

## GETTING OUR TALK AND OUR WALK TOGETHER

1 John 1:6-2:2

**Intro:** The theme of the first epistle of John is *fellowship with God*. And although the Apostle did not use the word *fellowship* after verse 7 of the first chapter, yet the whole epistle has to do with *fellowship, fellowship with God* and *fellowship with each other* in the family of God. To speak of *fellowship with God and each other* is just another way of describing the Christian life. It is, like most of the epistles of the NT, salvation in the present tense, or sanctification. At the close of the epistle the Apostle John said, “These things have I written unto you believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life . . .” You will find those words in chapter 5, and verse 13. But all through this letter he made it clear that he was speaking to and about those who were, and are, trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

So when we come to the words in verses 6, 8, and 10, “If we say . . .”, he must be referring to what we as the people of God sometimes say. It does not mean that only the children of God say what those verses tell us, but he was thinking particularly of the Lord’s people.

Even in NT days, and immediately after, many professed to be saved, who weren’t saved. And we know that has been true from then until now in the professing church. As I have said before, many call themselves Christians because they belong to some church, or even go to a church. Some think that being baptized proves that they are Christians, or because they had parents who knew the Lord. The very fact that the Apostle John wrote this epistle shows that it was a major problem in the early church, people who professed, but did not possess.

There is no question but that this has always been a problem. The Apostle Paul even said about the Jewish people in his day,

28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God .

A couple of weeks ago in our Tuesday morning Bible Class I was teaching the doctrine of election from Ephesians 1. And in teaching election I asked the class to turn to John 6. In that chapter our Lord said

some strong things about salvation. In verse 37 He said this:

37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

And then when you get down to verse 44 you find these words:

44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day (John 6:44).

Now some of the Jews who were listening to these words from our Lord, did not like them, and so the Apostle John who wrote the Gospel of John, said as we read in John 6:66,

66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

Now those people who believe that you can be saved and then lost again, take this verse to try to prove their point. But salvation is a birth, a new birth. And you can't be unborn, either physically or spiritually. These were disciples in name only. If they had been true disciples of our Lord they could not have gone away permanently. The Lord would not have let them go.

The Lord knew when He called Judas, that Judas was not a true believer, and that Judas would betray Him. But none of the disciples were even suspicious of him. Judas did a perfect job of fooling them. But when the proper time came, he showed who he really was.

Salvation is a work of God, not a work of man. And tucked away back in the OT we find these words in the book of Ecclesiastes. It is found in Ecclesiastes 3:14, and this is what it says:

14 I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.

So salvation is a work of God which He does forever, and no man can undo it.

How then can we tell that we are saved, and what should we look for in the lives of others to know if they are saved or not? Those are two questions in one, and they both have the same answer. What is it? 1 John. And in addition, those who are truly saved have what the Apostle Paul mentioned in Romans 8:16-17 *the witness of the Holy Spirit*. Listen to these amazing words:

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with

Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Our relationship to Jesus Christ is the most important relationship that we will ever have, or could ever have. And what a tragedy for anyone to be mistaken on this point. So we know that 1 John was written for the encouragement of those who were truly saved, but also for many who think that they are right with God, but are not, this epistle will show them how they can be saved. So we all need to read it. It will encourage those who are really saved, and it will tell others who think they are Christians for some other reason than through a personal faith in the saving power of Jesus Christ, how they can be saved. 1 John teaches us that it is not only extremely important to be saved, but it tells us how we can **know** that we are saved.

Now we saw last Sunday in verse 5 that if we are to have fellowship with God, it has to be on the basis of Who He is: "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." Light here mean holy; darkness means sin. So that any person who claims to have fellowship with God, and is not bothered by sin in his life, is making a claim that is not true.

Now to walk in darkness means to live in darkness. This statement does not mean that if you are a child of God through faith in Christ, that you will never sin. *But it does mean that if you know Jesus Christ as your Savior, you are not going to be happy living in sin.* So if you say one thing, and live another way, you are not telling the truth when you claim to be a child of God. If God has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light, as the Apostle Peter expressed it in 1 Peter 2:9, you are not going to be happy with sin anymore. God does not walk with us in darkness. All who really know the Lord still can sin, and we do sin. But we are not happy when we know that have done something, or said something, or even thought something, that God calls sin. No person can really trust Jesus Christ as Savior and ever be the same again.

What is the cure? We have trusted Christ. We want to please God. But just as we had to learn to walk in our childhood, so we need to know how to walk as God's children. Our talk is important, but our talk is either supported by our walk, or it is not! How do I learn to walk in fellowship with God. I learn that like every other Christian does, from the Bible! The Bible not only teaches us how to live, but it helps us to live to please God because it is a living Word and it imparts life to us. And when we

sin, we know that the blood of Jesus Christ by which we were justified before God, is the same sacrificial blood that keeps us clean. Aren't you thankful that the Apostle John said that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." We all are not troubled with the same sins, but "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from ALL sin!" And all means all.

