

Introduction to 1John / Part 1
The Assurance of Fellowship With God Renews The Inner Man

- I.** At my house I have a short hallway that leads to my bedroom.
1. The light switch to the hallway is at one end and my bedroom at the other.
 2. About half way down this short hallway are two heavy boxes.
 3. At night, when I head to bed, I look at those boxes and fix them in my mind, and then I turn off the light switch. Now it is dark.
 4. Even though I know where those boxes are I cautiously walk down the hallway with my hands on the walls.
 5. Three times I have caught my little toe on those boxes, and they don't move.
 6. With each incident I have become more cautious and hesitant about advancing down that hallway. I have even thought about moving the boxes.
 7. Interestingly enough, when the light is on in the hallway I walk right past those boxes with confidence.
- II.** The reason I tell this story is because it reminds me of what it is like to have assurance in our relationship with God.
- III.** When I know where those boxes are because I can see them I am assured that I can avoid hitting them so I walk with confidence.
- IV.** Knowledge is an invaluable asset.
1. It can save lives. (*A flood sign*)
 2. It can move us forward. (*A detour sign*)
 3. It gives peace of mind. (*The tornado, "all clear alert"*)
 4. It encourages. (*Your graded papers*)
 5. It provides stability. (*When the crop is harvested*)
- V.** When it comes to renewing the inner man knowledge is indispensable. When we can know for certain that we are in fellowship with God, (in a relationship with Him), lives are saved, we move forward in our Christian walk, we have peace of mind, we are encouraged and we have spiritual stability. **Rom. 8:31,32**
- VI.** Without the ability to gain knowledge life would be a fearful existence. Likewise, without the ability to know of our standing with God makes the Christians life a fearful uncertain existence.
- VII.** When it comes to our spiritual walk, it is imperative that those who seek a relationship with God know and are sure of their standing with Him.
- VIII.** **Christians must have the assurance that they are in fellowship with God if the inner man is going to be renewed.**

IX. A good place to learn about that assurance is the epistle of 1John. The theme of 1John is “fellowship with God”. In His epistle John assures Christians that they can know for certain that they are in fellowship with God and they can know how to maintain that fellowship.

1John 1:7

1John 5:13

X. Beginning today we are going to spend some time studying 1John in the hopes that it will instill within every Christian the assurance of their relationship with God.

XI. Today we are going to consider an overview of 1John. This overview will lay a foundation for the theme of the epistle.

XII. There are multiple ways to outline 1John. For the purpose of these introductory lessons I am going to focus on two key words found in the epistle, which support the theme of the epistle, “fellowship with God”

1. Know: Know of your fellowship with God.

2. Abide: Abide in your fellowship with God.

Trans: Not knowing something has been likened to being in the dark. As we all know darkness can hinder our advancement. It is imperative that we know where we stand in our relationship with God.

1. Know of your fellowship with God.

A. Some form of the word know (using the both γινώσκω or οἶδα) is found some 34 times in this epistle.

B. Being used that many times it is clear that there is something God wants us to know and something we can know. What is it? **1John 1:3**

C. John is dealing with false teachers who have planted seeds of doubts in the minds of some Christians. John is combating that by establishing the fact that there is no question of their relationship with God. **1John 2:26**

D. What are some of the things John wants us to know so we can be sure of our standing with God?

1. (We can know the truth), 1John 2:21

2. (We can know our sins are forgiven)

1John 3:5

1John 1:9

1John 2:12-14

3. (We know we have overcome the world) 1John 5:4,5

4. (We can know we are children of God) 1John 3:1,2

5. (We can know we are currently spiritually alive) 1John 3:14

6. (We can know life is in Christ)

1John 1:1,2

- 1John 4:9
7. (We can know we have eternally life)
1John 2:15-17
1John 2:25
1John 5:10-12

Appl: Brethren it is imperative that we do not walk in darkness in regards to our understanding of our relationship with God.

It is imperative that we know where we stand with God. This understanding, this knowing encourages us to move forward in our relationship. It keeps us from turning back to the world.

As we close today consider 1John 5:20

Christians must have the assurance that they are in fellowship with God if the inner man is going to be renewed.

Introduction to 1John / Part 2
The Assurance of Fellowship With God Renews The Inner Man

I. Last week I told you all about me stubbing my toe on the boxes in the dark hall way at our house. I am happy to inform you that many members came to me afterwards with multiple solutions to my problem.

