

The Misconceptions of Man

1st John – Chapter 1.6 – 2.2

1 John 1:6 – 2.2 ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; 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. ⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us. 2 ¹ My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; ² and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

CJB – In these passages, John writes about the relationship of a believer to both sinful acts and the sinful nature as a whole. These verses provide a threefold message: 1) there is an absolute call to put away sin; 2) it is impossible to live without sinning; and 3) one has no right to give up the battle against sinning... This is best illustrated in the following Mishnah passage:

“You are not obligated to complete the task, but you are still not free from working at it”

Last week we talked about John and how he may have been perceived over the centuries. In the ‘Thru the Bible’ series by J. Vernon McGee, he says this:

“If we say that we have fellowship with him”—there are a lot of folk claiming to have fellowship with Him when they do not in reality at all. “We lie, and do not the truth.” Do you understand what John says in this verse? He is rather blunt, don’t you think so? He says that we lie. It is not a nice thing to call another man a liar. John says that if you say that you have fellowship with God and you walk in darkness—that is, in sin—you are lying. I didn’t say that. I am too polite to say that, but John said it. We always think of John as being that little ladylike apostle who carried a handkerchief in his sleeve. I don’t know how the rumor got started that John was that kind of a man, unless it began during the Middle Ages when an artist painted him with curls! I suppose the artist got the idea of curls from the fact that John is called the apostle of love.

But our Lord never called him that—He called him a son of thunder! If John and that artist meet on the corner of Glory Avenue and Hallelujah Boulevard in heaven, I tell you, that artist is going to know what thunder and lightning both are, because I think John is going to level with him, “What is the big idea of giving the world the impression that I was a sissy-type individual?” John was a great, big two-fisted, rugged fisherman, and he is the one who says, “If you say you are having fellowship with God and you walk in darkness, you lie, because God is light; God is holy.”

As we get started, one thing we need to remember is that the apostle John is writing to Christians, to Believers, in other words he is writing to each of us. And he is going to show us some of the misconceptions that believers have – what they are, why they are wrong, and what is right.

Misconception 1 – Man Can Fellowship with God & Still Walk in Sin

1 John 1:6,7 ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; 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.

❖ **The Misconception** is: where & when we try to bring God down to the level of man – our level.

- If we claim to have fellowship with Jesus/God and yet live like the world – we are trying to ‘personalize’ God to what we can understand. But He is not our ‘good buddy’, the ‘man upstairs’; and we cannot walk in darkness, live double or triple lives (one at work, one at home, one at church).
 - Fellowship – g2842 **koinōnia** - partnership, participation, sharing, intimacy
- Vs 5 - Darkness g4653 **skotia** - dimness, obscurity - the darkness due to want of light.
 Vs 6 ‘Darkness’ is g4655 **skotos** - shadiness, the darkness of night, darkness of darkened eyesight or blindness... used as a metaphor - purposeful ignorance respecting divine things and human duties, and the accompanying ungodliness and immorality, together with their consequent misery in hell, persons in whom darkness becomes visible and holds sway.
 John is using this word **darkness** to refer to sin.
 - *John 8:12 ¹² Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”*
- We are lying if we say ‘we can have fellowship’ but live in darkness.
 - Lie – Lying g5574 **pseudo-mai** - to utter an untruth or attempt to deceive by falsehood —to speak deliberate falsehoods
 - *John 8:55 ⁵⁵ and you have not come to know Him, but I know Him; and if I say that I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you, but I do know Him and keep His word.*
 - *John 3:21 ²¹ But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.”*

❖ **The Truth is:**

- We must walk in the Light of the Lord.
 - *[Isaiah 2:5](#) ⁵ Come, house of Jacob, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.*
 - *[1 Timothy 6:16](#) ¹⁶ [Jesus] who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.*
- Walking in the light of Jesus means following Him and His direction, obeying Him, conducting ourselves according to Christian truth, and being that Berean that searches the Scriptures in order to know how to live a holy life
 - *Light - g5457 phōs - to shine or make manifest*
- This walk produces true fellowship with Jesus as well as one another, other Christians. The light itself is the fundamental reality which we all share. So true communion is living where our experience is illuminated by the truth of what God is, open to Jesus.
 - *Fellowship g2842 koinōnia - partnership, participation, sharing, intimacy*
- John talks of walking in the light, rather than according to the light. Walking in the light shows openness & responsiveness & affirms that the believers would have fellowship with God and that –
 - They are being cleansed from every sin – through the blood of Christ. His blood keeps on cleansing us from all sin, the daily sin, the constant grime of this world.
 - *[Titus 2:14](#) ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.*

Misconception 2 – Man is Not Totally Sinful and Depraved

[1 John 1:8,9](#) ⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

❖ **The Misconception is:** that we say we have no sin nature, that we have reached sinless perfection and are living on that high spiritual mesa that is above the others around us.