Let me take a by-path here for just a moment. The question is sometimes asked, "Is there any way that I can know God except through Christ? And the answer is a resounding, "No!" The Lord Jesus Himself told His disciples, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6). Anyone who says there is another way, is lying. And they don't really understand the awfulness of our sin to God.

But let us go back to our text, this time to verse 8 in 1 John 1. (Read.)

Here the Apostle John uses the same three words in verse 8 that he did in verse 6: "If we say . . . Oh, how careful we need to be about what we say!

Now there are some people who claim to know the Lord (and I do not doubt but that many of them do), but they claim that they have reached the place in their lives where sin is not a problem to them anymore. But let me say it as kindly as I can, but as firmly as I can, you will never meet a person, Christian or non-Christian, who has reached the place of sinless perfection.

When we are saved, major changes take place in our lives. As I have said you can never be the same again. But there is one thing that does not change, and that is our ability to sin. The Lord gives us new life when we are saved, and we are no longer in bondage to our sin, but it no longer is our master. Sin is still a powerful influence in all of our lives. We can still be tempted, and we can still sin. And we do sin! We do not sin like we did before we were saved, but we still sin.

I have been reading some of what Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones said when he preached through 1 John. And he brings out very clearly that in this life of fellowship with God, there are many things that God does for us, but that we also have responsibilities to fulfill on our part. And the Apostle John touched upon one of responsibilities here in verse 8, as he did in verse 6. In verse 6, if we are to have fellowship with God, we have *to do*

the Truth! How do we do that? How do we do the truth? We must obey the Word of God. If you ever have the privilege of leading a person to Christ, get them into the Word right away! Get them reading the Bible. Teach them to pray that the Lord will teach them what they read. We are going to come to this subject again in 1 John, but we need to get the Word in our minds and hearts, and then to live it out in our lives. We need to “do” the truth every day of our lives. This is a major part of our responsibility in this life of fellowship with God.

Well, what are we told in verse 8? We are told that “if we say that we have no sin, ever say that, we are deceiving ourselves because “the truth is not in us.” One thing reading the Bible will do for you is, it will never let you forget that you are a sinner, and that you always will need the Word of God to fortify you against the sin that is in you.

Well, when the Word of God reminds me of my sin, what am I to do about it? The answer is in verse 9. (Read.)

This word confess in the original Greek is a very interesting word. It is a word which means *to say the same thing*. It means that I am confessing my sin, and you are confessing your sin, we are saying the same thing about it that God does, *that it is sin!* Now the Lord does not put us out of His family when we sin. He doesn't take our salvation away from us. He will never do that! But He does two things:

1) “He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.”

2) He cleanses us “from all unrighteousness.”

He forgives and cleanses us. We are given a fresh, clean start. But what did the Apostle John mean by “faithful and just.” “Faithful and just” to whom? He doesn't owe me anything. Nor does He owe you anything. What is the answer – “faithful and just” to whom? He is faithful and just to His Son. You see, when the Lord Jesus died specifically for you and me, He died for all of our sins. So when you and I were saved, the death of Christ had already atoned for my past sins, my present sins, and my future sins. And He did the same for you.

So here is another place where our faith is strengthened. It is on the faithfulness of God. But God wants us to call sin sin, and to know that only He can, and will, forgive us of our sins, and restore us to fellowship with Himself.

Now we have only one “if you say” left, at least in the present context of

verses. It seems to me that when the Apostle John said, "If ye say," he was not speaking just of times we might give verbal expression to what he has written about, but even those times when we say these things to ourselves. One of our greatest sins is pride. In fact, many call it *the root sin* from which all other sins come. Even where sin is concerned pride continually shows its ugly face because even when we confess our sins, we take some satisfaction in the fact, or so we think, that while we are sinners, we can always point to others whose sins are greater than ours are.

Whatever we may do to minimize our sins, such an attitude is inclined to make God a liar in His condemnation of all sin. There are no good sins. There are no little sins. Sin is sin, and the soul that sinneth, shall die. Just one sin of eating fruit which God had forbidden to Adam and Eve, brought the whole world under the judgment of God.

The person who seeks to minimize sin, or to claim that this is not the problem of the whole human race, and of us in particular, is making God a liar. What a tremendously terrible statement this is, saying we have no sin, but God does.

**Concl:** There are many today who would like to take the word "sin" out of our language altogether. They picture man as being very noble, and capable of anything he sets his mind on doing. But this only adds to human condemnation. And those people, regardless of who they are, will some day realize when they stand before God that instead of charging God with sin, they will be keenly aware of their own sin, but it will be too late for them to do anything about it. Sin is the greatest problem of the human race. It has brought the whole human family under the judgment of God. And the only deliverance from the charge of sin is in the death of God's Son the Lord Jesus Christ, Who died that men might live both now and forever.

Let us make sure that our talk is true reflection of who we are, and why it is that we love God and His Son Jesus Christ, and hate the sin that made it necessary for the Lord Jesus to die in order that our sins might be forgiven. He died for us, in our place, and we are delivered forever from the judgment of God.