

4 Christians are children of the light and of the day. And they must put aside the conduct that is fit only for the hours of darkness. The conflict between good and evil is stated between darkness and between light. In view of the fact that God is light, what kind of life should the Christian live? A full answer to this question would probably take in all that John says in this book bearing on the Christian life. John makes it clear that the character and the life of the children of God are determined by the character of God and his fellowship with them, rather than by the character of the Christians themselves.

God's children should have fellowship with him. They should have such fellowship as will transform them in heart and character, and keep them pure in life. This must be real. John must have been acquainted with some professing Christian whose religions was only a matter of words. For three times he says, between Verse 6 and 10, if we say each time reverting to something untrue that is said.

✓ v. 6 The tense of continuous action is in present time or the tense of habit. Hence, walk in the light, means to keep on walking in the light. We have fellowship as the idea, we have unbroken fellowship. It cleanses us and continues to cleanse us if we confess, it may read, if we keep on confessing. If we keep, if we keep on keeping, could be

"HINDRANCES TO FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD"

I JOHN 1:3-10

INTRODUCTION: *wrote further aim - Fellowship with God*

The vast majority of John's readers were converted (Gentiles). They had come from (pagan) religion where Gods were guilty of all the weaknesses of human beings. (Morality) was a matter of little significance, God's or men, hence the (new life) the new fellowship, the highest type of life was (not) only difficult but it was hard for some people to appreciate.

We come by way of introduction to note the foundation for this fellowship which we will consider was hindered, as listed in Verse 3 and 4 and also Verse 5. The deepest of all of man's individual needs are discovered here in life to be satisfied in fellowship. There is a hunger for it. For none of us lives to himself. The result of our fellowship with the Father and with the Son, and that means we embrace everyone else in this fellowship. The life that he shared exists only to be shared in the life of the church.

✓ This is the fruitful overflow of the community of believers. The koinonia. Living religion has always created

groups from the disciples gathered around the prophet Isaiah  
 -- so Jesus gathers about Him the group to be the church by  
 having them together by commandment and by a supper, to stand  
 together. The spirit came upon them at Pentecost and the  
 scope of this community begins. It begins by sharing food,  
 the impulse is to meet and share together, and this has never  
 left the Christian heart. They are a closely knit community,  
 a society, a group of friends. They share in life, they  
 share in fellowship as fellow heirs with Christ. And it is  
 a rich, many-sided fellowship.

The spirituality of any person or any community can be  
 ✓ determined fairly accurate by its habits of church attendance.  
Wherever congregations are small, spirituality is low as a  
 rule. And the moral plain of the community life is at a  
 corresponding level. When we find that many churches begin  
 to dispense with the mid-week prayer meeting, the Sunday  
Evening Services, and little by little there is a cut down  
 of all the missionary activity in the church, we find that  
 there is low spiritual power in the members of that church  
 and of that community. Now if at all possible, the prayer  
 service of the church should be maintained, even though the  
 attendance may be a baker's dozen. Christian fellowship  
 ✓ however is a far greater thing than the world dreams of. It

revealed to us in Christ.

V. 4 In Verse 4, we have the mark of our fellowship with the  
 Father and with the Son, this is the mark of joy. The felt  
 experience of koinonia. This is the inner life of the early  
 church, which was characterized by gladness, by song, by  
thanks giving, joy, and was important to the Christian life,  
 to live a full, joyful life. The joy of the Christian is  
 found in this realization and the Christian heart is full  
 when it gives itself in service to Jesus.

5 In Verse 5, it says that God is absolute light. Light  
 has been a universal religious symbol and it represents a  
 universal human need. There is a horror against darkness  
 and the shadow of doubt, and out of darkness which we declare  
 as lifeless, and it would be unfair to suggest that many  
 modern thinkers prefer darkness to light. But those who  
 have a purposeless, meaningless object in life, certainly  
 know little of this light. The statement that God is light  
 belongs as it were mid-way between God, His Spirit. Being a  
 personal timeless, self existent, God is love which character-  
 izes him, we see the meaning of this to give us a picture, of  
 the light which he gives to the world enlightenment. And it  
testifies to what we are to believe in. Now some chose  
 (darkness) to avoid this light. He who hates his brother is in  
 darkness. He who loves light and life, is in the light.

Over against the false claims to have fellowship with God John sets up the true fellowship with God, that if we walk in the light. This is a beautiful figure, the idea of fellowship with God as walking in the light. The idea of walking has a term to denote the course and character of one's conduct. But the reality of fellowship with God is a much more beautiful thing than any term that can be used to express it. It is a light that shines more and more unto the perfect day.