1. I could put a night-light in the hall.
2. I could turn on the light in my bedroom and then turn off the hall light.
3. It was also suggested that there be a work-day at my house.

II. The reason I tell you all this is because it supports what I was saying last week.

III. The advice I was receiving was an attempt to instill in me some knowledge of how I might rectify my problem, so that I might have assurance when I walk down that hall.

IV. If I listened to the advice given and did as instructed, then I would not longer walk with trepidation down the hall. I would walk with confidence.

V. Again, this is the way it is when it comes to our relationship with God and the renewing of our inner man. When we know for certain that we are in fellowship with God, our inner man is renewed.

VI. Without the ability to know the status of our relationship with God, Christians will live a fearful uncertain existence.

VII. Christians must have the assurance that they are in fellowship with God if the inner man is going to be renewed.

VIII. As stated last week, 1John is a good place to learn about that assurance. The theme of 1John is “fellowship with God”. In His epistle John assures Christians that they can know for certain that they are in fellowship with God and they can know how to maintain that fellowship.

IX. There are some key words used by John, which lays the foundation for our assurance of fellowship with God.

1. **Know: Know of your fellowship with God. (1John 3:1)**
2. **Abide: Abide in your fellowship with God. (1John 1:7)**

X. We’ve discussed that we can know that we are in fellowship with God, **1John 1:3**

Recap: Know: Know of your fellowship with God.

(We can know the truth), 1John 2:21

(We can know our sins are forgiven) 1John 3:5

(We can know we are children of God) 1John 3:1,2

(We can know we have eternally life) 1John 5:10-13

Trans: Today we will continue our intro into 1John and consider our second key word which tells us how we can maintain our relationship with God so we can continue in fellowship with Him.

Abide: Abide in your fellowship with God

A. The word abide (μενω, meno in the Greek) is used some 23 times in 1John.

B. The word is used in reference to a place, state or condition and demands that one not depart from, but remain in that place, state or condition.

C. In the context of 1John it refers to the state of fellowship Christians find themselves in because of Jesus, **1John 2:1,2.**

D. Being found in a state of fellowship, Christians are called to live in such a way as to maintain that condition.

E. It doesn't take John very long to not only establish that fellowship with God is possible, and that fellowship can be maintained,

1John 1:3

1John 1:7,9

F. Throughout 1John we find a constant reminder of how we can maintain our state of fellowship with God.

G. Let's consider a few things John says are required to maintain fellowship with God.

1. Fellowship with God requires accepting His Son,

a. **1John 3:23**

b. **1John 4:15**

2. Fellowship with God requires obedience,

a. Keep His commandments,

1John 2:3-6

1John 3:24

b. Abiding in His word, **1John 2:24**

c. Abiding in Him, **1John 2:28**

3. Fellowship with God requires not loving the world, **1John 2:15-17**

a. We are to purify ourselves, **1John 3:3**

b. Not live in sin, **1John 3:9**

4. Fellowship with God requires love of the brethren,

1John 2:10

1John 4:7,8

1John 4:21

Appl: Brethren it is imperative that we do not walk in darkness in regards to our understanding of our relationship with God.

It is imperative that we know where we stand with God.

This understanding, this knowing, encourages us to move forward in our relationship. It keeps us from turning back to the world.

God not only assures us that we can know we are in fellowship with Him, but that we can know how to maintain that relationship.

Christians must have the assurance that they are in fellowship with God if the inner man is going to be renewed.

That Your Joy May Be Full
1John 1:1-4

I. Imagine that you went to your doctor and he told you, after many tests, that you had a disease that was killing you. He says it is terminal and you have no more than 6 months to live. How would you feel?

II. Now imagine that at the end of those six months your doctor calls you back into his office and tells you there has been a mistake. Somehow files were mixed up and you in fact do not have this incurable disease. How would you now feel?

III. The certainty of our own mortality has always been something that stirs up emotions. We all know we are going to die, but the “what’s on the other side” question is what affects people the most.

IV. The response to the question of the afterlife is different for one who is a Christian as compared to one who is not.

1. To have assurance of eternal life with our Creator is a wonderful thing.
2. Christians should never fear the time that their physical life here ends.
3. This knowledge provides joy for the believer.

V. But what provides us this assurance? In 1John 1:1-4 we are given two empirical facts that provide the assurance we need.

