

God's Fellowship (Series) **(1 John Chapter 1)**

Lesson # 1 “Walk in the light for fellowship with God”

Scripture: 1 John 1:7 “but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.”

Introduction:

When we have fellowship gatherings we sure have great fun laughing and sharing in each others lives as we find common ground together.

But what about when something threatens our fellowship with God.

Well, during the time of this writing the church was being confronted with different ideas that would destroy their fellowship with God.

1. Grecian Philosophy....
 - Colossians 2:8 “See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.”
2. Persian mysticism.....Secret, mystery religions who thought drawing close to God was a method of mind manipulation.
3. Asceticism.....Seclusion, depriving the body of fleshly desires
 - Included intense rule keeping
 - Self mutilation
 - Don't eat drink or touch
4. Judaism
5. Gnosticism

-Some 38 times in the letters of John the word “Know” is mentioned. This the Greek work Gnosis and has to do with knowledge. John's letters are basically written from a single question.... “How do you know what you know?” The study of Knowledge was important in that early society and bleeds into ours today as well. And yes it even has a name (Epistemology).

-In trying to figure out how God who is spirit make us in a fleshly body they came up with this warped idea and a lot of folks were buying into it.

-Their great idea was Dualism...suggested by a Persian religious leader named Zoroaster, basically meaning there were two God's.

1. Bad God, The God of the Old Testament who made all matter and everything fleshly.
2. Good God, The God of the New Testament who is of the soul and mind.

*They thought, everything that was matter, fleshly or tangible was evil.

- So sin was just a function of a physical body and made no difference, only the state of mind was important.
- That God could not fellowship with fleshly man.

*From this thinking they held that Jesus only appeared as some ghost or apparition while on earth. He could not have had a physical body. Also, Jesus not the Messiah of Old Testament....this would mean one God

-They thought:

- They knew it all
- That they were Intellectually enlightened
- And, Greater than the Apostles
- *And they had penetrated the church and were leading folks away from the truth

-John refers to these people as:

- Anti Christ
- Deceivers
- Liars
- False prophets

6. Two extremes came out of this age of reason:

Lawlessness & asceticism

1. Lawlessness being where a person refuses to accept God's rule in his or her life thinking that sin was only a function of an evil body.
 - Eat drink and be merry for tomorrow we die....
2. Asceticism at the other end being an extreme self denial as the spiritual road to God.
 - Don't eat drink, taste or touch

7. From all this warped thinking came the greatest danger of all. Syncretism, which is the blending of all these religious thoughts into one harmonious religion. We better watch out, God tells us to stick closely to what he has said and add nothing to it or take nothing away from it. Proverbs 30:5-6; Duet 4:2 & 12:32; 1 Cor. 4:6; Rev. 22:18-19

Transitional Statement: John writes as an apologist (Defender) of fellowship with God

Lesson:

I. Jesus was made know to the Apostles

1 John 1:1-2 “What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life — 2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us”

John 1:1-4 says “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.”

So Jesus is not just something of the New Testament, he was with the one and only God in the beginning of time and he was the Messiah who was to come.

-John goes to great length here to explain that “we” saw him, heard him and even touched him. The “we” here is in reference the Apostles who were required to be witnesses (Acts 1:21-23). If Jesus was only a ghost or apparition they could not have touched his flesh. So here John positively shows that Jesus was the incarnation or God.

John 1:14 says “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

-John refers to Christ here as the “Word (Logos) of life” from the gospel of John 1:1Literally translated John is calling Jesus the language of life, in contrast to human wisdom leading to death.

Manifested

- Made known
- To whom?To us the Apostles

Testify

- Bear witness Acts 1:8
- Ambassadors (Representatives of Christ) 2 Cor 5:20

Proclaim

- Not an exclusive knowledge
- Shared

II. Fellowship with God comes through Apostolic proclamation of Jesus

1 John 1:3-4 “what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. 4 These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.”

-Fellowship with God comes through Apostolic Instruction.

