



II. FELLOWSHIP AND RIGHTEOUSNESS (1 John 1:8-10)

A. The Denial of a Sin Nature (1 John 1:8)

1. The claim of no sin

- a. It is likely that this verse makes a distinction between sin and sins.
- b. This claim is not a claim of no personal sin, but of no sin nature.
- c. We are sinners in three aspects: sinners by representation, sinners by nature, and sinners by practice.

(1) Sinners by representation:

- a) In Eden, Adam was the great champion of the human race.
 - i) Levi was in Abraham's loins and paid tithes to Melchisedek but had not been born (Hebrews 7:9-10).
 - ii) In a similar way, I was in Adam when he disobeyed God and partook of the forbidden fruit.
- b) What Adam lost by that sin, I lost (Romans 5:12, 15).
 - i) He lost paradise on earth. I lost it.
 - ii) He lost eternal life and so did I.
 - iii) Paul states, "in Adam all die" (1 Corinthians 15:22).
 - iv) When Adam sinned, we all suffered.
 - v) This is the truth conveyed in Luke 19:10.

(2) Sinners by nature:

- a) Something else happened when Adam sinned. His very nature was corrupted and that corrupted nature is passed on to all of his descendants.
- b) Adam was created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27). After the fall, Adam "begat a son in his own likeness, after his image" (Genesis 5:3).
- c) In the New Testament, the word *flesh* is often used to refer to this fallen nature (although flesh also refers to the material part of man and the meaty portion of the body according to context).
 - i) Jesus bore the *likeness* of sinful flesh (Romans 8:3).
 - ii) The wording here is important.
 - (a) Naturally, the flesh referred to here is sinful.
 - (b) But in the case of Jesus, it was not sinful though it was visibly no different than all other flesh.
- d) The scriptures are filled with testimonies to this fact.
 - i) Man's heart is deceitful (Jeremiah 17:9).
 - ii) There are none that do good (Psalm 14:1-3).
 - iii) The best acts of man are as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6).
 - iv) David recognized that from his conception, it was his nature to sin (Psalm 51:5).
 - v) Paul refers to this sinful nature (Romans 7:18).

(3) Sinners by practice:

- a) This refers to our practice of committing actual sins.
- b) Practice of sin commits sinners to judgment in hell.



- d. Note: These truths have led some to believe there is a problem in the blood.
 - (1) Blood is thought to be a carrier of corruption.
 - (2) Christ in His resurrected body had flesh and bones (Luke 24:39); “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 15:50).
 - (3) Apparently, the offending item is the blood.
 - a) From a practical point, an embalmer quickly removes the blood from a dead body because it corrupts so quickly.
 - b) In the Bible (Exodus 7:17-18; Revelation 11:6), the changing of water into blood was a corrupting plague.
 - (4) This would explain some things said of the blood of Christ.
 - a) It is called “the innocent blood” by Judas (Matthew 27:4).
 - b) Acts 20:28 tells us that God purchased the church “with his own blood.” It was the blood of God that paid for our sins.
 - c) 1 Peter 1:18-19 tells us that we were not redeemed with corruptible things but with the “precious blood of Christ.”
 - d) Christ’s blood was not corruptible. It was evidently divine.
 - e) This is how Jesus could be born in the “likeness of sinful flesh” (Romans 8:3), but without the sin nature.
 - i) His flesh came from Adam; but His blood came from God.
 - ii) He experienced all the weaknesses of the physical body, but He did not have the sin nature.
 - iii) He came as the “last Adam” (1 Corinthians 15:45) and the “second man” (1 Corinthians 15:47).
 - iv) He came to win where Adam had lost.
- 2. Self-deception
 - a. Notice the first three words—“If we say.”
 - (1) The Bible does not say, “If we have no sin.”
 - (2) The point being, we can only “say” such things, but it can never be true until we are with Christ (1 John 3:2).
 - b. Deception comes from two directions (2 Corinthians 7:5)
 - (1) From without
 - a) Satan (1 Timothy 2:14)
 - b) Sin (Romans 7:11)
 - c) False teachers (Romans 16:17-18)
 - (2) From within—self (1 Corinthians 3:18; Galatians 6:3)
 - c. This passage teaches that to deny a sin nature is self-deception.
- 3. The absence of truth
 - a. Our denial of the truth does not dismiss the truth.
 - b. Our denial of the truth is evidence that the truth is not in us (1 John 2:4; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; 2 John 1:2; 3 John 1:1-3).
 - c. Truth is truth regardless of any man’s acceptance, but mankind is doomed without truth. In other words, truth does not need man, but man needs truth.