- 1. We have the means to eternal life.**
- 2. We have the proof of eternal life.**

VI. Because we know whom we believe in, our joy is full.

Trans: As John begins this epistle he very quickly establishes the reason for our assurance of eternal life. It is because of whom we believe in.

1. We have the means to eternal life.

A. If we are going to have the assurance of eternal life, there must be some means to support that claim.

B. John makes the claim that we have this assurance because of Jesus.

C. But why is Jesus the means to eternal life?

1. He possesses an eternal nature.
 - a. 1John 1:1 – “What was from the beginning.”
 - b. The word “was” is imperfect indicative active.
 - c. This establishes that Jesus was already in existence before there was a beginning. 1John 1:2 “with the Father”.
 - d. This is the same word used in John 1:1 and establishes Jesus as the creator of life, John 1:1-3.

2. He is eternal life
 - a. 1John 1:2
 - b. Jesus is not a created being. He is eternal. As such he can provide eternal life.
 - c. John refers to Jesus as the "Word of Life".
 1. He is the proclamation of eternal life.
 2. He brings forth the words of eternal life.
 3. John 6:67-69
 4. Rom 6:23

Appl: If I am to believe if something is true or not I must know the source of the information is reliable.

John tells us we can know of the hope of eternal life because Jesus is the source of eternal life. He has the words of life and the means to provide eternal life being the eternal creator.

Because we know whom we believe in, our joy is full.

Trans: So we can conclude Jesus is the source of eternal life, but where is the proof?

2. We have the proof of eternal life.

- A. For John the evidence of eternal life is not hearsay but is supported by his own experiences.
- B. John can proclaim that eternal life is in Jesus based upon eyewitness testimony, and it is not just his eyewitness testimony. He uses the pronoun "we". 1John 1:1
- C. John provides three avenues by which proof was provided.
 1. We heard – can be audible and perceptive, 1John 3:11
 2. We saw – can be both visual and perceptive, understood.
 3. We beheld – physical contact, Luke 24:36-39
 4. Heb. 2:1-4
 5. John 20:30-31
 6. 2Pet. 1:16-19
- D. John proclaims that the life was manifested, 1John 1:2
 1. To make manifest or visible or known what has been hidden or unknown.
 2. Make actual and visible
 3. There should be no doubt about Jesus being here, 1John 3:5
- E. Jesus was a real man. The eternal creator came to this earth and proclaimed words of life. They are witnesses of this fact.

F. This evidence was not kept secret. John says it is proclaimed to them,
1John 1:2,3

Appl: The reason we believe our doctor when we are told something is because we trust him/her.

We suppose that their training and expertise in their field provides them with a level of knowledge so as to provide us with a degree of certainty.

John says that what he knows about Jesus was not something he heard about. He has first hand experience. This should provide us confidence in what he is saying.

His testimony and that of the other apostles carry a weight worthy of belief.

Because we know whom we believe in, our joy is full.

Con: Our Joy is full because we do not believe in some fictitious person, but in the Creator Himself.

We can have fellowship with God because the creator provides the means to that fellowship.

That fellowship is the means to eternal life and so our Joy is full.

Because we know whom we believe in, our joy is full.

1John 1:5-10
"Walk In The Light"

I. Imagine that you go to your doctor and it is found that you have a life threatening disease, yet the doctor tells you it is curable.

II. The cure requires treatment that you will have to take the rest of your life. Would you take the treatments?

III. What if he told you that there will be some discomfort on occasion, and time will be required of you. There is no way you can put it off at any time. It is a life long commitment to the treatments. Would you now take the treatments?

IV. In 1John, we have learned that fellowship with God is a reality. Fellowship is something that the apostles had with God and something John says we can have.

V. But fellowship does not come without a price. There are things that are required of those who chose to enter into fellowship with God.

VI. Fellowship with God requires living in harmony with His character

VII. Today we are going to consider what it takes to be in fellowship with God and what it takes to maintain that fellowship.

Trans: First

1. In God's Fellowship

A. 1John 1:5-10

B. As we consider the letter of 1John it is obvious that fellowship with God involves more than a simple profession of faith. It is more than saying "I believe in God."

C. Fellowship requires actively submitting oneself to the terms of fellowship.

1. **1John 1:6,7**

2. John uses the conjunction "**if**" which makes fellowship conditional.

3. John says the condition of fellowship is to "**walk in the light**".

a. To walk in the light means to walk in God.

b. **1John 1:5** – "God is light."

