barnyard. We walked along by the creek there and had some good hunting. Finally we came to a fork in the creek, and he said to me, "I'll take the right fork, and you take the left fork. It will lead you around the hill and back to the barnyard. We will meet there." In the meantime it looked like it was going to rain. It had drizzled once or twice and stopped. When I started out by myself, it started drizzling again. I kept going, and I made the turn around the hill. I noticed quite a few caves in the hill, and when it started to really rain, I knew I was going to get wet; so I crawled into one of those caves. I went into the largest one I could find and sat in that dark cave for about thirty minutes. I began to get cold and decided I needed a fire; so I gathered together a bunch of leaves scattered on the floor of the cave and put a match to them. I soon had a small fire going, and when I looked around the cave, I found out that I wasn't alone. I have never been a place in which there were so many spiders and lizards as there were in that cave! Over in one corner was a little snake all coiled up, just looking at me. My friend, I got out of there in a hurry, working on the assumption that possession is nine-tenths of the law, and since those creatures had the cave ahead of me, it belonged to them. I proceeded down to the barn and really got soaking wet, but I wasn't going to stay in that cave!

Now let me make an application. I had been sitting in comfort for about thirty minutes while I was in darkness, but when the light of the fire revealed what was in the cave, I could no longer be comfortable there. My friend, across this land today are multitudes of folk who are sitting in churches every Sunday morning but are not hearing the Word of God. As a result, they are sitting there in darkness, hearing some dissertation on economics or politics or the "good life" or an exhortation on doing the best they can. And they are comfortable. Of course, they are comfortable! But if they would get into the light of the Word of God, they would see that they are sinners and that they cannot bring God down to their level. John has said that if a person says he is having fellowship with God but is living in sin, he is lying.  
pp.761-62

(If Jesus Has Come by Steve Brown)

The Westminster Larger Catechism says this about the first commandment:

The duties required in the first commandment are: the knowing and acknowledging of God to be the only true God, and our God [okay so far]; and to worship and glorify Him accordingly [still okay]: by thinking, meditating, remembering, highly esteeming, honoring, adoring, choosing, loving, desiring, fearing of Him; believing Him; trusting, hoping, delighting, rejoicing in Him [how are you doing?]; being zealous for Him; calling upon Him, giving all praise and thanks, and yielding all obedience and submission to Him with the whole man; being careful in all things to please Him, and sorrowful when in anything He is offended; and walking humbly with Him.

You say you have some trouble with all of that? Guilty!  
pp. 126-27

(The Existence and Attributes of God by Stephen Charnock)

When we honour him by acknowledging his purity, he will honour us by communicating of it to us. This is the way to derive a greater excellency to our souls.  
p. 524

## QUICK-QUOTE: SANCTIFICATION

"I sometimes say I've been sanctified a dozen times, but it never quite took. I very much appreciate that side of theology, but I think the kind of easy way that mainstream Protestantism tolerates sin without hope of change is not New Testament. The Holy Spirit wants us to keep making progress, although it's a process."

--Ron Sider

(In Christianity Today,  
Apr 27, 1992)

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

We can say that the 2 RESULTS that accrue from being honest with the Lord and "WALKING AROUND IN THE LIGHT" are:

1. WE ARE HAVING FELLOWSHIP WITH OUR HEAVENLY FATHER,
2. "THE BLOOD OF JESUS HIS SON IS CLEANSING US FROM EVERY SIN."

1. We are having communion.

2. There is an increased sensitivity of that which brings Him displeasure.

So the 2 RESULTS from "WALKING AROUND IN THE LIGHT" are:

1. "WE ARE HAVING FELLOWSHIP ONE WITH THE OTHER,"

What a glorious thought to recognize that we can have blessed and sweet communion with our Heavenly Father:

Genesis 5:24

Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.

The 2nd RESULT of "WALKING AROUND IN THE LIGHT" is seen in the next phrase:

2. "AND THE BLOOD OF JESUS HIS SON IS CLEANSING US FROM EVERY SIN."



Dr. Ryrie points out:

When we are walking in fellowship with the Lord, the light of God's word shines on additional areas of our lives and shows up our sins and frailties which then need the cleansing power of the blood of Christ in order that we may continue to walk in the light.

These may be areas that come to light in the normal cause of growing up physically and/or spiritually. For instance, as a Christian child, I was not concerned with the question of whether or not I would serve the Lord, when I did give my life to the Lord. Where I would serve him, was not an issue. Before I had children, the question of whether I would give them to the Lord as much as a Parent can, was not an issue. All these things arose in the normal progress of life, and as they came up, and I reacted positively to the will of God, the blood of Christ kept on cleansing me from all sin. This is the cleansing that relates to growth, not the cleansing that results from confessing known and deliberate sin.

It is an increased sensitivity to the things that hurt our heavenly Father.

It is the APOSTLE PAUL crying in:

Romans 7:24

Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?

It is ISAIAH in:

Isaiah 6:5

"Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the king, the Lord Almighty."

It is JOB in:

Job 42:6

Therefore I despise myself  
and repent in dust and ashes.

The closer you get to the light the more you are aware of sin in your life.

The hymn writer has it correct:

There is a fountain filled with blood  
 Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;  
 And sinners plunged beneath its flood  
 Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see  
 That fountain in his day;  
 And there may I, though vile as he,  
 Wash all my sins away.

v. 8 If we say that we are not having sin, we are leading ourselves astray, and the truth is not in us.

In verse 6 we had the false response of saying that we are having fellowship and walking around in the darkness,

in verse 7, it is walking in the light honestly,

and now in verse 8 we have the false response in that we are denying the existence of sin in our lives.