There is a challenging expression in John's words, if we walk in the light, as he is in the light. What is the meaning of, as he is in the light. Certainly these words do not mean that man can possess the same measure of holiness or moral perfection that God, who is light, possesses. John would certainly agree with the Master, who said, that only God possesses absolute and underived goodness. Mark 10:17.

John means to express the reality and genuine fellowship with God rather than the perfect character of that fellowship.

This fellowship results in a cleansing from sin. The love fellowship of the saint grows out of fellowship that they have with God.

Sin disrupts. It cuts men off from God. Men may engage together in sinful activities but they do not thereby find any true fellowship. Each man sets up his own selfish will and he desires as the law of his activity his own idea.

translated the one who keeps on saying I have come to know him and keeps on not keeping his commandments, is a liar. Now he points out in the beginning of Chapter 2 and advocate, one who will come along beside and help in the form of the Holy Spirit. This is certainly wonderful. The nature of God and the work of Christ in bringing salvation. Now the practical aim of this passage of Scripture is to reveal the hindrances to fellowship, and to show the believer how they may have that fellowship through the help of Christ Jesus.

Fellowship with God is the reason for our being, the means of our security, it is the goal of our whole existence. Romans 11:36.

But is such fellowship possible. John declared that he is instructed to announce the good news that such fellowship is not only possible but is actually experienced by Him and other true believers in Jesus.

Who is this God with whom we may fellowship. God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. He is absolute purity, truth, goodness. The Greeks and Romans knew nothing of a God like that. The idea was one that was contrary. God is light, Verse 5. God is love, Verse 8. God is life, Chapter 4, Verse 8. Chapter 5, Verse 20. For some human beings to have fellowship with him is almost unthinkable. The fellowship is not to be taken for granted. Many profess-

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ing Christians have fallen short of the rich experience

because there are hindrances all too common. And John points out some of them.

### I. False Claim of Fellowship. Verse 6.

The first hindrance that we see and claim to fellowship with God, John mentions, is insincerity, hypocrisy, playing a part, professes to honor Christ while deliberately rejecting Him. If we claim fellowship with the God of light while walking in darkness of sin, we are liars, we are deceivers, and this is incompatible with fellowship with God.

If we say that we have fellowship with Him, to claim to have fellowship with God whose character is light, is to make a great claim. More over it is a claim that is easily tested. The test to be applied is clear. Here it is, how does the man who claims fellowship with God live? What is his life? Does his conduct justify his claim.

Some have said that John was impractical, that he made religion an inner experience. In our day we want to have a practical religion that manifests itself indeed. John believed in the direct and conscious fellowship of the soul with God and he tested it by results. It was not vague, it was a conscious fellowship, revealed for Jesus Christ which demanded holiness. It is impossible for any man to live in

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fellowship with this God of holy character and not become

like him.

Consequently, John says if we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie. Now John's statement needs no proof. It is self evident. The very fact that God is light carries with it a further fact that anyone who lives in fellowship with HIM must be characterized by light and not by darkness. Righteousness and not by sin, a man cannot have all fellowship with a Holy God and be partaker of a sinful morality.

This expression does not say "do not the truth" - it is worthy of our notice. A gospel truth is not merely something to be held in the mind. But it is something to be thought, not without reference to the character and the conduct, it is a program of life, it is a program of activity. It is not first of all a matter of theory, but it is a way of life. Christianity is not primarily a doctrine but it involves doctrine to be sure. It is a plan of conquest. It is a map for us to campaign by. Now our lives count and we cannot occupy the position of riding two horses going in the opposite direction. And we do not wait for the grave to get

a young man - walked from Wisconsin to West Point Academy, N.Y. this experience. This fellowship is here now for us. Expecting to get admission to that institution. Met at door way by a sentinel - told him could not even produce document with his foot. Seals - unable - so turned away - without seal of God's approval he refused entrance Kingdom of Heaven -

### II. True Claim of Fellowship. Verse 7.

doubtless John was not dealing with something in his imagination but he was (repeating) what men were actually saying in that day. They were denying that the real man was a sinner. And they were also denying the atoning death of Jesus and the sin from which his blood saves. They were denying that men were stained with guilt.

✓ John does not think that any man can truthfully say that he has no sin. The force of that statement cannot be avoided by saying that John just put it in the present. If you say that we have now no sin, we deceive ourselves. Nor can it be said that he refers to the unregenerated, class of Christians. He said if we say, here is a form that allows no exception among Christians. No Christian is exempt from sin and there for from the need of the cleansing blood of Christ.

John's statement if we say we have no sin suggests that perhaps he is thinking not so much about separate acts of transgression but as about sin as a principle, or sin as a power. That the Christian can have victory over this power and evil but he does not claim that any man can claim to be free from it. Or that he does not need the cleansing power of the blood.