4. To walk in God, the light, is to live daily according to His nature and will.

a. The word "walk" is a present active verb.

b. It means "to make due use of opportunities."

- c. It is an action that is continually ongoing.
- d. The Christian life is not spiritually stagnant. It involves upward movement and growth.
 - 1. Phil. 3:13,14
 - 2. 2Pet. 1:8-11
- e. The Christian is continually seeking to live in harmony with God.

Appl: Fellowship with God is not something that just happens. It is something we must continually pursue after.

Fellowship requires me making the decision to live in God

Fellowship with God requires living in harmony with His character.

Trans: Knowing that fellowship is conditional I must seek to meet those conditions. This is our second point.

2. Meeting the conditions of fellowship.

- A. How do we meet this condition of fellowship, to “walk in the light?”
- B. Since fellowship with God requires that I walk in Him, I need to understand who He is.
 - 1. 1 John 1:5
 - 2. John says God is light.
 - a. Light represents all that is holy, pure and good.
 - b. Barnes notes that God is “perfectly pure, without admixture of sin. He has all knowledge, with no admixture of ignorance on any subject. He is infinitely happy, with nothing to make Him miserable. He is infinitely true, never stating error; He is blessed in all His ways, never knowing the darkness of disappointment and adversity.”**
 - 3. John also says that there is “**no darkness in Him**”at all.
 - a. Here darkness refers to wickedness or sin
 - b. God does not participate in or otherwise associate with darkness.**
- C. Knowing these things about God we can begin to understand the kind of life that is required if we are maintain fellowship with God.
 - 1. Fellowship with God requires a life committed to Him.
 - 1. **1John 4:15** (Confess Christ to be the Son of God)
 - 2. 1John 2:15-16 (The sinful world cannot attract us)

2. Fellowship requires practicing the truth, **1John 1:6**
 - a. I cannot deny sin, **1John 1:8**
 - b. I cannot deny that I sin. **1John 1:10**
 - c. I must confess my sin. **1 John 1:9**
3. Fellowship requires the absence of dark living, 1John 3:7,8
4. Fellowship requires that I do the will of God, **1John 2:17**
 - a. I must purify myself, 1John 3:3
 - b. I must keep His commands, 1John 2:4
 - c. I must walk as He walked, 1John 2:6
5. Fellowship requires practicing righteousness, **1John 2:28,29**

Appl: Fellowship with God requires a life lived out according to His character.

A Christian is one who has chosen to adopt a specific way of life.

Fellowship with God requires living in harmony with His character.

Con: Some people believe that the story of Jesus is a nice story but not much more than that.

John shows it is much more. The story of Jesus tells us how we can be in fellowship with God and how we can stay in that fellowship so that we might have the hope of eternal life with Him.

Fellowship with God requires living in harmony with His character.

What is Fellowship with God?

I. In the fall of the year, Linda, a young woman, was traveling alone up the rutted and rugged highway from Alberta to the Yukon. Linda didn't know you don't travel to Whitehorse alone in a rundown Honda Civic, so she set off where only four-wheel drives normally venture. The first evening she found a room in the mountains near a summit and asked for a 5 A.M. wakeup call so she could get an early start. She couldn't understand why the clerk looked surprised at that request, but as she awoke to early-morning fog shrouding the mountain tops, she understood. Not wanting to look foolish, she got up and went to breakfast. Two truckers invited Linda to join them, and since the place was so small, she felt obliged. "Where are you headed?" one of the truckers asked. 'Whitehorse'

"In that little Civic? No way! This pass is dangerous in weather like this." "Well, I'm determined to try," was Linda's gutsy, if not very informed, response. "Then I guess we're just going to have to hug you," the trucker suggested. Linda drew back. "There's no way I'm going to let you touch me!"

"Not like THAT!" the truckers chuckled. "We'll put one truck in front of you and one in the rear. In that way, we'll get you through the mountains." All that foggy morning Linda followed the two red dots in front of her and had the reassurance of a big escort behind as they made their way safely through the mountains. Caught in the fog in our dangerous passage through life, we need to be "hugged." With fellow Christians who know the way and can lead safely ahead of us, and with others behind, gently encouraging us along, we, too, can pass safely.

II. As we began looking into 1John it was noted that the central theme is fellowship with God. (**1John 1:3**)

III. In this letter, John encourages these Christians to stay true to what they have heard knowing that they have life eternal with the Father being in fellowship with Him.