Have you ever noticed that when someone does something wrong there is usually 1 OF SEVERAL RESPONSES:

1. To the most immature the response is one of complete DENIAL:

"You've got to be kidding, I didn't do that; I couldn't have done that."

2. The 2nd approach is one of DEFENSE. It usually expresses itself like this:

"Well, you made me do it. If it hadn't been for you, I never would have done anything like that." This is placing the responsibility for one's actions upon someone else.

3. The 3rd method is the DETOUR method. This is just a little more grown up in the approach and in solving a situation where a problem has arisen. You usually get this sort of answer:

"Well, let's just say 'we did it,' and let each of us share a part of the responsibility for the problems."

How easy it is to say, "It is all your fault," when we are confronted with sin.

Why is it that it is so hard for us as Christians to recognize sin in our lives and to accept the responsibility for it?

Van Gorder says:

Knox translated this verse as follows: "Sin is with us; if we deny that, we are cheating ourselves; it means that truth is not in us." To claim the absence of sin in our lives, therefore, is to violate the truth of God's Word.  
p. 34

### HOMOSEXUALS CAN BE ORDAINED

The United Church of Canada's judicial committee has ruled that the denomination is not required to seek approval from local congregations for a recent General Council statement on the ordination of homosexuals. That statement said, among other things, that "all persons, regardless of their sexual orientation, who profess faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to him, are welcome to be or become full members of the church. . . . All church members are eligible to be considered for ordination as ministers."

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

### DOES ANYBODY CARE ABOUT "MORAL LITERACY"?

Shame, after all, is a moral position, and some of these kids have no language to express this.

A Harvard psychiatry professor who surveyed 5,000 children was shocked to find that the moral standards of nearly 60% of them are motivated by self-gratification. Many of these kids, the professor says, have been reared without any sense of guilt or shame.

"Does anybody care about 'moral literacy'?" Discipleship Journal, Jan/Feb 1991 [#61]. Page 12.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

## AN HONEST MAN

Charles Swindoll, in Growing Deep in the Christian Life, writes about a man who bought fried chicken dinners for himself and his date late one afternoon. The attendant at the fast food outlet, however, inadvertently gave him the proceeds from the day's business--a bag of cash instead of fried chicken.

They drove to the park and found a picnic table. When they opened the bag to pull out the chicken, they found instead over \$800! The man did the unexpected. He quickly put the money back in the bag and they drove all the way back to the fast-food place.

By this time, the manager was in a panic. The guy walks in and says, "A little while ago I ordered two chicken dinners and all I got was this money in a bag."

The manager was so relieved he just about hugged the fellow. "You're about the most honest man I've ever met. I'm going to call the Times. We'll get your picture in the paper."

Immediately the man began to protest. "Oh, no please don't do that." Just before he headed toward the door, he whispered, "You see, the woman I'm with is not my wife. She's, uh, somebody else's wife."

[Leadership, Spring 1992. Page 48.]

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

(The Existence and Attributes of God by Stephen Charnock)

So vile, so odious is sin in the sight of God. It is no light thing, then, to fly in the face of God, to break his eternal law, to dash both the tables in pieces, to trample the transcript of God's own nature under our feet, to cherish that which is inconsistent with his honour, to lift up our heels against the glory of his nature, to join issue with the devil in stabbing his heart and depriving him of his life. Sin, in every part of it, is an opposition to the holiness of God, and consequently an envying him a being and life as well as a glory. If sin be such a thing, 'ye that love the Lord hate evil.'

p. 509

The holiness of God is injured by our unprepared addresses to him, when, like swine, we come into the presence of God with all our mire reeking and steaming upon us.

p. 505

"IF WE SAY THAT WE ARE NOT HAVING SIN, WE ARE LEADING OURSELVES ASTRAY."

(Living by the Book by Howard G. Hendricks  
& William D. Hendricks)

### The Scientist and the Flea

A scientist was using the inductive method to observe the characteristics of a flea. Plucking a leg off the flea, he ordered, "Jump!"

The flea promptly jumped.

Taking another leg off, the scientist again commanded, "Jump!"

The flea jumped again.

The scientist continued this process until he came to the sixth and final leg. By now the flea was having a little more difficulty jumping, but it was still trying.

The scientist pulled the final leg off and again ordered the flea to jump. But the flea didn't respond.

The scientist raised his voice and demanded, "Jump!" Again the flea failed to respond.

For a third time the scientist shouted at the top of his lungs, "Jump!" But the hapless flea lay motionless.

The scientist then made the following observation in his notebook: "When you remove the legs from a flea, it loses its sense of hearing."

p. 192

(Victory through Surrender by E. Stanley Jones)

To have a wrong idea about the self may produce a wrong self and a wrong self may mean a misspent life. In a small mission plane I went over the spot in Zambia, Africa, where Hammarskjold met his tragic death. The pilot of the mission plane, who lived in Zambia, told me that they found in the wreckage of the U.N. plane the open map of Nadolo, a town in a section near Leopoldville, Congo, instead of the map of the city of Nadola, Zambia, the destination of the plane. The map of the Nadolo section showed that the pilot had a thousand feet more than he actually did have in landing at Nadola, for Nadola is higher than Nadolo. So he crashed in an open field in the night, thinking he had a thousand feet more than he actually had. He had the wrong map. The difference of an "o" and an "a" was the difference between death and life--and a very precious life.

