

INTRODUCTION

1. Please take God's Word and turn with me to 1 John chapter 1.
2. This morning we are looking at verses 8-10 and we conclude chapter 1.
3. For the past 3 weeks we have looked at:
4. The beginning of the preaching of Jesus, His life, John's witness and declaration of it and His message.
5. God is light, Jesus says, and in Him is no darkness at all.
6. But there are always those who claim fellowship with God.
7. We saw last time there are those who walk in darkness and those who walk in the light.
8. The ones in darkness are liars "and do not practice the truth."

9. But those who “walk in the light....have fellowship” with God and Jesus and are cleansed by His blood.
10. Now as we come to verses 8-10, we hear 3 more claims which bring us to the subject of one’s confession regarding sin.

LESSON

- I. The Claim of Fellowship with God (vv.6-7)**
- II. The Confession Regarding Sin (vv.8-10)**

- A. The Claim of No Sin (v.8)

“If we say” - same phrase as in verse 6 but this time it refers to someone who claims to have no sin.

This position was prouder than the stance of those in the first category who ignored their sin (cf. Jer. 17:9).

Any so-called Christians who claim to have reached a higher spiritual plane, where sin no longer exists in their lives, completely misunderstand their condition and the Spirit’s work of progressive sanctification. (MacArthur, John. 1, 2, 3 John).

“We have no sin” “that is, we have no personal guilt, no principle of sin” (A.T. Robertson, Robertson’s Word Pictures).

1. This claim ignores Scripture

1 Kings 8:46 (NKJV) there is no one who does not sin.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

2. This claim ignores the teachings of Jesus because He taught that sin was within everyone

Mark 7:21-23 (NKJV) For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,²² thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.²³ All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”

3. This statement also ignores what the Bible teaches concerning total depravity (Rom.3:10-12)

4. Jesus was the only human being who could ever claim to be without sin

Hebrews 4:15 (NKJV) For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

5. John says those who say they have “no sin” are deceived and the truth is not in them

Adam Clarke says, “By supposing that we have no guilt, no sinfulness, and consequently have no need of the blood of Christ as an atoning sacrifice: this is the most dreadful of all deceptions, as it leaves the soul under all the guilt and pollution of sin, exposed to hell, and utterly unfit for heaven” (Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Bible).

“Deceived” (Gr.planao, present, indicative) “to go astray, to be led astray” (LTW)

In describing “the last days,” Paul says in 2 Timothy 3:13 (NKJV) But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

“The truth is not in” refers to their state of darkness and lack of conversion.

1 John 2:4 (NKJV) He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

John Gill says, "It is a plain case the truth of grace is not in such persons, for if there was a real work of God upon their souls, they would know and discern the plague of their own hearts, the impurity of their nature, and the imperfection of their obedience; nor is the word of truth in them, for if that had an entrance into them, and worked effectually in them, they would in the light of it discover much sin and iniquity in them; and indeed there is no principle of truth, no veracity in them; there is no sincerity nor ingenuity in them; they do not speak honestly and uprightly, but contrary to the dictates of their own conscience" (John Gill's Exposition of the Bible).

B. The Claim of Present Sin (v.9)

Verse 9 gives us the second contrast in chapter 1. The first was in verse 7 where it contrasted those in the light versus those in darkness in verse 6. Verses 7 and 9 are true believers while verses 6, 8, and 10 are not.

Instead of saying “If we say” as in verses 6, 8, and 10, believers continually say “If we confess.”

1. There is no denial of sin. They continually confess sin because they recognize sin in their lives

“Confess” is a present active subjunctive of *homologeō*, and could be translated “if we keep on confessing.” (Robertson) and means “to say the same thing” (Vincent, MacArthur).

Thus believers are those who confess their sins, agreeing with God about their sin—they acknowledge its reality and affirm that it is a transgression of His law and a violation of His will, the presence of which the truly penitent seek to eliminate from their lives (MacArthur, John. 1, 2, 3 John).

When the prodigal son came to his senses, he said in Luke 15:18-19 (NKJV) I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you,¹⁹ and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.”

When David confessed his sin in Psalms 32:5 (NKJV) knowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

We see more detail in Psalm 51.

2. Because believers confess sin they have the promise of forgiveness

We could also say it the other way. Because believers have the promise of forgiveness, they confess their sin.

"He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Adam Clarke says, God is faithful "to His promises. He will do what he has assured us He will do in remitting them."

Hebrews 10:23 (NKJV) Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

God is faithful to His promise to forgive because in Christ we have “redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace” (Eph.1:7 NKJV).

God is also Just (δίκαιος)

Rev., righteous. From δίκη right. The term is applied both to God and to Christ.

The two words, faithful and righteous, imply each other. They unite in a true conception of God's character. God, who is absolute rightness, must be faithful to His own nature, and His righteous dealing with men who partake of that nature and walk in fellowship with Him, is simply fidelity to Himself” (Marvin Vincent, Word Studies in the NT).

“Righteousness is truth passing into action” (Westcott).

Notice the third claim...

C. The Claim of Not Having Sinned (v.10)

“If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”

1. This is a denial of any specific acts of sin

Albert Barnes says, “Some perhaps might be disposed to say this; and as the apostle is careful to guard every point, he here states that if a man should take the ground that his past life had been wholly upright, it would prove that he had no true religion” (Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Bible).

2. This is blasphemously making God a liar in two ways:

First, they explicitly deny His teaching that all have sinned and second, they implicitly deny the need for a Savior.

After all, why would they need a Substitute to take their punishment for something they claim to have never committed? (MacArthur).

Albert Barnes says, “The whole system of Christianity is based on the fact that man is a fallen being, and needs a Saviour; and unless a

man admits that, of course he cannot be a Christian.”

John Gill says regarding the phrase, “and his word is not in us; either Christ the Word of God, or rather the word of God which declares these things; no regard is had unto it; it "is not with us", as the Syriac and Ethiopic versions render it; it is not used and attended to as the rule and standard of truth, but is east away and despised; at least it has no place in the hearts of such, nor does it work effectually; for, was this the case, they would have other notions of themselves than that of sinless creatures. The apostle has regard either to the Gnostics, a set of heretics of this age, who fancied themselves pure, spiritual, and perfect, even in the midst of all their impurities, and notwithstanding their vicious lives; or to judaizing Christians, and it may be to the Jews themselves, who entertained such sort of notions as these of being perfect and without sin (h).

CONCLUSION

1. Do you confess your sin?
2. If you're a Christian you do or you're not one at all.

3. Because you are forgiven of your sin, you confess sin.

4. This is a mark of salvation.

5. Don't hide or deny your sin. Confess it to Christ and receive the gift of forgiveness found in Jesus Christ.

6. Let's pray.