IV. Before we advance any further into the text of 1John I want to take some time and discuss what it means to be in fellowship with God.

V. A simple way to define fellowship is to say, "**Fellowship with God is spiritual union with God.**"

VI. But there are some dynamics of fellowship that need to be clarified so that we do not misapply what it means to be in God's fellowship.

VII. We will consider two points on this.

1. Defining fellowship.

2. Parameters of fellowship.

Trans: Many define fellowship in such broad terms that it seems everyone is in fellowship with God. But it is clear that fellowship with God is limited in some ways.

1. Defining fellowship.

A. In the original Greek language of the NT the word is Koinonia, and it can be defined in several ways.

1. Fellowship, association, community, communion, joint participation,
2. It implies a sharing together in anything.
3. The idea of intimacy (closeness) is also involved.

B. Koinonia is a common word, but when used in connection with God has a more specific meaning and purpose.

1. Often times it is applied to our giving or sharing our possessions.
 - a. Rom. 15:26 – to make a *contribution*
 - b. 2Cor. 9:13 - for the liberality of your *contribution* to them
 - c. 2Cor. 8:4 - favor of *participation* in the support of the saints
 - d. Heb. 13:16 - do not neglect doing good and *sharing*
2. It is applied to Christian suffering.
Phil. 3:10 - the *fellowship* of His sufferings
3. It is connected to unity.
 - a. Gal. 2:9 – the right hand of *fellowship*
 - b. Phi 1:6 - the *fellowship* of your faith
 - c. Phil. 2:1 - if there is any *fellowship* of the Spirit

Appl: When we are speaking of Christian fellowship we are talking about a specific kind of relationship.

The association we have is not simply with human kind but with God. The things we share in, although some being common to the world, have a particular spiritual application.

“Fellowship with God is spiritual union with God.”

Trans: Fellowship, when used in connection to Christianity, has a specific meaning and purpose. Thus it has boundaries. This is our second point

2. Parameters of fellowship.

A. All humans are in the fellowship of humanity. That is we all share some common things.

B. But when we speak of fellowship with God the commonality of sharing is narrowed. Matt 7:13,14

C. Fellowship with God is a sharing, but it is spiritual in nature.

1. Fellowship with God is a sharing in His Son, 1Cor. 1:9
2. Fellowship comes through His Son’s sacrifice. 1Cor. 10:16

3. Fellowship exists because of the gospel,
Gal. 3:26-29
Rom. 6:3-7

D. Fellowship with God then is extended only to those who have procured the forgiveness that comes through the blood of His Son, 1John 3:1

E. Thus, fellowship with God it is narrow in scope. It does not involve those who are not Christians, 2Cor. 6:14.

F. Fellowship with God also requires a continual narrow walk, 1John 1:6,7,9

G. But there needs to be a little clarification. Just because we do not have Christian fellowship with those still in sin, does not mean we disassociate ourselves from them.

1Cor. 5:9,10

1Cor. 7:12,13

H. Gods children may not be in Christian fellowship with those in sin, not sharing the same common spiritual relationship with God, but we do have an association with them, Matt 28:19,20

Appl: Fellowship with God is limited in scope. Although offered to all, 2 Pet. 3:9, it only involves those who turn to Him through His Son. Seeking forgiveness and spiritual unity.

Spiritual unity with God guarantees the forgiveness of sins, which is why Christians have life eternal with the Father.

“Fellowship with God is spiritual union with God.”

Fellowship Through the Work of Christ.
1John 2:1,2

I. The editors of American Book Review selected what they consider the most memorable first lines of novels.

1. **Call me Ishmael. (Herman Melville, Moby-Dick, 1851)**
2. **It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife. (Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice, 1813)**
3. **A screaming comes across the sky. (Thomas Pynchon, Gravity's Rainbow, 1973)**
10. **I am an invisible man. (Ralph Ellison, Invisible Man, 1952)**

II. Though not a novel, I would like to submit to you what truly is the greatest first line to any book, **“In the beginning God created the Heavens and the earth.”** Gen. 1:1

III. This is the greatest first line because it is in fact the words of God.

1. This first line provides for mankind an understanding like no other.
2. It tells us of a greater power than ourselves, a Creator.
3. It assures us of hope beyond ourselves. The Creator is benevolent.