If you have the wrong mental map of your self, you will probably come to wrong landings, a disaster instead of a destination.

pp. 8-9

(Looking Back, Moving On: Applying Biblical Principles of Freedom to Your Life by Boyd Luter)

The first of these, found in 1 John 1:8, is the consistent human tendency to self-deception in regard to sin. This pattern can helpfully be termed "internal spiritual denial." It is classically evidenced in many churches when, during a time set aside for confession of sin during the service, or before taking the Lord's Supper, we can't think of anything to confess.

Since John is clearly writing to those who are already believers (5:13), it is an invalid "dodge" to claim that Christians aren't sinners. And that seems to be exactly the kind of response John is anticipating when he makes his preemptive strike in 1 John 1:8. The wise veteran apostle is at pains to leave no doubt that, if you think you don't have a sin problem to "recover" from in some meaningful sense, you are lying to yourself. Nothing more and nothing less!

p. 61

(The Gospel According to Bubba by Chuck Meyer)

"He didn't want to let loose of his old identity, boy. I dang near had to cripple the sucker to get him to cut loose of it. I mean, he was attached to it like stink on a skunk--the way most people are."

"I can understand that, Bubba. Even though an old identity's painful, it's a lot more comfortable--maybe even enjoyable--than taking on a new one."

"Well, we rassled all night long until morning. I mean, we went for broke. We kicked and grunted and grabbed and hollered and swat (that's past tense of 'sweat,' boy) and tore and twisted till the sun rose. I had a great time. Course I was a mite younger then, and I enjoyed that stuff more. It's not that he was beatin' me ya know, just that I was gettin' hungry for some grits and Elgin sausage and I wanted to leave. And he was bound and determined not to let me."

p. 108

Isaiah 53:6

We all, like sheep, have gone astray,  
 each of us has turned to his own way;  
 and the Lord hath laid on him  
 the iniquity of us all.

Guy King in his book, The Fellowship, says:

This evil presence remaining is the reason why sin is so Universal. A jelly-mould gives its pattern to all its children: if you accidentally drop something into it, and chip the pattern, all the subsequent jellies will bear the mark of the fall. All those who come from Adam carry the stigma of his Fall. This also explains why Sin is so Attractive. There is a something in us that answers to the pull of the temptation without. A magnet will have no effect on a pile of wood shavings--there is nothing there to respond; but how different when the approach is to a pile of steel filings! There is an element in the steel that finds in a magnet something desirable, and succumbs to its draw. That magnet is like the temptation and this root in us finds fascination in it and yields to its invitation. Here, too, lies the suggestion of why Sin is so Strong. This root is like a spy within the castle, in league with the enemy outside, giving increased power to the onslaught, because he knows which doors to leave open. The evil triumvirate of the world, the flesh, and the devil is immensely strengthened by the fact that one of them is hiding within the stronghold itself. In this truth also we have the clue why Sin is so Usual. Left to ourselves, we shall always be liable to take the crooked way, and rarely likely to go straight.  
 p. 21

We not only are leading ourselves astray but:

"THE TRUTH IS NOT IN US."

I believe the apostle is referring here to the word of God itself. The word of truth tells us that:

"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

We learned back in verse 6 that:

when "we are walking in darkness we are lying and not doing the truth,"

and now here in verse 8 we see that:

"THE TRUTH IS NOT IN US."

#### Psalm 51:6

Surely you desire truth in the inner parts;  
you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.

#### Galatians 6:3

For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

#### (Who You are When No One's Looking by Bill Hybels)

I went to a close friend one time when I saw his life taking a bad turn. I took him to a restaurant and said, "I'm not trying to run your life, but I'm concerned about the direction it's taking." He was so angry that he came close to leaping over the table to punch my lights out. So, man of valor that I am, I looked him in the eye and said, "Sorry, I'll never mention this again." I didn't either, and he shipwrecked his life. I still see this friend occasionally, and many times I've said to him, "I failed you. I should have been on you like a shirt. I should have said, 'Leap over that table and deck me, if it will make you feel any better, but I'm going to tell you again that I'm concerned about your future.'" Maybe God would have used me if I had been a little more tenacious.

Whenever you take action on behalf of another person's well-being, you are taking a big risk. The comfort level between you may drop precipitously. Over time, however, the outcome of speaking the truth in love--especially when the relationship is basically mature and healthy--is usually positive.

p. 74



(Success, Motivation, and the Scriptures by William H. Cook)

Rather than admit there's a self I can't stand, I go into the business of excusing myself--as if God didn't know me better than that. A Tulsa newspaper recently carried a classic example.

Judge Gets Verdict by Mail

WICHITA, KAN. (AP)--The blizzard this week forced everyone to cope with unusual circumstances.

One Wichita man was scheduled to appear in Municipal Court Tuesday with a speeding charge. The court was closed because of the heavy snow, and the following letter arrived in the court clerk's Friday:

"I was scheduled to be in court February 23, 1971, at 12:15 P.M. concerning a traffic ticket. Well, I was there as scheduled. And to my surprise I was the only one there. No one called and told me that court would be closed.

"After going through the snow to be there on time, I decided to go ahead with the hearing as scheduled, which meant that I had to be the accuser (the patrolman who gave me the citation) and I had to be the accused and also the judge.