B. The Confession of Sins (1 John 1:9)

1. The confession of sins (see Leviticus 26:40-42)
 - a. Confession defined
 - (1) It is the acknowledgement of sin (Leviticus 26:40).
 - a) Confession acknowledges failure (Psalm 32:5).
 - b) Confession brings sin out of hiding (Joshua 7:19; Proverbs 28:13).
 - (2) It is agreement with God (Leviticus 26:40-41; Amos 3:3).
 - (3) It is the acceptance of judgment (Leviticus 26:41).
 - b. The level of our confession
 - (1) We confess our sin at salvation.
 - a) At salvation, we agree that “all have sinned, and come short” (Romans 3:23).
 - b) At salvation, we admit that “there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not” (Ecclesiastes 7:20).
 - (2) We confess our sins for fellowship (1 John 1:9).
 - c. The recipient of our confession
 - (1) Our faults (James 5:16)—we confess our faults one to another.
 - (2) Our sins
 - a) We confess sins to God (Psalm 32:5; 1 John 1:9).
 - b) This is consistent in the Bible: Achan (Joshua 7:19); Levites (2 Chronicles 30:22); Ezra (Ezra 10:1); Daniel (Daniel 9:4, 20).
 - d. The benefit of our confession
 - (1) Pure fellowship
 - a) Sin separates (Isaiah 59:2).
 - b) Confession restores (Amos 3:3).
 - (2) Forgiveness and cleansing (1 John 1:9)
2. The character of God
 - a. He is faithful.
 - (1) The word *faithful* speaks of the dependability of God.
 - (2) God’s faithfulness is a foundational truth on which other parts of His nature are established (Deuteronomy 7:9; Isaiah 49:7; Jeremiah 42:5; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:24; 2 Thessalonians 3:3).
 - b. He is just.
 - (1) The word *just* is the root for such words as *justice*, *justify*, *justification*, and many others.
 - (2) The God of the Bible is a just God (Deuteronomy 32:4; Job 8:3; Psalm 89:14; Isaiah 45:21; Zephaniah 3:5; Romans 3:26).
 - (3) It is also a part of the nature of Christ (Zechariah 9:9; Acts 3:14; Acts 7:52; Acts 22:14; 1 Peter 3:18).
 - c. The reason for these two traits being connected.
 - (1) God’s faithfulness means He will keep His word continually.
 - (2) God’s justness means that He will do what is right.
 - (3) The fact that God does right is only good if He is faithful.



3. The work of God
 - a. He forgives us our sins—the guilt of sin.
 - b. He cleanses us from all unrighteousness—the defilement of sin.