IV. To know this Creator should be the journey of all human kind.

V. If possible, to have a relationship with this Creator should be our life's goal.

VI. As we have been considering the epistle of 1John we learn that not only is it possible for us to be in a relationship with God, but that He has provided the means by which this goal can be accomplished.

VII. But it is also clear that our fellowship is not a result of the good things we have done, **1John 1:10**

VIII. We are sinners, Rom. 3:23, separated from God because of our sin, Rom. 6:23.

1. John wants us to understand that as we stand before God guilty of our sin and deserving eternal separation from God, Jesus; His Son intercedes on our behalf.
2. He not only acts in our defense, but he stands in our stead, paying the price for our sin.

IX. Because Jesus is willing to do this we have the assurance of fellowship with God and thus eternal life with Him.

X. John explains that the work of Jesus is two-fold when we speak of our fellowship with God.

1. **Fellowship is Possible Because Jesus is our Advocate**
2. **Fellowship is Possible Because Jesus is our Propitiation**

XI. John is telling us, “Fellowship with God does not exist apart from the work of Christ.”

Trans: Let’s consider the first aspect of Jesus’ work regarding fellowship with God.

1. Fellowship is Possible Because Jesus is our Advocate

A. 1John 2:1

B. The word "**advocate**" literally means "to call to one's side"

1. The implication is the ability to give aid
2. In a court of law it denotes a legal assistant, or counsel for the defense.
3. This is someone who pleads the case of another.
4. An advocate intercedes on behalf of another.

C. Jesus is the perfect "advocate" because He is righteousness.

1. **1John 3:5**
2. Our sin separates us from God, Isa 59:1-2
3. Jesus, the sinless one, is the perfect representative for us, before God, **Heb 9:24**
4. He took on our nature and now stands in Heaven on our behalf pleading our case.
 - a. Heb. 2:17-18
 - b. Heb. 4:14-16

D. John also says, "**we have**" an advocate.

1. The words we have, is present tense.
2. That is to say, “We keep on having an advocate”
3. Jesus is our “ever present” counselor when we commit sin.

Appl: “Fellowship with God does not exist apart from the work of Christ.”

Trans: Having an advocate is a good thing, but if you are guilty and you wish to avoid the penalty for your guilt more is needed.

2. Fellowship is Possible Because Jesus is our Propitiation

A. 1John 2:2

B. 1John 4:10

C. First, note that Jesus as our propitiation is something God provided. God gave us what was necessary to satisfy Him.

D. The word “**propitiation**” in verses **2,10** literally means “satisfaction”

- a. It is akin to atonement

b. Kittles states, “**Propitiation is the action in which God is propitiated, (satisfied) and sin is expiated, (atoned for).**”

D. Kittles further states that propitiation “**means a setting aside of sin as guilt against God.**”

E. Because Jesus satisfied the guilt of our sin we have confidence to stand before God in judgment. **1John 4:17**

F. Also note that John says, “***He Himself is our propitiation***”.

1. This is emphatic and also present tense.
2. Christ currently is, RIGHT NOW, and continually the appeasement for our sin.

Illust: Easton’s Biblical Dictionary states; “**Christ is "the propitiation," because by his becoming our substitute and assuming our obligations he expiated our guilt, covered it, by the vicarious punishment which he endured**

Appl: “**Fellowship with God does not exist apart from the work of Christ.**”

Con: In part, Jesus’ work in relationship to fellowship with God is two-fold

- 1. Jesus is our Advocate**
- 2. Jesus is our Propitiation**

“Fellowship with God does not exist apart from the work of Christ.”

Maintaining Fellowship with God **1John 2:3-6**

I. Most people recognize that regular maintenance of mechanical equipment is necessary for the longevity of that equipment.

Car

Airplanes

Computer

II. When we fail to maintain something it begins to break down.

III. Even the creation must be maintained. If things are left alone, they overpopulate or over grow. God has even put measures into place, which help this maintenance.

IV. When speaking about fellowship with God it should be understood that maintenance is also required. Like any relationship, if it is to last, we must do what is necessary to maintain that relationship.