"The citation was for going 46 miles per hour in a 35 mile per hour zone. I had the speed alert on my car set on 44 miles per hour. As the accuser I felt that I was going over 35 miles per hour, but as the accused I knew that I was not going 46 miles per hour and as the judge, and being the understanding man that I am, I decided to throw it out of court this time, but it had better not happen again."

p. 91

(Jumping Hurdles, Hitting Glitches, Overcoming Setbacks  
by Steve Brown)

In a Charlie Brown cartoon, Charlie is eating a peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich, and as he eats he notices his hands and becomes enamored with them. He holds them up and starts looking at them, then muses: "I like my hands. They are fascinating. They really are. I have nice hands. They have a lot of character. Do you realize that these two little hands may someday accomplish great things? These hands may someday do marvelous works . . . miracles. They may build mighty bridges, or heal the sick, or hit home runs, or write soul-stirring novels. . . ." Lucy finally interrupts this grandiose musing and puts it in perspective: "Charlie, your hands have jelly on them."

p. 85

Evangelist D. L. Moody once said, "I've had more trouble with D. L. Moody than with any other man I've ever known." Thomas a Kempis said, "Be not angry that you cannot make others as you wish them to be since you cannot make yourself as you wish yourself to be."

p. 108

How are you doing on the equality scale? Let's find out. Complete the statements on the left-hand side of the chart by checking off one of the categories in the right-hand section of the chart that seems to best describe your situation.

I LIKE . . .	USUALLY		SOMETIMES		RARELY
flattery	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
winning	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
my way best	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
center stage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
getting even	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

If any of your answers landed in any of the columns, then welcome to the club of sinners, where everyone stands on the same platform, whether they sin rarely, sometimes, or usually. Keep that in mind, regardless of how high you seem to be climbing on the leadership or popularity ladders. We're all equal in Christ--as sinners saved by His blood, as servants saved by His blood, and as leaders saved by His blood. No exceptions.

(The Body by Charles Colson with Ellen Santilli Vaughn)

The twentieth century has produced the most staggering advances in knowledge, education, and technology in all of history. It also has given us Hitler and the Holocaust, the horrors of mass slaughter in two world wars, and countless other conflicts. It has given us brutal rulers, genocide, serial killers, greed, rape, horror, bloodshed, and evil of unimaginable proportions. Yet the myth of man's goodness endures.

p. 177

(Rut, Rot or Revival: The Condition of the Church  
by A. W. Tozer)

When people in the church only point to others for improvement and not to themselves, it is sure evidence that the church has come to dry rot. It is proof of three sins: the sin of self-righteousness, the sin of judgment and the sin of complacency.

When our Lord said, "One of you will betray me," thank God those disciples had enough spirituality that nobody said, "Lord, is it he?" Every one of those disciples said, "Lord, is it I?" If they would not have so responded there could not have been a Pentecost. But because they were humble enough to point the finger in their own direction the Holy Spirit fell upon them.

Self-righteousness is terrible among God's people. If we feel that we are what we ought to be, then we will remain what we are. We will not look for any change or improvement in our lives. This will quite naturally lead us to judge everyone by what we are. This is the judgment of which we must be careful. To judge others by ourselves is to create havoc in the local assembly.

p. 10

v. 9 If we are confessing our sins, faithful is He and just that He should forgive us our sins, and should cleanse us from every unrighteousness.

Mitchell says:

This is different from the way we entered into relationship with God. At the cross we received forgiveness. The moment we became Christians we were forgiven every sin. He did not ask us to confess our sin. He asked us to receive the Saviour. The moment we took Jesus Christ as our Saviour, on the ground of His wonderful grace, He forgave our sin. In whom we have redemption through His blood the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace (Ephes. 1:7).

p. 41

When you realize that something has come between you and your Lord, do not go another hour out of fellowship with Him. You are not waiting for God, God is waiting for you. Confess your sin and be cleansed. He knows all about it, He is your Father. Then enjoy the day in fellowship with Him. It will delight the heart of God and it will fill you with great joy.

In this 9th verse we have the real key to maintaining fellowship with the Father:

As long as we continue to:

DENY,

DEFEND,

or to PRETEND about the real situation, we are going to be living out of fellowship with the Father and strained in our relationships with each other.

It is the design of our heavenly Father that we live in:

OPENNESS,

HONEST WALKING IN THE LIGHT,

and MAKING CONFESSION of those things in our lives which have broken our fellowship.

When we confess, we are opening our lives to God. "I am going to say the same thing about it that God says about it. I am going to take off the roof and open up the doors and let the light of Jesus Christ shine into every area of my life. I am going to let God be the one who renders a verdict on that which is sin, and when sin is revealed, confess it and accept the responsibility for it."

How easy it is for us to RATIONALIZE:

"Oh that wasn't really worry, it was only concern."

"That wasn't anger, it was only righteousness indignation."

"That wasn't a lustful look, that was only an appreciative glance."

Unless we are willing to come and follow the admonition of verse 9, sin goes:

UNJUDGED,

UNREBUKED,

UNCHECKED,

and UNCLEANSED in our lives.

This then leads to broken fellowship and walking in the darkness.

### 1 Corinthians 11:28

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

We are not coming to the Lord to ask forgiveness. That forgiveness already has taken place and is a settled fact with God as a result of the cross.

Here in this verse I am asked to agree with God about my sin, and I am unable to agree with Him about my sin until I can see clearly His attitude toward sin. Forgiveness is involved in restoring a relationship.

There are 2 RESULTS that accrue from agreeing with God about our sins:

- 1.WE RECOGNIZE THAT HE HAS FORGIVEN US OUR SINS,
- 2.HE HAS CLEANSED US FROM EVERY UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.

Not only has His death upon the cross dealt with the problem of forgiveness of my sin, but it has also dealt with the problem of defilement from the guilt of wrongdoing.

We are still married when we have a fuss, but we are out of fellowship and that must be dealt with before the fellowship can be restored.

Isaiah 1:18

"Come now, let us reason together,"  
says the Lord.  
"Though your sins are like scarlet,  
they shall be as white as snow;  
though they are red as crimson,  
they shall be like wool.

