

## What to Do When You Mess Up – 1 John 1:8-9

### INTRO • Read vs. 5-10

#### Winning at Sinning

1. A woman went to see her doctor about her husband's snoring.
  - a. It had become a real problem because many nights he came home late,
    - 1) & having drunk too much, he'd fall into bed still dressed
    - 2) & immediately start sawing logs.
  - b. She couldn't sleep & it was taking a toll. So she went to see the doctor.
2. He told her to tie a ribbon round her husband's nose.
3. That night he again came home late, fell into bed & started snoring.
4. So she got up. Went to her dresser, found a blue ribbon and tied it round his nose.
5. Sure enough, the snoring stopped and she got a good night's sleep.
6. The next morning when they woke, she asked Him, "Where were you last night?"
7. He looked in the mirror & said, "I don't know, but where ever it was, I won first place."
8. This guy didn't want to admit he had a problem.
  - a. His wife had tried to talk to him about it and the consequences it was having.
  - b. But he didn't want to hear it.
  - c. He pretended everything was fine, though his behavior was causing others problems.

#### Starting 1 John

1. We've finished our study in Joel & Amos, so it's time to move back to the NT.
2. So today we start our study in 1 John.
3. It won't be long until we've completed another journey thru the entire Bible.
4. And when we've finished with Revelation, we're going to start studying thru the latest best-sellers in the self-help genre.
5. Nope! We're going to start all over again with Genesis & Matthew.
6. So we'll begin with some background on 1 John this Wednesday.
  - a. We've had a really good turnout Mid-week.
  - b. Want to encourage you to join us.

#### Set Up

1. While John deals with several subjects in this letter, they all have something to do with our relationships; first with God, then with one another.
2. Here in vs. 5-10, he says sin **hinders** our relationships.
  - a. So, rather than **deny** our sin, we ought to **admit** it,
  - b. Bring it to God & ask that He forgive it.

#### Vs 8-9

<sup>8</sup> If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1. As we'll see Wednesday in setting the background for the letter, John is dealing with some goofy ideas that have risen among Jesus' followers.
  - a. Historians & scholars have long debated exactly what errant teaching John was dealing with.
  - b. But it's pretty clear it was an early form of what later would be known as **Gnosticism**.
  - c. I don't want to get too technical, but it may have been a teaching called **Docetism**, which would alter morph into the Gnostic Heresy.
2. Docetism was a mystical spirituality that adopted some of the **words** Christians used.
  - a. So, not a few young believers assumed Docetism was just a branch of the Faith – because it used the same words.
  - b. It was a clever way for Docetists to recruit converts to their group.
3. The Docetists claimed once you were properly **enlightened** by the secrets they **sold**, I mean **taught** –
  - a. You could rid yourself of sin.
  - b. They said it was possible for people to become morally perfect; w/o sin.
4. So John writes in v. 8 –

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

- a. As long as we live in these mortal bodies, we'll mess up. Sin happens!