Now the apostle states here that we deceive ourselves.

And second, the truth is not in us. That a man first does

Such a man does not deceive his family.

This results in confusion.

✓ The puzzling thing about the consequence of the fellowship with God, the blood of Jesus Christ. Now the gnostics were denying that there was any divine sacrifice for the salvation of the world. They insisted that God could not suffer. Now this doctrine John opposes.

It is blood, the blood of Christ, God's Son that cleanses from sin. This stands for the sacrifice of deity. And it is available only for those who come into the fellowship of God through faith in His Son. Therefore the hypocrite may be cleansed of all his sin, he may be made fit to walk in the life with God, this is possible because of the sacrifice

Jesus made for our sin, on the cross. To reject the cleansing blood then is to choose the realm of untruth, and the part

of liars. Adam hides himself away from the presence of God in the garden. Isaiah cries, woe is me for I am lost and I am a man of unclean lips. And the psalmists cries who shall ascend the hill of the Lord. And who shall stand in his

holy place. Moses at the beginning of the Bible must take off his shoes. And John falls as one dead in his presence.

Zaccheus passes unto sharp judgment, even upon himself. The

woman of the city weeps out at her shame. Peter says depart from me, I am very sinful. Sinful men may know the fellowship of the Holy God because God himself has made a provision

against sin. And he cannot minimize sin. And until repentance takes place, a man will not come to this light and will not enter this fellowship. But to walk in this light is to do opposite from Adam hiding from God. It involves something more than just an honest self-examination but it says, "search me Oh God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts and see if there be any hurtful way in me. And lead me in the way everlasting. We walk in the light as he is in the light, and we come to this light in His presence and in His will, in His hope, in His purpose, and in His promise.

To claim a sinless record is certainly to shirk our responsibility for sin, as some try to do with is mere deception. John is anxious for his readers to leave sin behind. And sinlessness, he said, is only self-deceit, and false claim.

Dr. Robertson says walking in the light with God makes possible fellowship with one another and is made possible also by the blood of Jesus, real blood, atoning blood of the sinless son of God for our sins. He said John is not ashamed to use this word, it is not the mere example of Jesus that cleanses us from sin. It does cleanse the conscience and life and nothing else does it outside the blood.

### III. Denying The Need of Fellowship. Verse 8.

Some deny that human nature is depraved. They claim that evolution in a moral sense is what man needs in the way of development. This is a heresy and it is subtle. This is very similar to some of the isms that are taught today. That matter is entirely evil, that God can have no fellowship with it, and you bridge the gap between God and matter by the creation of His system. So you find a way out by denying the reality of material things. God is infinite mind and they believe that he has revealed himself in the mind of Christ. And all else is unreal, sin is unreal simply because it does not exist. It must be ignored by the Christian. And that one does not get sick and yet some of these people get sick and they die like the rest of us. But the refusal to recognize sin, we insist that our errors are not sin, merely mistakes. Is not man fundamentally good. Are we not honest good citizens. No, says John. We have not touched the realm of truth, we have only deceived ourselves, we are walking in dense darkness he says.

There is the possibility then of denying the need of the cleansing blood on the ground that there is no sin from which to be cleansed. John had seen his master meet those who felt no need of salvation. And he had heard him say that it is the sick that need a physician and not those that are well. Now

the conscience in making God a liar and second, is to be ignorant of God's word which is not in us, else we would not make such a claim. The great challenge is to make a confession and to move these hindrances and come in fellowship with Him.

There is a story told by H. M. Wharton of a little boy who was carried to a hospital in London from a wretched district. His limbs were crushed. The doctor examined him and said nothing can be done for him now. Make him as comfortable as you can and he will soon be gone. Another little boy heard it and went to the bedside and said, what is your name. My name is Bobby. Did you hear what the doctor said Bobby? The doctor said you are going to die, Bobby. I go to the Mission School and the teacher told me that Jesus loves little boys and that if we would put our trust in him he would save us. He will come along after you tonight. The dying child replied, he don't love poor boys like me. My father is a drunkard, my mother has to work for us all, and we are so poor they don't anybody care for us. Yes, but the teacher said, he loves poor little boys just as well as others. You talk to him Bobby, he can hear you. He is always near. The little fellow was dying. I am so sleepy and tired, I don't know what to do.

Nor does he deceive God. He deceives nobody but himself.