The hardest thing in the world is to accept the full responsibility for the problem without trying to find some excuse or some defense or to deny or pretend. The way to fellowship is to accept full responsibility for our wrongdoing.

I have met so many husbands who could solve the problems in their marriage if they could just come with a broken attitude and accept the responsibility for their wrongdoing in the marriage relationship. This is the key to hope for a future in that relationship.

The word "FORGIVE" here means:

"to let go,"  
"to send away,"  
"to cancel,"  
"to remit,"  
"to pardon."

(The God-Players by Earl Jabay)

A great man of God, Samuel M. Shoemaker, said the following in a sermon shortly before the end of his long and fruitful ministry: ". . . the thing to do with sin is to do what Nicodemus did: go and search out someone with whom we can talk privately and frankly.

Tell them of these things and, with them, to God. You say that you can do this alone with God; and I ask you, Have you succeeded in doing so? I said I was going to do that for years, but it never happened until I let a human witness come in on my decision. That is the 'how' of getting rid of sin if you are in earnest about doing it at all; face it, share it, surrender it, hate it, forsake it, confess it, and restore for it."

Quite understandably, we object to the third party--a human ear who hears the confession. Why is that human ear so necessary? I'll never forget how one recovered alcoholic answered that question. This man, whose years of alcoholism plainly showed on his face, gave the best answer I have ever heard.

"Well, it's this way--God already knows what you've done so there is no sense to telling just Him. What you have to do is tell your sins to someone who doesn't know them yet."

That says it.

p. 114

(The Existence and Attributes of God by Stephen Charnock)

Certainly, if God could have hated sin without punishing it, his Son had never felt the smart of his wrath. His love to his Son had been strong enough to have caused him to forbear, had not the holiness of his nature been stronger, to move him to inflict a punishment according to the demerit of his sin. God cannot but be holy, therefore cannot but be just, because injustice is a part of unholiness.

p. 510

### CALL IT LYING!

A woman once said to a famous evangelist, "I'm deeply troubled over a problem that I know is hurting my testimony. It's the practice of exaggeration. I start to tell something, and then go on and enlarge the story until it's all distorted. People know that what I say is not true, and lose confidence in me. I wonder if you can help me?" The preacher looked at her and said, "Let's talk to the Lord about it." She prayed, "O God, Thou knowest that I have this tendency to exaggerate . . ." At this point the evangelist interrupted, "Call it lying, Madam, and you may get over it!" The woman began to weep and finally made a full confession of her evil habit.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

### OH, MAKE ME CLEAN

The New Testament answered John's question: "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" A related question concerns the sources of uncleanness. We become defiled by contact with an evil world, by our own evil nature, and by communication from Satan. Both our bodies and our spirits can be defiled. But we can be cleansed by 1) God's Word, 2) Christ's shed blood, and 3) the Holy Spirit. God has provided the opportunity and means of cleansing as a gift. If we accept and trust it, we become new and pure and whole.

"Oh, make me clean" by J. Glyn Owen. Decision, Sep 1989. Pages 25-26.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)



## TED KENNEDY'S ONE GIANT STEP

We used to call this an acknowledgement of sin, before that word went out of fashion and some psychiatrists started to earn a nice living explaining our imperfections resulted from dysfunctional upbringings.

It's hard to believe both things happened the same week. First, we see Ted Kennedy admitting that he has a problem. Speaking at Harvard, Senator Kennedy openly acknowledged faults in his private life, saying, "I realize that I alone am responsible for them, and I am the one who must confront them." Following those remarks, his speech was the usual liberal rhetoric, but the admission of culpability was "a giant leap for a political figure of Kennedy's stature."

Within just a few days of that event, evangelist Jimmy Swaggart went before what was left of his congregation and blamed "demons" for his fling with a California prostitute. Last time he was caught in a similar embarrassing situation, he tearfully admitted he had committed some unspecified sin, but this time he told his followers that the details of the incident were none of their business. He even implied that he would do the same thing again since God would always forgive.

Comparing Swaggart's statement to Kennedy's, the Senator evidences a lot more integrity because he admitted that he would have to struggle to improve himself. Actually what both men need to do is repent, which means to consciously decide to turn away from old habits and embrace a drastically different lifestyle. Oswald Chambers once said that when a person is confronted with his own sin, any response other than repentance is merely regret for having made mistakes, "a reflex action of disgust at himself." To repent a person must acknowledge his sin and his own unworthiness before God.

It might not be as difficult as you would think for Kennedy to take this step of true repentance. Those who counsel with alcoholics say that the initial admission that a problem exists is perhaps 70% of the battle. So the Senator may be closer to solving his moral problem than the preacher--and some people say God doesn't have a sense of humor!

"Ted Kennedy's one giant step" by Cal Thomas. World, Nov 16, 1991. Page 12.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

## LOOKING FOR THE ESCAPE FROM SIN

Once we are aware that temptation will come and that we're not alone in it, we can draw strength from Paul's encouragement to rely on God's faithfulness.

The promise of 1 Cor. 10:13 is vital for any believer who wants to gain the victory over temptation. The first step is to be alert, realizing that temptation is inevitable, and the second is to not lose hope, knowing that God will be with us. Based on His faithfulness, we can be sure that the temptation will be within the limits of what we can stand. If God's sovereignty does not extend over the temptations we face, then all His promises are meaningless. We should then face temptation boldly with the assurance that by His grace we can overcome it. God's faithfulness is also demonstrated in His leading us through temptations and providing a way out. Scripture describes several possible escape routes:

(1) Running away--Fleeing is not cowardly whether it involves changing activities, mentally running away, or physically leaving the source of temptation.