C. The Denial of a Sin Practice (1 John 1:10)

1. The claim of no sins
 - a. The object of the claim
 - (1) This is the claim of no personal sins of commission or omission.
 - (2) This statement is in complete contradiction with the enlightened mind (Psalm 130:3; Proverbs 20:9; John 8:7-9).
 - b. The time of the claim
 - (1) Some state this is only a claim of no sins in the distant past.
 - (2) It is more likely dealing with a claim of no sins from this moment and backward.
 - c. The level of the claim
 - (1) This can be done on various levels, not excluding those who refuse to be called sinners after the point of their salvation.
 - (2) Many will claim that though we still sin, we are not still sinners. The truth still stands that someone who commits sin is a sinner.
2. The accusation against the Lord
 - a. Our denial of personal sins refutes the very words of God.
 - b. The Bible teaches that all have sinned (1 Kings 8:46; Job 15:14-16; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:9, 23).
 - c. To deny this fact is to call God a liar.
 - (1) God cannot lie (Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29; Titus 1:2).
 - (2) God is true, but every man is a liar (Romans 3:4).
3. The absence of His word
 - a. By denying personal sins, we declare that God’s word is not in us.
 - b. This statement acknowledges the absence of God’s word in at least two senses.
 - (1) The presence of God’s word reveals sin (Psalm 119:130).
 - (2) The presence of God’s word keeps from sin (Psalm 37:31; Psalm 119:11).
4. Notice the contrast between the last three verses:
 - a. The unrighteous response (1 John 1:8)
 - (1) We deny the sin nature.
 - (2) We deceive ourselves.
 - (3) The truth is not in us.
 - b. The righteous response (1 John 1:9)
 - (1) We confess our sins.
 - (2) He is faithful and just.
 - (3) Sin and unrighteousness depart.
 - c. The unrighteous response (1 John 1:10)
 - (1) We deny our sins.
 - (2) He is a liar.
 - (3) His word is not in us.



The First Epistle General of John

Divine Fellowship (Cont'd)

1 John 2:1-29

- I. THE GOD OF RECONCILIATION (1 John 2:1-2)
 - A. The Advocate for Sins (1 John 2:1)
 1. John's care for his audience
 - a. John's term of endearment—"My little children"
 - b. John's concern for sin
 - (1) He wrote these things to persuade his readers not to sin.
 - (2) As such, John sought to persuade the audience of:
 - a) God's righteousness (1 John 1:5)
 - b) The importance of their walk (1 John 1:6)
 - c) The danger of sin (1 John 1:8-10)
 2. John's encouragement for his audience
 - a. What is an advocate?
 - (1) This is the only occurrence of this word in the Bible.
 - (2) Historically, the word meant one whose profession is to plead cases in a court of justice.
 - (3) The word breaks down in two parts: *ad + vocate*. *Vocate* came into the language from a word connected to the word *voice*.
 - (4) An advocate speaks on behalf of another (Zechariah 3:1-7).
 - b. The need for an advocate
 - (1) Sins accuse us (Numbers 32:23; Psalm 90:8; Isaiah 59:1-2, 12).
 - (2) The Devil accuses us (Revelation 12:10).
 - c. The presence of an advocate—"we have an advocate."
 - d. The purpose of an advocate (Romans 8:34; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 7:24; Hebrews 9:24)
 - (1) To speak for the accused (Zechariah 3:1-7; John 8:1-11)
 - (2) To reconcile the accused with the Father
 - e. The identity of the advocate
 - (1) His name—"Jesus"
 - (2) His authority—"Christ"
 - (3) His character—"the righteous"
 - a) Notice the definite article *the* in front of righteous.
 - b) This signifies that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only one that is righteous that could speak on your behalf.
 - c) Christ's righteousness allows the Father to trust Christ's judgment and defense. The accuser is a liar (John 8:44).
 - d) Christ's argument must be a righteous argument. As such, He argues our justification (Acts 13:38-39; Romans 3:24-28; Romans 4:25; Romans 5:1; 1 Corinthians 6:11).