It is a sad thing when a man deceives himself in regard to his own spiritual condition. *Saturday the Dead - Battle Chancellorsville - a Northern Soldier found on open M.T. leaf was torn & the left arm and connected to his hand with his own blood "I don't know the resurrection & the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and by it, he may have admired it. But he has not received that he that liveth & believeth in me shall never die."* he may have heard the gospel, he may have been attracted to it, he may have admired it. But he has not received that gospel into his inner being as the transforming power of God. *Blue Steel body not always sleep -*

#### IV. Confession Opens Way For Fellowship. Verse 9, 10.

Now the gospel announces that such deceived people may be cleansed by bringing our sins into the light and openly confessing our sins, by yielding to the only saviour, we may have the joy of forgiveness and experience of up-rightness. This salvation is made possible by one who is not only faithful to us in our helplessness but he is just in what he does in the sight of God. He brings together His love for needy men, and the justice of a holy God and his atoning work is very important.

Denial of a need is therefore inconsistent and simple hypocrisy and down right falsehood, we lie. Moffatt says the term walk is throughout the Old Testament means moral conduct. In the constant light, there is nothing to be shameful or hidden from God, but it must be confessed. It is easier to be satisfied withoutward religion, conformity, and to seek less and less the presence of the most high, less the secrets

of our hearts should be revealed.

✓ What is quite impossible, John says, is to have fellowship with the light and dark light and walk deliberately and carelessly in darkness. To profess to have fellowship and yet hug the darkness is an intellectual and moral lie and ought not to be. John declared it cannot be. Only the pure in heart shall see God. Now, he said, if we confess our sin, God's forgiveness can only come after one has seen his condition. One has faced him squarely and one has confessed before God. Now one does not face his condition and confess his sins. God's character then is pledged to Him. He is faithful and righteous to forgive. Faithfulness is one of the qualities in a person that gives assurance that he will

be true to his promises. And this, the gospel says, God has promised to save from sin. *Close of War 1866 - Triumphal Entry of Russian and to Berlin for each regiment approached gate was hailed by White robed choir - dancing by what right it would enter, Regiment replied in song battles should be righteous rather than just. Righteousness is a joyful-victorious - choir chanted the welcome "Enter into the City" broader term than justice. Justice may call for punishment they marched amid cannons - flags - & saluted grand old Frederick, of the signer. But righteousness means that he is up right The Creator of Prussia = so when first battles of 47 over - church after church will be challenged by choir at gate of heaven. The mansions are ready come home.*

V.10 ✓ Now the claim that a man is without sin and has never sinned is one of the heresies he is facing. One making such a claim may make God a liar. That the whole Christian revelation is based on the fact that a man is a sinner. The

Old Testament taught that men were sinners. If man is not a sinner, the coming of Christ, the crucifying of Christ, the resurrection all are without meaning. God sent his Son to save a lost world from sin but if men were without sin, then God is a liar. The truth is not in the man that denies that he is not a sinner. He says that God's word is not in the one, John says, that says he has never sinned. And he bases all of the works of Jesus Christ on this. Now this means that the man thinks within himself he has the resources that will give him a successful life. That God is wrong when he charges me with wrong doing. I do not need to repent. As he insists. It is ridiculous for us to say that we need a Saviour. No, not impossible. If he discovers his need, then turns to Jesus for help, Jesus certainly is ready and not indifferent to help him. And John with his usual plain manner, he speaks and says a man lies and he is not of the truth, it is not in him. Christ provides the strength for the obedience, the disobedience will lead to indifference. How serious the charge John makes. They are hypocrites, liars, they deceive themselves. They are self-sufficient, they are indifferent, toward truth. These are strong words used by John. Now who could refuse his challenge here, to overcome these hindrances to Christian fellowship. David Smith says that the claim personal perfection is to stifle



Well Bobby, said the other little fellow, if you don't feel like calling, just raise your hand, and he will see it and stop and save you. But the poor child was too weak to raise his hand. Then the little comforter said, I know what I will do. I will get my pillow. He went to his cot and got his own little pillow.

You just put your hand on this pillow and when Jesus comes along, he will see your hand on the pillow, and he will know it was raised for him. And he will take you home with Him. Good night Bobby, don't be afraid.

The nurse heard it all and sat and wiped the tears from her eyes in silence. Then bending over the dying boy she kissed him. He waked up and said, please kiss me again. It is like my mother. He soon fell asleep and his spirit passed away. Don't you think Jesus came there and took ~~him~~ where there isn't any poverty and pain.

This is what John is urging upon his hearers. That if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us.

*I have heard  
of a sand on  
your way  
nurse grows old*

Dec - 14, 80 P.M. ✓✓

Nov - 23, 75 ... A.M. ✓✓

August 25, 68 So. day - A.M. ✓✓

March 20 - 66 - 50 - Nov - A.M. ✓✓ (of Rehabilitation)