(2) Resisting--The key here is single-mindedness. If you allow no foothold of doubt, the devil will leave.

(3) Rejoicing in the Lord--When tempted to despair the best defense is to sing and pray.

(4) Confronting it head-on--The best weapon we have in this battle is quoting Scripture to Satan just as Jesus did.

(5) Replacing evil with good--In some cases the best defense is to substitute a different activity or thought-pattern. For this to work, the substitute must be something pleasant that takes you away from the temptation, such as praise music, but you have to give it time to work.

(6) Making yourself accountable--Since others experience the same temptations, they can offer support and encouragement when you need it, but in order for that to happen you have to confess your sins as Scripture says. One of Satan's most effective tactics is convincing Christians that they shouldn't confess their sins because they will lose the respect of others.

(7) Calling on the Lord--God promises to answer when we pray for an escape. However, if you choose to sow wild oats and then ask for a crop failure, you can't expect God to honor that request!

"Looking for the escape from sin" by Mark Littleton. Charisma & Christian Life, Oct 1991. Pages 76-82.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

Micah 7:18, 19

Who is a God like you,  
 who pardons sin and forgives the transgression  
 of the remnant of his inheritance?  
 You do not stay angry forever  
 but delight to show mercy.  
 You will again have compassion on us;  
 you will tread our sins underfoot  
 and hurl all our iniquities into the  
 depths of the sea.

v.10 If we say that we have not sinned, we are making Him a liar, and His Word is not in us.

If we are saying we have not missed the mark:

"WE ARE MAKING HIM A LIAR, AND HIS WORD IS NOT IN US."

In verse 8, we have a picture of one who is denying the existence of sin,  
 and in verse 10 we have one who is denying that he has committed sin.

There's a 2-FOLD RESPONSE to this approach, too:

1. "WE ARE MAKING HIM A LIAR,"
2. "AND HIS WORD IS NOT IN US."

Romans 3:19

that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God;

Romans 3:23

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

His word tells us that "there is none righteous, no not one."

Proverbs 28:13

He who conceals his sins does not prosper,  
 but whoever confesses and  
 renounces them finds mercy.

Thus far in the passage we have heard the message that:

"God is light,"

and that "there is not one bit of darkness in him."

The response to that message has been considered in  
verses 6-10.

(The God-Players by Earl Jabay)

God's revelation to us is that our view of man as someone small and innocent is fundamentally wrong. Man is not innocent. He is not basically right, humble, merely learning and cooperative--to use a few of the words we use to defend ourselves from such words as guilt, being wrong, acting arrogantly, being spoiled, being unteachable and acting obstinately.

The Word of God to us is that we have such a haughty image of ourselves, we seek even to dethrone the Almighty. Such rebellion is called sin.

When we think of a man as a sinner, therefore, let us not think of him as one to be pitied because of his frailty and moral stumblings. A sinner is a contender against God's throne. A sinner is incarnate arrogance. He is adamantly resolute that his will be done. Sinners are people who play god.

p. 22

Dr. Eric Berne, a Freudian psychiatrist, speaks of three basic beliefs in all people. Everyone believes in "the immortality of his being, the irresistibility of his charms, and the omnipotence of his thoughts and feelings." When Dr. Berne refers to our universal belief in the immortality of our being, he means that we are so self-oriented that our minds will not tolerate the thought that once we were not, and that someday we will not be. Countless people have and will slip away into death still holding a deep conviction that "this can't be happening to me. To others, yes. But not me. Something will still happen to save me." Dr. Berne also sees, particularly in our dreams, how each person has such a deep conviction of his exquisite charm that he believes he is downright irresistible to others! Also worth pondering is our secret belief that our thoughts and feelings can wield an all-powerful, magical influence over our world.

p. 38

(God Is the Lover of My Soul by Ken Olson)

Now in the city where Lot went,  
Men in gross sin would not repent.  
People indulged their worst desire,  
And God said, "They will end in fire."

Now Abram met with God one day.  
He said to God, "For this I pray,  
Will you destroy if fifty men,  
Can I change that to only ten."

"If there be ten that will repent,  
Will you withhold the punishment."  
God said, "Yes, if there be ten,  
Good, God fearing and righteous men."

But there was not ten righteous men.  
These men would sin, then sin again.  
Lot took his wife, and daughters too,  
And fled the city, as told to do.

They traveled fast, but then Lots wife,  
Not trusting God, she missed her life,  
So she looked back and turned to salt.  
She had been warned, t'was her own fault.

pp. 7-8

(Looking Back, Moving On: Applying Biblical Principles of Freedom to Your Life by  
Boyd Luter)

You can call a spade, a spade until you are blue in the face, but a person entrenched in denial will continue to call it a pickax or a garden hoe if it helps stave off the onslaught of the discomfort zone. Only the Lord can dissolve that kind of stubbornness.

I know this because I was a much-decorated veteran of the wars of denial before I resigned my commission two years ago. I was a master of this sad combination of spiritual resistance, pride, and fear of change.

It took divine intervention to move me toward righting my wrong attitudes. In fact, I'm now convinced that my experience of the recovery process was right in line with the expectation of divine intervention that Paul lays out in Philippians 3:15.

p. 162

Leviticus 26:19, 21

I will break down your stubborn pride and make the sky above you like iron and the ground beneath you like bronze.

If you remain hostile toward me and refuse to listen to me, I will multiply your afflictions seven times over, as your sins deserve.

2:v. 1 My little children, these things I am writing to you in order that you may not commit an act of sin. And if anyone commits an act of sin, we are continually having one who pleads our case with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous one.

We come now to a consideration of what I would like to call:

### A PRECIOUS PRESCRIPTION FOR THE PROBLEM OF SIN.

This is the answer to the problem of sin in the life of a Christian.

Hebrews 7:25

Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

It is Jesus Christ who is the foundation of fellowship in the 1st study, in that He is the only way to the Father.

Now we learn here in the 2nd study in chapter 2:1 that He is the maintainer of our fellowship by continually representing us as an attorney before the Father.

The basis for His case before the Father is His own shed blood upon Calvary's cross, the just payment for man's sin.

J. Vernon McGee says:

Someone has expressed this in beautiful poetic language:

I hear the accuser roar  
Of ills that I have done;  
I know them well, and thousands more,  
Jehovah findeth none.

Though the restless foe accuses--  
Sins recounting like a flood,  
Ev'ry charge our God refuses;  
Christ has answered with His blood.

--Author unknown

p. 766

#### QUICK-QUOTE: FREEDOM

"It is not freedom of choice people want so much as license to sin."

--Mary Ann Bell

(in World, Apr 25, 1992)

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

#### HE SEES AND KNOWS

The old spiritual says, "He sees all you do; He hears all you say. My Lord is writin' all the time." It is a startling fact that God knows all about us. Nothing, absolutely nothing escapes His all-seeing eye!

P. R. Van Gorder relates this incident: "A man driving a yellow Thunderbird had just passed me, and unconsciously I increased my speed, staying close behind him. A glance in my rearview mirror told me that we were being followed by another car. Soon it swung out into the left lane alongside of us, and we both obeyed the patrolman's compelling signal to pull over. Waiting until the fellow ahead of me had been ticketed and had resumed his journey, I climbed out of my car. I was casually dressed in a sport shirt and slacks with no distinguishing mark on my automobile to indicate I was a minister. As the officer greeted me, he said, 'Preacher, you were traveling a little too fast!' Surprised that he knew my occupation, I inquired if we had met previously. He said we had not. 'Then, how did you know I was a minister?' I asked. He replied, 'I seldom miss. I've learned to size up a person and can usually tell what he does just by looking at him. And you're a preacher!' Believe me, I was really impressed!"

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

## EXCUSES! EXCUSES!

A radio news series about honesty in America talked about excuses. The commentator said that people use three types of excuses when guilty of wrongdoing. The first is outright denial--a rejection of any involvement. Sometimes this is done even though the person is obviously guilty. The second is the "It's not my fault" excuse. (Often it is a loved one--a husband or wife or parent. Sometimes it's the boss.) A third form of excuse is the "I did it, but" approach. In this instance the person blames circumstances for his shortcoming. Either he's been struggling with some illness or the assignment wasn't clear or the car's been giving him trouble.

What about the excuses we give the Lord. How flimsy they must sound to Him! How empty! The radio commentator concluded with, "And this final word of advice: Never give an excuse to an expert. He'll see right through it anyway." How true that is--especially when you're dealing with God!

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

Luke 22:31, 32

Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.

v. 2 And He Himself is satisfaction for our sins; not for ours only but also for the whole world.

He is the sin offering.

He is the mercy seat.

He has made a satisfactory offering for our sins that has been accepted by a Holy God.

He died, not for our sins only, but for the whole world. His death upon Calvary took care of all of the sins:

PAST,

PRESENT,

and FUTURE.



A Christian's fellowship with God is inseparably connected with the effectiveness of the blood which Jesus shed for him.

Jesus satisfied God's demands by His death upon Calvary's cross. If He had not made an adequate payment for our sins, the Father would have left Him in the grave.

Throughout His life you hear the statements of the Father:

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Because He is our satisfaction, He is eligible to be our advocate or representative before the Father.

This takes us back to chapter 1:7:

"the blood of Jesus His Son is cleansing us from every sin."

Upon a life I did not live,  
Upon a death I did not die,  
Another's life, another's death,  
I stake my eternity.

It is finished, yes indeed,  
finished every jot.  
Sinner, this is all you need,  
Tell me, is it not?

I hear the accuser  
Roar of ills that I have done;  
I know them well and thousands more,  
Jehovah findeth none.

Tho the restless foe accuses,  
Sins recounting like a flood;  
Every charge our God refuses,  
Christ has answered with his blood.

Blaiklock says:

Our advocate, like some cleaver apologist in court, does not plead extenuating circumstances or seek with subtlety to put our case in the most favorable light. He acknowledges our guilt and puts forth his own redeeming sacrifice as the grounds for our acquittal. He is our "propitiation." Some have disliked the use of this term because it implies an angry God who required appeasement. The Old Testament had no doubt at all about God's anger against sin. No reader of the Gospels can be in doubt about the wrath of Christ against pose, hypocrisy and the use of holy things as a cloak for evil.  
pp. 28-29

Mitchell says:

The Greek word for "propitiation" is the same word used for "mercy-seat." It signifies that which Christ has become for the sinner. On the cross He met the demands of God's holiness and righteousness. He is what the mercy-seat was in the Old Testament, namely, the place of meeting between God and men. John is telling us in these verses that Christ is our Advocate, not only because He is the righteous One, but also because He is the abiding propitiation for our sin.  
p. 51

### SOME PRINCIPLES OF PRAYER

The Lord will not hear our petitions if we continue to live in sin. Moody underscored this truth in his ministry. He said, "If I regard iniquity in my heart and am not willing to give it up, I need not pray, for there is no room in my life to receive the blessing I seek. You may take a bottle and cork it up tight and put it under Niagara, and yet not a drop of that mighty volume of water will ever get into the container. Therefore, if any unconfessed sin remains in my life and I am not willing to abandon it, I have blocked the channel between me and God."

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

(Victory through Surrender by E. Stanley Jones)

For you live life against life. Carlyle once said: "Sin is, has been, and ever shall be the parent of misery." And the central sin is the sin of trying to make your self God. It can't be done. So sin is not only wrong, it is stupid. The word "evil" is the word "live" spelled backwards. It is an attempt to live life against itself. The sin of sins is self-centeredness.

Self surrender is the central necessity in life.  
p. 82

(The Signature of Jesus: On the Pages of Our Lives  
by Brennan Manning)

Henri Nouwen tells the story of an old man who used to meditate early every morning under a big tree on the bank of the Ganges river. One morning, after he had finished his meditation, the old man opened his eyes and saw a scorpion floating helplessly in the water. As the scorpion was washed closer to the tree, the old man quickly stretched himself out on one of the long roots that branched out into the river and reached out to rescue the drowning creature. As soon as he touched it, the scorpion stung him. Instinctively the man withdrew his hand. A minute later, after he had regained his balance, he stretched himself out again on the roots to save the scorpion. This time the scorpion stung him so badly with its poisonous tail that his hand became swollen and bloody and his face contorted with pain.

At that moment, a passerby saw the old man stretched out on the roots struggling with the scorpion and shouted: "Hey, stupid old man, what's wrong with you? Only a fool would risk his life for the sake of an ugly, evil creature. Don't you know you could kill yourself trying to save that ungrateful scorpion?"

The old man turned his head. Looking into the stranger's eyes he said calmly, "My friend, just because it is the scorpion's nature to sting, that does not change my nature to save."

pp. 126-27

(Rediscovering Holiness by J. I. Packer)

What has emerged is a sort of identikit profile of a person:

- o who can never love God enough;
- o whose adoration of him is unceasing;
- o who is always seeking to live nobly, lovingly, and honorably for God;
- o who reveres the indwelling Holy Spirit;
- o who battles constantly against indwelling sin;
- o who pleads God's promises and waits expectantly for their fulfillment; and
- o who practices self-discipline maturely and thoughtfully.

Passion and compassion, prayer and prudence, gentleness and generosity, all enter into the portrait. The reflections of Jesus Christ, the apostle Paul, and David and his fellows in the Psalms (to look no further) are surely too plain to miss. Such is the outline of the holiness that is learned in the school of Christ.

p. 116

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: God is light and therefore perfect in holiness.

LESSON #2: It is possible to be hypocritical about our fellowship with the Father by continuing to live in sin.

LESSON #3: When we are living in sin, we are lying and not doing the truth.

LESSON #4: When we are walking in the light, we are having fellowship with the Father and the blood of Jesus His Son is cleansing us from every sin.

LESSON #5: When we live in denial, we are leading ourselves astray and the truth is not in us.

LESSON #6: To confess our sins is to say the same thing about them that God says about them.

LESSON #7: When we say we have not sinned, we are making God a liar and His word is not in us.

LESSON #8: When we sin, the Lord Jesus pleads our case before God the Father on the basis of His shed blood.

LESSON #9: He has paid the full price for our sins in His blood.

LESSON #10: Sins past, present, and future have been cared for by Calvary's cross.

(The Existence and Attributes of God by Stephen Charnock)

Certainly there are many who have more reason, as having larger quantities of patience cut out to them, who have lived to see their own gray hairs in a rebellious posture against God, before grace brought them to a surrender.  
p. 800

What if God had snatched you away when you had been sleeping in some great iniquity, or sent you, while burning in lust, to the fire it merited?  
p. 800

If God has spoken to you today about your fellowship with the Father and it is broken by sin, may the Spirit of God cause you to realize that fellowship will not be restored until you quit DEFENDING, DENYING, and DETOURING the problem and accept the full responsibility for sin and say the same thing about it that God says about it. Then and only then will you experience the joy of fellowship with the Father.

Father, teach us to know the quality of life we are to share. Teach us how to be open and honest and to confess those things which have disrupted our relationship. Teach us to know the answer to our failures. Some of us need to know that the answer to deep guilt and sin is not to DEFINE, DEFEND, or to PRETEND, but to walk in the light, to take the roof off and to let the sun shine in, to open up to acts and actions that have been unpleasing to You. We can do this in the full assurance that Your grace will heal and restore so that fellowship and oneness with the Father can be enjoyed once again.

Lord, we realize that one of our problems about being open with each other is a problem simply because we have not learned to be open with You, that our fellowship with each other is compartmentalized and strained simply because our fellowship with You is not what it should be. Thank you, Father, for what You are going to do in our lives. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## STUDY #2 - 1 John 1:5-2:2

What are some of the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: God is light and therefore perfect in holiness.

LESSON #2: It is possible to be hypocritical about our fellowship with the Father by continuing to live in sin.

LESSON #3: When we are living in sin, we are lying and not doing the truth.

LESSON #4: When we are walking in the light, we are having fellowship with the Father and the blood of Jesus His Son is cleansing us from every sin.

LESSON #5: When we live in denial, we are leading ourselves astray and the truth is not in us.

LESSON #6: To confess our sins is to say the same thing about them that God says about them.

LESSON #7: When we say we have not sinned, we are making God a liar and His word is not in us.

LESSON #8: When we sin, the Lord Jesus pleads our case before God the Father on the basis of His shed blood.

LESSON #9: He has paid the full price for our sins in His blood.

LESSON #10: Sins past, present, and future have been cared for by Calvary's cross.