V. In 1John we have been assured that fellowship with God is something we can have through the work of the Father and the Son, 1John 2:1,2

VI. But there is also the call for us to be active in our relationship with God if we want to maintain fellowship with Him. This is something John frequently speaks about in this epistle. 1John 1:7, 9

VII. Christians are called to live a certain way. They must seek a life that reflects the nature of God's glory. Fellowship, or communion with God cannot be expected if one determines to live according to their sinful desires, 2Pet. 2:20-22

VIII. Fellowship with God is assured through maintaining the Christian character.

IX. In **1John 2:1-6** John provides three things we need to be doing to maintain the Christian character.

- 1. Avoid living in sin.**
- 2. Keep God's Commandments.**
- 3. Imitate Christ.**

Trans: First and foremost, Jesus died for our sins, there is no way one who is a Christian should suppose that giving ourselves back over to sin is acceptable Christian behavior.

1. Avoid living in sin.

A. **1John 2:1**

B. John wants us to understand that it is possible for a person to sin after becoming a Christian.

1. In **1John 2:1** the grammatical subjunctive mood of “**if anyone sins**” indicates that sinning is a possibility for the Christian.
2. This is also supported in 1John 1:8-10. John is writing to Christians; people who have already walked away from a life given over to sin.
3. His instructions are for them.
 1. Christians cannot deny their sin, v.8
 2. Christians cannot deny they have sinned, v.10
 3. Christians must confess their sins, v.9

C, But, just because the possibility exists that I can sin doesn't mean I should give myself over to living sinfully.

1. As John stated, “**I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.**”
2. God calls us to a life that renounces sin. The Christian life and sin do not mix.
3. The goal of every Christian is to pursue the righteousness of God,
1John 3:2,3
2Tim. 2:2
1John 3:7
4. Although a Christian can sin, maintaining the Christian character requires that I do not seek out sin.
1John 3:4,5
1John 3:8,9
5. It would seem strange that we should seek out that which separated us from fellowship with God, if we seek to be in fellowship with God. Isa 59:1,2

Appl: God does not require sinless perfection from His children. This is an impossible task that would destroy any hope of salvation.

But God does require that as Christians we seek to maintain the proper Christian character. That character requires that I avoid living in sin.

Fellowship with God is assured through maintaining the Christian character.

Trans: It is not enough for the Christian to move away from a life of sin if they hope to be in fellowship with God. There is also the need to move towards God. This takes us to our second point

2. Keep God's Commandments.

A. 1John 2:3-5

B. John says we can know that we have come to know Him if we keep His commandments.

1. The word “know” in 1John is used some 24 x’s
2. The word “know” is a term of relationship.
3. It is more than a mere knowing of facts but implies that as we experience that relationship we come to really “know” someone.

C. John is saying that if we wish to be in a relationship with God, to be in fellowship with Him, to know Him, we must live up to His standard.

D. Gods standard of Christian conduct is found in His commandments.

John 14:21-23

John 15:10

E. John warns that to say that you know God, that you are in fellowship with God, and then chose not to live according to His standard indicates that you are a liar and the truth is not in you.

F. But John also says that if we keep His word “in him the love of God has truly been perfected”.

1. This phrase is perfect passive and it means to advance a person to a level of completeness or to reach an intended end.
2. It is through keeping God’s word that the love of God has its intended purpose; we are in fellowship with God.

Appl: Our goal as Christians is to seek to know Gods will and live accordingly so we can know God.

Fellowship with God requires obedience to His standard. We must ever submit ourselves to living according to that will.

Fellowship with God is assured through maintaining the Christian character.

Trans: The epitome of being in fellowship with the Father is seen in the life of Jesus. He knew the Fathers will and did as the Father instructed. He then is our example of what it means to be in fellowship with God. This is our third point.

3. Imitate Christ.

A. **1John 2:6**

B. John does not clarify who the Him is in this passage. Is it God the Father or the Son?

1. Being that John believes Jesus is God in Human form it makes no difference.
2. But I would say here, in context it is Jesus he is referring to.

C. If I hope to be in fellowship with Jesus, who is in fellowship with God the Father, then I must seek to imitate Him.

D. Again, Christians are required to maintain the proper Christian character if they wish to maintain fellowship.

E. Jesus defined the Christian character by the life He lived. We are called to imitate that life,

Rom. 8:29

Luke 6:40

F. When we imitate His life then we are His disciple, John 8:31

Appl: To say I abide in Christ requires me to follow His example. Why claim fellowship and yet not follow the one you claim to be united to?

The Christian character requires that I imitate Jesus. I do the will of the Father as He did the will of the Father.

Fellowship with God is assured through maintaining the Christian character.