-Apostles were:

-Given as Witnesses of Christ Acts 1:8

-They were instructed as to the beginning of the church....Acts 1

-The apostles were lead into all knowledge....John 16:13

-They were the foundation of the church with Christ being the chief corner stone....Eph. 2:20

-They were given as a pattern that we should follow.... Phil. 3:17.

-Hey, if you want to have fellowship with God it will come through Apostolic instructions.

-John Goes on to cap this thing off by saying:

-1 John 4:6 "We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error."

Completed Joy

-The life of an Apostle was certainly hard, but great joy was found by John in as he called them "His little children" being faithfully obedient to God.

-A lot of us with children know both sides of this. The joy that fills our hearts when our children are faithful to the Lord verses the agony that keeps us awake when they forsake God and follow their own passions of heart.

III. Jesus' message about God's nature

5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

-God is light, being all that is righteous, pure and holy.

-Isaiah 60:19 "No longer will you have the sun for light by day,
Nor for brightness will the moon give you light;
But you will have the Lord for an everlasting light,
And your God for your glory."

-1 Timothy 6:16 ".... dwells in unapproachable light..."

-In Him there is no darkness.....That is no Sin, Wrong or injustice

IV. Error #1 "Sin Doesn't really matter"

6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

-“If we say” is Johns way of exposing error.

-We can't claim to have anything in common with God and think sin doesn't Matter.

-Gnostics were saying, sin is just a function of the body it really doesn't matter.

-If we think sin doesn't matter:

-We lie

-Do not practice the truth

-But on the other hand ...In contrast to this:

Verse 7 says

“but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.”

-If we live, striving for righteousness, holiness and purity as God so exists

-Then the blood of Jesus continually cleanses us from all sin

-Therefore we can be pleasing before God in the flesh because we are clothed in the blood of Jesus Rev. 7:14

*This doesn't mean sinless perfection or else Jesus' blood would not have any continued need.

V. Error #2 “We are not living in Sin”

Verse 8

“If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.”

-We have no sin (Present Tense)

-Closed minded

-Deceive yourselves and the truth is not in you

-John 8:32 says then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free

-If there is no truth in you, then you're a slave of the very thing you think you don't have...sin

-But...if,

Verse 9

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

-Confession is not a matter of informing God

-Confession is an acknowledgement of wrong doing

-Humble ourselves

-Own up to....

-Take responsibility for our sins

*God will forgive them

Listen to David in Psalms 32:1-5

1 How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven,
Whose sin is covered!
2 How blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity,
And in whose spirit there is no deceit!
3 When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away
Through my groaning all day long.
4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me;
My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah.
5 I acknowledged my sin to You,
And my iniquity I did not hide;
I said, " I will confess my transgressions to the Lord";
And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah.

*Confession brings forgiveness and cleaning

VI. Error #3 “We have never sinned”

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

-Ascetics say, we live by such a ridged life of self deprivation going to great lengths to avoid every possible sinWe haven't sinned and our past has nothing to do with the present

-Paul tells us in Romans 3:23 “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”

-If we somehow separate ourselves from the ability to sin we:

-Make God out to be a liar

-Jesus is not in us.

Conclusion:

The world around us uses terms like witness and testimony, generally as a way of trying to show what God has accomplished in their lives. But, while we enjoy seeing the wonderful working of God in peoples lives the power of God lies in His gospel Romans 1:16.

The gospel was given as a sacred trust to the Apostles to proclaim to us and it is through that common ground with God's Apostolic teachings that we find fellowship with God.

And that Fellowship with God comes through walking in the light as He is in the light. Striving for moral purity in both the body and the mind.

We walk in the light by:

- Following Apostolic teaching
- Understanding God's nature
- Realizing sin matters
- Admitting sin
- *And practicing the truth.
- *Hey John says if your going to have fellowship with God your going to have to strive to be like him.
- After all he calls us to be holy as he is holy. 1 Pet 1:15

Folks sin matters.....

Hebrews 10:26 "For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,"

Church, Jesus died for our sins, and it must grieve Him deeply that we look so lightly upon the very thing that nailed Him to the cross. When are we going to get serious about sin, when are we going to fall on our knees before our great and might God and surrender all of our hearts to him.

Have you acknowledged your sin?