- b. Now – Listen! This is super-important.
  - 1) John is going to go on in ch2 to say that if we’ve been born again, we won’t sin habitually!
  - 2) We won’t live at peace with sin. We won’t compromise, rationalize, or excuse sin.
  - 3) An evidence we’re born again is that though we sin, we don’t want to anymore.
  - 4) We abhor that fact that sin still happens.
  - 5) We yearn for the day when sin’s no more; not just “out there”, but “in here.”
- 5. I make an obvious statement: No one in this room or the sound of my voice as it goes out on the net, No one at the CU campus or in SP, is sinless.
  - a. We all sin; every one of us.
  - b. But as obvious as that seems to most of us, I have to warn you there’s a movement in the church today that denies that.
  - c. Called the Hypergrace movement, it says when we’re born again,
    - 1) God forgives our past sins –
    - 2) And gives us a new nature that CANNOT sin.
  - d. So, what do they call it when a Christian lies, gossips, lusts, loses their temper & throws a hissy-fit?
  - e. Well, it’s not living up to the character of Christ, they say, but it’s not sin.
  - f. They are adamant that Christians ought not ask God to forgive them because He already has.
- 6. Now, you’re sharp! & I’ll bet you’re wondering what they do with this!
  - a. They say John isn’t writing to Christians.
  - b. They claim this referred to unbelievers.
  - c. That’s why we read frn v5 a moment ago.
  - d. John is writing to Christians here. That’s obvious.
  - e. So, how can the Hypergrace folk get it so wrong?
  - f. That’s what happens when you use your imagination to design what to believe, then read the Bible thru that filter.
  - g. We ought rather to **let the Bible** design what we believe, & conform all other thoughts to that.
- 7. So what does v8 say? We all sin. // [Response] **Do you sin?** How?
- 8. Really, that’s what John deals with next . . .
- <sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- 9. That word ‘forgive’ means to “send away.”
  - a. When God forgives us, He sends our sins away.
  - a. He lifts guilt from us & as the prophet says, He hurls it into the depths of the sea.
- 10. While we can’t **earn** forgiveness, it is conditional.
  - a. The condition is that we **confess** the sins we want to be forgiven of.
- 11. I want to be clear: Confession isn’t the **basis** of forgiveness.
  - a. God doesn’t forgive us BECAUSE we confess.
  - b. He forgives because Jesus paid the penalty for our sins.
  - c. The Cross makes forgiveness possible.
  - d. Forgiveness **becomes** ours when we **receive it by faith**;
  - e. The **kind** of faith that **confesses** sin.
    - 1) It sees sin for what it is Wicked & worthy of God’s wrath.
    - 2) It sees there’s nothing we can do to expunge sin’s guilt
    - 3) So it looks **outside ourselves** for deliverance.
- 12. This word **confess** means **to agree** with another about something.
  - a. When we **confess** our sins, we agree with God about them.
  - b. We align our view with His about how wicked they are.
  - c. We don’t **rationalize** them & say,
    - 1) “Everyone’s doing it.”
    - 2) “I can’t help myself; I was born this way.”
    - 3) “My parents didn’t raise me right.”
  - d. We don’t **excuse** or **re-define** them.
    - 1) Sin’s going thru a massive public-relations makeover in our day.

- 2) It's not gluttony – It's over-indulgence.
  - 3) It's not drunkenness – It's a chemically-induced altered state of consciousness.
  - 4) It's not lust – It's acute attraction fixation.
  - 5) Teens don't rebel – They're experiencing oppositionalism
  - 6) A couple aren't committing adultery – They're just expressing their evolutionary predisposition to maximize the distribution of their genetic material. I actually read that article!
13. This tendency to duck culpability goes back to the beginning.
- a. When God asked Adam why he ate of the forbidden fruit, he replied, "The woman YOU gave me gave to me and I ate."
    - 1) Adam didn't just throw Eve under the bus, he hinted that it was God's fault too.
  - b. Eve was a quick study on how to duck blame. When God asked her, she pinned it on the serpent.
14. When John says we're to **confess our sins**, it means we're to agree with God about them.
- a. Note that the word "sins" is **plural**.
    - 1) We don't confess "sin" as an **abstraction**.
    - 2) We don't admit that sin is a general spiritual principle everyone deals with.
  - b. John says, "If we confess **our sin-s**."
    - 1) This isn't confessing my neighbor's sins; or America's sins. It's MY sins.
    - 2) And I'm to admit **specific** sins.
  - c. Imagine this conversation with me.
    - 1) "Dear God, please forgive me of my sins."
    - 2) "Love to! Which ones?"
    - 3) "Well, all of them would be nice."
    - 4) "Sure, but why not be **specific** so you can have confidence I've forgiven them **specifically**. **What** sins do you want Me to forgive?"
    - 5) "Okay Lord; forgive me for, ummm Lying."
    - 6) "Which 1?"
    - 7) "You mean there was more than 1?"
    - 8) Silence.
    - 9) "Exaggeration."
    - 10) "Ah, now we're getting somewhere. Which exaggeration, the 1 you told on Monday at the gym or the 2 you told on Tuesday at Coffee Bean."
15. If we're all alike, then I can venture to say you'll understand when I say when it comes to confessing specific sins, we can all think of something major we deal with.
- a. But once we get past that moral weakness which is the major project the HS is working on in us right now
  - b. Naming other specific sins can be a challenge.
  - c. We admit we sin. But when it comes times to name them, we draw a blank.
  - d. And we might be able to label a few things we've done we know are no bueno, but specific incidences of them are difficult to recall.
  - e. The reason for this is because guilt's painful and we've learned how to turn it off.
  - f. We spin doctor sin & shift the blame to others.
16. V9 is the remedy.
- a. God doesn't want us to save up our confession of sin for once a week or month when we take Communion.
  - b. Confession should be daily; even better instantaneous!
  - d. We ought to be so spiritually sensitive, the moment we mess up & are convicted by the Spirit, we confess & ask God to forgive.
17. Now – note the promise attached to the condition  
If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
18. When we confess our sins, God is **both** faithful & just to forgive.
- a. He's **faithful** to forgive because THAT'S what Jesus died for.
    - 1) If you show up at my door asking for a place to stay,
    - 2) & hand me a note from my son that says, "Dad, please let the bearer of this note stay with you for a