- When a believer is experiencing true fellowship with God she may be tempted to think or say at that moment that she is free from sin – or that particular sin. John is warning us that this is a self-deluding concept or perhaps even a Satan inspired concept.
 - *Deceiving g4105 planaō - to roam (from safety, truth, or virtue), to go astray, err, seduce, wander, be out of the way. Metaphor - to lead away from the truth, to lead into error, to be led into error, to be led aside from the path of virtue, to go astray, to be led away into error and sin*
 - This is a deception where we are not just deceiving ourselves, we are trying to deceive our brothers, and we are trying to deceive God... who will not be deceived even if others are.
 - *Job 15:14 ¹⁴ “What is man, that he should be pure, Or he who is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?*
 - *Proverbs 20:9 ⁹ Who can say, “I have cleansed my heart, I am pure from my sin”?*
 - *Romans 3:10 ¹⁰ as it is written, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE*
 - *James 3:2 ² For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well.*
 - This is not the truth. Today there are people who say that there are no absolutes, what’s wrong for you just isn’t wrong for me. I may not be perfect, but I’m not a sinner. Well, John answered that conviction in his gospel...
 - *John 8:44 ⁴⁴ You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*
- ❖ **The Truth:** We cannot bring God down to our level and we cannot rise to His level – so we must confess our sins We see that there is **sin** – referring to our corrupt, evil nature which we inherited by birth; and there are **sins** – referring to the trespasses and evils which we do each day. We must agree with God about what sin is, how much we do sin each day, and then turn away from them in confession and repentance.
- What does it mean to confess our sins? It means that you are saying the same thing that God says. When God in His Word says that the thing you did is sin, you get over on God’s side and look at it, then you agree with Him.

- Confess - g3670 **homologeō** to assent, acknowledge, to say the same thing as, to agree with, to concede and not refuse, to admit or declare one's self guilty of what one is accused of
- You confess because God is faithful and just and because God forgives
 - **Psalms 32:5** 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.
 - **Proverbs 28:13** ¹³ He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.
- You confess because God cleanses us from all unrighteousness
 - Cleanse g2511 **katharizō** - to make clean, purge, purify - in a moral sense, to free from defilement of sin and from faults; to purify from wickedness; to free from guilt of sin
 - **Titus 2:14** ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

Misconception 3 – Man Can Become Sinless and Righteous on His Own

1 John 1:10 – 2.2 ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us. 2 ¹ My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; ² and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

❖ **The Misconception** - says that we can become righteous & sinless on our own. The Gnostics at that time did not believe they sinned or even had a sin nature, so they did not admit to any wrong doing. But divine dealings with humankind are based on the premise that all have sinned as declared from Genesis through The Revelation. So, saying that we have not sinned is wrong, we cannot become sinless or righteous on our own and to deny one's personal sins in the face of God's own testimony is...

- To make God out to be a liar
 - Job knew that all men sin as he said in **Job 15:14** ¹⁴ "What is man, that he should be pure, Or he who is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?"
 - We see in John's Gospel that God cannot be a liar - **John 3:33** ³³ He who has received His testimony has set his seal to this, that God is true.

- To dispute God's Word as written in Scripture, and taught by His Son Jesus. God does not lie and to think or say such means that His word is not in us.

❖ **The Truth:** Yes we are not sinless, and we sin in some way every day, but we should not be living in the manner of or practicing a sinful life style – it should not be habitual

- *1 John 3:9 ⁹ No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*

- We must be absolutely honest about our condition, there can be no hypocrisy or hiding what we really are before God. We cannot become completely sinless, nor can we obtain righteousness without Him

❖ **The Provision:** When we do sin..

- John call us his little children and so we are to our Heavenly Father. When we are born again we become a child of God and therefore He is our Father, and nothing can ever affect that relationship. Jesus frees us from the guilt of our sins and restores us to God by removing every barrier to fellowship with Him and our brothers.
- Jesus Christ is our Advocate, the One who pleads for us before God
 - *Advocate - g3875 **paraklētos** - intercessor, consoler, advocate, comforter - summoned, called to one's side, esp. called to one's aid one who pleads another's cause before a judge, a pleader, counsel for defense, legal assistant, an advocate - one who pleads another's cause with one, an intercessor – as Christ in his exaltation at God's right hand, pleading with God the Father for the pardon of our sins - in the widest sense, a helper, aider, assistant of the Holy Spirit destined to take the place of Christ with the apostles (after his ascension to the Father), to lead them to a deeper relationship with the Father*
- Jesus died for the sin and sins of the whole world, from the beginning of sin in the garden of Eden to the end of earthly time when God will make all things new. Jesus paid the price demanded by a Holy God – which was death by a perfect human - Christ's death. Before Jesus died He said – 'It is finished'. The payment has been made, the judicial forgiveness has been paid on the cross.
- But as far as fellowship in the family of God, the sinning believer needs parental forgiveness... The forgiveness of The Father and this is where Jesus is our advocate throughout our Christian life.

- **Romans 8:33-34** ³³ Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; ³⁴ who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.
 - **1 Timothy 2:5** ⁵ For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus
 - **Hebrews 7:25** ²⁵ Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.
 - **John 14:16** ¹⁶ I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever
- Jesus Christ is the propitiation, the atonement sacrifice & reconciliation for our sins
- *Propitiation - g2434 hilasmos - atonement, expiator, appeasing, satisfaction, a means whereby sin is covered & remitted. When used for Jesus, it signifies that He Himself through the sacrifice of His death, is the personal means by whom God shows mercy to the sinner who believes on Christ as the One so provided.*
 - **Romans 3:25** ²⁵ whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness
 - **Hebrews 2:17** ¹⁷ Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people
 - **1 John 4:10** ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins