

# Fellowship With God

**1 John 1:5-2:2**

**Study #2**

**(Not entirely original with me)**

## INTRODUCTION:

1. In the first four verses of **First John**, we saw that John's aim in this epistle is...
  - a. To declare the "Word of life", the "eternal life" that was with the Father and has been manifested in Jesus Christ - **1 Jn 1:1-2**
  - b. That we might have fellowship with the Father and Son, just as the apostles do - **1 Jn 1:3**
  - c. That we might have fullness of joy - **1 Jn 1:4**
2. So to have fullness of joy, we must experience the kind of life that comes from having fellowship with God!
3. What is to be basis for fellowship with God, so that we have the life that produces fullness of joy?
  - a. In our text (**1 Jn 1:5-2:2**), John discusses the basis for fellowship with God
  - b. He also describes the place of sin, and how it can affect that fellowship

## I. THE PREMISE OF FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD (5)

### A. "GOD IS LIGHT..."

1. The figure of light is often used in the Scriptures to describe that which is good, righteous, and true - cf. **Ep 5:8-10**
2. Therefore, God must always be thought of in this way: He is good, He is righteous, He is true!

### B. "IN HIM IS NO DARKNESS AT ALL..."

1. The figure of darkness would represent the opposite of light: evil, unrighteousness, falsehood
2. Therefore we can never think of God as countenancing sin, excusing it in any way

## II. FALSE CLAIMS CONCERNING FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD (6-10)

### A. "WE HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM", YET WALK IN DARKNESS... (6-7)

1. Why is this claim false?
  - a. Because fellowship means to have something in common
  - b. And we have seen that God is "light" (goodness, righteousness, truth)
  - c. "Walking in darkness", therefore, would be going against everything God stands for!  
- cf. **Ep 4:17-24**
2. What is the result of such a claim?
  - a. We are false in our **word** ("we lie")
  - b. We are false in our **deeds** ("do not practice the truth")

3. Instead, we should **“walk in the light as He is in the light”**
  - a. I.e., instead of living a life characterized by “evil, unrighteousness, and error” (all the while claiming to have fellowship with God)...
  - b. ...we should live a life in harmony with God’s “goodness, righteousness, and truth”!
4. Only then will we experience:
  - a. **“Fellowship with one another”**
    - 1) That is, we will have fellowship with God
    - 2) Whereby we can share in that life which is eternal, and provides fullness of joy!
  - b. **“The blood of Jesus Christ His Son [which] cleanses us from all sin”**
    - 1) This suggests that “walking in the light” does not imply sinlessness
    - 2) Any more than “walking in darkness” implies total absence of good
    - 3) Rather, “walking in the light” suggests...
      - a) A life making progress under the positive influence of God’s “light”
      - b) A life enjoying the cleansing power of Jesus’ blood as one meets the conditions of forgiveness

## **B. “THAT WE HAVE NO SIN...” (8,9)**

1. John may have reference to statements made by professing Christians who thought they had become sinless
2. The consequences of such a claim...
  - a. Self-deceit (“we deceive ourselves”)
  - b. Living in error (“the truth is not in us”)
  - c. I.e., walking in darkness, not walking in light!
3. Instead, we should freely confess our sins - **1 Jn 1:9a**; cf. **Pro 28:13**
4. Then God, who is “faithful” (trustworthy) and “just” (one who does what is right) will...
  - a. “forgive us our sins”
  - b. “cleanse us from all unrighteousness”
 

...through His mercy He makes it possible for to continue in fellowship with Him!

## **C. “THAT WE HAVE NOT SINNED...” (10)**

1. This claim may have been made by some denying they had ever sinned
2. The consequences of this claim are grievous...
  - a. We make God a liar! - cf. **Ro 3:23**
  - b. His Word is not in us!
3. How can anyone who makes such claims as these hope to have true fellowship with God, and thereby enjoy the life such fellowship gives?
4. Fellowship with God does not occur by making claims that turn God into a liar! [Though affirming that we do sin, John is not seeking to encourage sin. Indeed, he is writing to discourage sin (**1 Jn 2:1**). But fellowship with God requires that a person takes sin seriously.]

## II. FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD REQUIRES AN ADVOCATE (2:1-2)

### A. “WE HAVE AN ADVOCATE WITH THE FATHER, JESUS CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS...” (1)

1. The word “advocate”...
  - a. Literally means “to call to one’s side, to one’s aid”
  - b. It suggests the capability for giving aid
  - c. Used in a court of justice to denote a legal assistant, a counsel for the defense
  - d. Generally, it is one who pleads another’s case, an intercessor
  
2. Jesus is the perfect “advocate”, for He is **righteous**
  - a. As sinners, we are alienated from God - cf. **Isa 59:1-2**
  - b. Since Jesus is without sin, He is a fit representative to come before God on our behalf!
  - c. The author of Hebrews also makes the point that though righteous, He understands our situation perfectly - cf. **He 2:17-18; 4:14-16**

### B. “HE HIMSELF IS THE PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS...” (2)

1. The word “propitiation” means “an appeasing”
  - a. E.g., the pagans would offer sacrifices to appease their gods
  - b. In the NT, it is God, not man, who offers the appeasing sacrifice - cf. **1 Jn 4:10**
  - c. Through His death on the cross, Jesus is the means by which God can show mercy to the sinner
  - d. This explains how God can be “just” (cf. **1 Jn 1:9**) and still forgive sin
  - e. This wonderful “propitiation” was given to the whole world, but is accessed only by those who believe in Jesus - cf. **1 Jn 2:2; Ro 3:21-26**

## CONCLUSION:

1. John makes it clear upon what basis we can have fellowship with God, and enjoy the life that provides fullness of joy
  
2. To have fellowship with God, we who are Christians must...
  - a. Not walk in darkness, but walk in the light of God’s goodness, righteous, and truth
  - b. Admit that we have sinned, and do sin
  - c. Utilize our “advocate” (Jesus Christ), whom God provides as the “propitiation” for our sins  
In **1 Jn 1:9**, John explained how those who are already children of God can appropriate the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus (through confession and prayer).
  
3. But how about the alien sinner? - cf. **Ac 2:38; 22:16** (faith, repentance)

(Material from Mark A. Copeland)