few days.”

3) You’re going to be shown tremendous hospitality.

4) Because my son has asked me to show it to you and I’m faithful to him.

b. God the Father forgives us because God the Son, as the Mediator between God & Man, asks Him to.

c. God is also **just** in forgiving us, **again** because of the Cross.

1) Jesus paid the penalty for ALL our sin & sins.

2) So when God forgives us, it’s not because He just magically waves our guilt away –

3) As though sin didn’t matter. It does! SO much to cost Jesus His life.

4) In forgiving us, someone must pay. He pays. He bears the loss so we don’t have to.

19. And as John says, He cleanses us from ALL unrighteousness.

a. There’s no sin God can’t forgive – save 1.

b. What that 1 sin is, we’ll see in a moment.

c. But please hear me: Besides that, there’s no sin God can’t forgive if we’ll confess it.

d. There’s no sin we commit or that’s been committed against us that when we surrender it to God, He can’t forgive, and as Romans 8:28 says, turn to some good.

1) Evil is evil and will always be evil.

2) God doesn’t suddenly switch tags and make evil good.

3) What he does is turns it to produce good.

4) The ultimate proof of that is the Cross.

5) The greatest evil & crime in history became the means by which God effected the greatest good.

6) And the cross of Jesus becomes the lodestone that is able to transmute any evil into gold.

20. The 1 sin God can’t forgive, is the 1 thing upon which all forgiveness hinges – Jesus!

a. The only sin God can’t forgive is rejecting His Son.

b. He’s the door to eternal life.

c. Jesus is the Savior. Reject Him & you reject salvation.

d. Receive Him, & there’s no sin too great for God to forgive, no soul-stain He can’t remove.

God’s Eraser

1. A young girl watched some planes skywriting.

a. The big letters were a delight.

b. But no more than 4 or 5 letters were written done when the first were blown away.

c. She said to her friend, “Maybe God’s got an eraser.”

2. He does; the blood of Christ. V7

If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, & the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Take Out The Trash

1. Thursday night, Lynn made salmon; it’s a fave around the Ralston house.

2. But we’ve learned, you can’t throw the foil it was cooked in in the trash & leave it in the closet.

3. You have to take the trash **out** – or it’ll stink up the whole house.

4. We need to take out our moral & spiritual trash **right away**.

a. We can’t let it accumulate & stink up our lives.

b. Let’s take out the trash.