**B. The Propitiation for Sins (1 John 2:2)**

1. The identity of the propitiator
 - a. He refers back to the last person referenced.
 - b. It is Jesus Christ the righteous.
2. The definition of propitiation (1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:10; Romans 3:25)
 - a. Technically, the word *propitiation* means *to satisfy the demands for justice*.
 - b. Doctrinally, it can be explained as:
 - (1) God hates sin because He is righteous.
 - (2) As such, sin must be judged and judgment was appointed to me.
 - (3) God's wrath is on all who do not know Christ as Saviour.
 - (4) Christ stands as a propitiation between the saint and God's wrath.
 - (5) Christ took that wrath upon Himself, paid the price of judgment, and gave eternal life!
 - (6) Christ satisfied God's demand for righteous judgment.
3. The need for propitiation
 - a. The problem of sin (Psalm 14:1-3; Jeremiah 17:9; Isaiah 64:6)
 - (1) In all of the places where propitiation is mentioned, the context deals with sins (1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:10; Romans 3:25).
 - (2) Man has a sin problem and the only true remedy is propitiation (1 John 4:10; see Romans 3:23-25).
 - b. The standard (Isaiah 6:3; Habakkuk 1:13; Job 25:1-6)
 - (1) God is thrice holy (Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8).
 - a) Holiness means God has no blemish, evil, or wickedness.
 - b) Everything is pure, holy, and righteous with God.
 - (2) God cannot look on iniquity (Habakkuk 1:13).
 - a) God's eyes are pure and cannot look upon iniquity.
 - b) God is so holy that we could not exist in the same universe apart from His grace.
 - (3) Much is impure in His sight (Job 25:4-6).
 - a) The stars are not pure in God's sight.
 - b) The moon is not pure in His sight.
 - c) We are as a worm.
 - c. The demand (Psalm 9:7-8; Acts 17:31; Hebrews 10:30-31)
 - (1) The requirement for justice
 - a) God demands that sin be fully judged.
 - b) The payment for our sin must be made.
 - c) God cannot "just forgive" because His own righteousness is at stake.
 - d) He is absolutely righteous. As such, He demands that sinful actions be paid for by righteous judgment.
 - (2) God will judge the world in righteousness (Psalm 9:7-8).
 - a) God's righteousness demands that sin be judged and that punishment equal to the sin be applied.



- b) God is absolutely holy and the only way He can be consistent with Himself is to fully execute all judgment and justice in a righteous way.
 - c) It is a fearful thing to stand before the righteous God (Joel 2:11; Nahum 1:6; Malachi 3:2; Revelation 6:17).
 - (3) There must be a righteous solution to satisfy justice.
 - a) God has provided a solution—propitiation.
 - b) Propitiation satisfies the demand for justice.
4. The offer of propitiation
- a. The source is love (1 John 4:10).
 - (1) There have never been any instances in the history of mankind where man loved God before God loved man.
 - (2) We love God only because He first loved us (1 John 4:19).
 - (3) God loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
 - b. The means is blood (Romans 3:25).
 - (1) Jesus died for your sins and my sins, but He also died to satisfy the wrath of the Father against you (Isaiah 53:3-5).
 - (2) When Jesus suffered on the cross, He became sin.
 - (3) He suffered and experienced the wrath of God on Himself.
 - c. The outcome is satisfaction.
 - (1) Jesus Christ accomplished God's purpose (Isaiah 53:10-11).
 - (2) Propitiation means the satisfaction of God's demand for judgment.
 - a) It requires the pouring out of wrath upon sin.
 - b) God knows that judgment must be applied.
 - c) This is the only way that His righteousness can be satisfied.
 - d) Judgment must be poured out upon the sin of that sinner, but Jesus said, "Father, put it on me."
 - e) God saw the wrath placed on the Son and the Father was satisfied or pleased.
 - f) Now the Father can receive one who is a sinner because the sinner is now in the Son (2 Corinthians 5:21).
5. The reach of propitiation
- a. When Jesus Christ died on the cross, He offered to satisfy the wrath of God against every man, woman, and child (1 Timothy 4:10).
 - b. He is potentially the Saviour of all men; He is specifically and especially the Saviour of those who accept Him by believing on Him.
 - c. When He died on the cross, He suffered everybody's hell all at once. He has suffered that judgment.
 - d. Jesus Christ died to be the Saviour of the world (1 John 4:14).
 - e. He came to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29).
 - f. In Christ, God was reconciling the world unto Himself (2 Corinthians 5:18-21).



II. THE ASSURANCE OF OBEDIENCE (1 John 2:3-6)

A. Evidence of Knowing God (1 John 2:3)

1. Basic information concerning the passage
 - a. The word “hereby” indicates that what follows is a method by which we can determine whether or not we “know him.”
 - b. The emphasis of the passage is that we can “**know**” we “know him.” Therefore, the emphasis is that assurance is available. God wants us to **know**:
 - (1) We know Him (1 John 2:3).
 - (2) We are in Him (1 John 2:5).
 - (3) We have passed from death unto life (1 John 3:14).
 - (4) He abideth in us (1 John 3:24).
 - (5) We have a mutual indwelling (1 John 4:13).
 - (6) We have eternal life (1 John 5:13).
 - (7) We are of God (1 John 5:19).
 - c. The evidence provided—“we keep his commandments.”
 - d. The bookends provided
 - (1) “[H]ereby we do know that we know him” (1 John 2:3).
 - (2) “[H]ereby know we that we are in him” (1 John 2:5).
2. The common interpretation
 - a. The passage provides the believer assurance of salvation.
 - b. Keeping the commandments of God indicates that a person has truly trusted the Lord Jesus Christ (see also 1 John 3:14; 1 John 5:13).
Note: The Lord Jesus Christ used this as a principle to verify His relationship with the Father (John 8:55).
 - c. Trouble with this interpretation
 - (1) False obedience
 - a) Problem stated—People can seemingly keep the commandments without having trusted Christ as Saviour (Matthew 7:21-23).
 - b) Solution—Keeping the commandments would include not only man’s works, but also motives. A man’s motive cannot be right apart from a personal relationship with God.
 - (2) Saved people sin.
 - a) Problem stated—Genuine believers may turn from the Lord (Acts 15:36-38).
 - b) Solution—The passage is not speaking of a person’s salvation, but is speaking of his assurance. A man who lacks obedience to the commandments of God lacks assurance.
 - d. Finding assurance of salvation
 - (1) The problem of assurance
 - a) Doubting saints (Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:1)
 - i) Their personal agony
 - ii) Their hindered service



- b) False professors (Titus 1:16; Matthew 7:21-23)
 - i) Their false hope
 - ii) Their false life
 - (2) The possibility of assurance
 - a) By the word of God (1 John 5:13)
 - b) By the person of Christ (2 Timothy 1:12)
 - c) By the examination of self (2 Corinthians 13:5)
 - (3) The practical proofs of assurance
 - a) Inward—the witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16; 1 John 3:24; 1 John 4:13; 1 John 5:10)
 - b) Outward—the love of the brethren (1 John 3:14; John 13:34-35)
 - c) Upward—the keeping of God's commandments (1 John 2:3-5; 1 John 3:7, 10)
 - (4) The final proof of assurance
 - a) Examine the word of salvation (Romans 10:8-10, 13).
 - b) Examine your time of salvation (2 Corinthians 13:5).
- B. The Perfection of the Love of God (1 John 2:4-5)
- 1. He that keepeth not the commandments (1 John 2:4)
 - a. The claim of knowing God
 - (1) The words of the individual—"I know him."
 - (2) The insinuation of the individual
 - a) If we just had the phrase "I know him," we might suggest that the individual was speaking of a daily walk with God.
 - b) However, the last phrase of 1 John 2:5 clears up any difficulties of interpretation. The phrase "in him" (1 John 2:5) is given to define the phrase "know him" (1 John 2:4).
 - c) The phrase "in him" deals with our personal salvation.
 - i) We were baptized into Christ at salvation (Galatians 3:27). Note: This is a spiritual baptism.
 - ii) Believers are said to be "in Christ" (Romans 8:1; Romans 16:7; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Peter 5:14).
 - b. The failure to keep His commandments
 - (1) A man's words say he knows God, but his actions say otherwise (Titus 1:16).
 - (2) This professor of Christ states that he knows Him, but he willingly refuses to follow the commandments of Christ. In other words, sure I know Him, but I will not live for Him.
 - (3) Keeping the commandments of God is an evidence of salvation (1 John 2:4) and offers assurance of salvation (1 John 2:3).
 - c. The reality of condition
 - (1) He is a liar.
 - (2) The truth is not in him (John 8:44).
 - (3) This matches the condition of one who denies sin (1 John 1:8-10).



- d. Salvation and works
 - (1) Biblical salvation is not of works (Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:5, 8-9; Titus 3:5).
 - (2) Biblical salvation leads to good works.
 - a) It changes men (2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 6:6-11).
 - b) We are saved unto good works (Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:14; Titus 3:8).
 - c) True faith moves to action (James 2:14-26; see Hebrews 11).
- 2. He that keepeth the commandments (1 John 2:5)
 - a. No need to say it
 - (1) The first person professes that he knows Christ.
 - (2) This person demonstrates that he knows Christ.
 - b. The perfecting of the love of God
 - (1) The working of God is “in him.”
 - (2) The love of God is perfected in him (Romans 5:5; 1 John 2:15; 1 John 3:17; 1 John 4:12).
 - a) The word *perfected* informs us that this is a process.
 - b) The love of God grows and matures within the believer who is actively keeping the word of God.
 - c) A believer’s love matures in several areas.
 - i) From selfish to selfless
 - (a) A selfish love—It begins with thoughts of what we gain from knowing Him.
 - (b) A selfless love—A mature love wonders what it can give back to the Lord for His great love.
 - ii) From fear to faith
 - (a) Fear—Perhaps a believer does not know the faithfulness of the Lord.
 - (b) Faith—A mature love knows the Lord is faithful.
 - iii) From knowledge to knowledge
 - (a) Shallow knowledge—The saint knows very little about the words of God and will of God.
 - (b) Deeper knowledge—A mature love understands the leading of the Lord.
 - iv) From earning to enjoying
 - (a) The need to earn love—Early on, a believer may think he must work to get the Lord’s love.
 - (b) The blessing of enjoying love—A mature love serves the Lord because His love is enjoyed.
 - v) From beauty to beauty
 - (a) Surface beauty—A believer may speak of God’s beauty in saving him from hell.
 - (b) Altogether beautiful—The Lord is beautiful in everything He does including the trials He sends.
 - vi) From tokens to time
 - (a) The tokens—Love is confirmed with blessings.
 - (b) The time—Fellowship with Him is priority.



- (3) Loving God is strongly connected to keeping His commandments (Exodus 20:6; Deuteronomy 7:9; Deuteronomy 11:1, 22; Deuteronomy 30:16; John 14:15, 21, 23-24; 1 John 5:2-3).
 - c. Evidence of our salvation
 - (1) The word *hereby* points back to the previous thoughts.
 - a) Keeping the word of God
 - b) The perfecting of the love of God
 - (2) These truths provide assurance of salvation for the believer.
 - a) A person's personal salvation is the most important matter this side of eternity.
 - b) God would be unjust to leave us without some evidence to confirm or refute our claim of that salvation.
- C. The Responsibility of the Believer (1 John 2:6)
- 1. He that saith
 - a. The claim of abiding in Him—Those who are redeemed by the Lord should have no trouble saying so (Psalm 107:2).
 - b. The responsibility of the claim—If you are going to talk the talk, you should walk the walk.
 - 2. Ought also so to walk
 - a. Abiding in the Lord changes your walk (John 15:4-8).
 - b. We should walk as He walked.
 - (1) In serving others
 - a) He washed the feet of the disciples as an example (John 13:12-17).
 - b) He came to minister to others (Matthew 20:27-28).
 - (2) In pleasing others
 - a) The example of Christ (Romans 15:3)
 - b) Our call to please others (Romans 15:1-2)
 - (3) In loving others
 - a) We are to love as Christ loved us (Ephesians 5:2, 25).
 - b) We are to love one another (John 13:34-35).
 - (4) In forgiving others
 - a) The example of Christ at the cross (Luke 23:33-34)
 - b) We are to forgive as we have been forgiven (Colossians 3:13).
 - (5) In humility
 - a) Christ made Himself of no reputation (Philippians 2:6-8).
 - b) We are to have the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5).
 - (6) In suffering
 - a) The suffering of Christ without complaint (1 Peter 2:22-23)
 - b) Christ is our example in suffering (1 Peter 2:21).
 - (7) In endurance
 - a) We look to the endurance of Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-2).
 - b) We consider the endurance of Jesus (Hebrews 12:3).