Con: Christians are called to live a certain way. Fellowship, or communion with God cannot be expected if one determines to live according to their sinful desires.

Fellowship with God is assured through maintaining the Christian character.

We maintain the Christian character.

- 1. Avoid living in sin.**
- 2. Keep God's Commandments.**
- 3. Imitate Christ.**

Abiding in the Light or Walking in Darkness
1John 2:7-11

I. Throughout the history of mankind, we humans have perpetrated innumerable acts of sin against our fellow man.

II. I believe no greater sin has been perpetrated than the sin of hate for one's fellow man.

III. According to the *Information is Beautiful* web site, in the 20th Century it is conservatively estimated that **94 million people perished** in China, the Soviet Union, North Korea, Afghanistan, and Eastern Europe due to communism.

20 million deaths from civil wars

28 million died under fascist regimes.

30 million deaths were due to genocide

58 million deaths were due to homicide

37 million deaths in WWI

66 million deaths in WWII

In a 100-year time span 333 million people were removed from this earth, due to the sins of other men.

IV. Granted not all deaths are a direct result of the hatred humanity has for its own kind, but the majority of these deaths are directly related to that hatred.

V. This should not surprise us considering man's first sin against his fellow man sprung from hatred, **1John 3:11,12.**

VI. As John continues his exhortation for Christians to remain in fellowship with God he turns his attention to how our abiding in the light requires a love for our brethren.

VII. The hatred that mankind has held for one another is something that must not be found in the life of a Christian.

VIII. Fellowship with God requires Christians to love one another with the love of God.

IX. In supporting this tenet of the Christian faith John provides two conditions in which we can find ourselves.

1. Abiding in the Light

2. Walking in Darkness

X. Each of these conditions possesses different characteristics with different outcomes, but for Christians only one is acceptable if we are to remain in fellowship with God, **1John 2:7-11**

Trans: To begin John focuses on the condition Christians should be in. This is the first point we will discuss.

1. Abiding in the Light

A. The need for those who are in fellowship with God to love their brethren is an absolute. It is a command,

1John 2:7,8

B. The command to love means we must be selfless in our concern for others. We must ever be looking to their needs, to their salvation as Christ looked to ours.

C. This command is not something Christians should be unfamiliar with.

1. **1John 2:7**

2. John says it is not a **new commandment** but an **old commandment**.

3. He is not presenting to them something “new” like the false teachers.

4. This command was what they **heard from the beginning**, it is “**the word which you have heard**”. 1John 1:1

5. This command is part of the apostolic message that they originally believed,

1John 3:11

1John 4:21

D. Although this command is not new, it is new.

1. **1John 2:8**

2. The word **new** here has the sense of quality and not time.

3. Christians are to possess the love found in Christ, **John 13:34,35**

4. John says the command is **true (real)** in Him and in you.

a. This command to love was realized in Christ.

b. This command was realized in those in fellowship with God.

5. This command to love in a new way is possible because the **darkness in passing away and the true Light is already shining**.

a. The darkness is sin and the ignorance of truth

b. But the true Light removes this sin and ignorance so that we can love the brethren as Christ loved us.

E. John then provides the outcome of keeping the command to love your brethren. **1John 2:10**

1. Here we see that the love of the brethren is an absolute if we are to be in fellowship with God.

2. If we love our brethren then we abide in the light, 1John 1:5

3. When we love our brethren we do not become a cause for others to stumble, because we can clearly see where we are going.

Appl: To be in fellowship with God we must abide in the light. We can be sure we are abiding in the light when we possess the love of Christ, demonstrated in the love we have for our brethren.

Fellowship with God requires Christians to love one another with the love of God.

Trans: There is an alternative to abiding in the light and being in fellowship with God. It is not a place we want to find ourselves. This is our second point.

2. Walking in Darkness

A. It is one thing to say you are in fellowship with God, but it is another to actually live out that relationship. **1John 2:9,11**

B. John says the claim of being in the light must be accompanied by loving your brother.

C. To not have a concern for the spiritual welfare of your brethren, to not seek the help in their spiritual needs is to not love them and you are found to be in the darkness yourself.

D. Not only are you in darkness if you hate your brother, but you actually never left the darkness, **1John 2:9**

E. How can this be the situation of someone who supposes they are in the light?

F. John gives several reasons why this is the case.

1. The one who hates his brother **“is in darkness”**.
2. The one who hates his brother **“walks in darkness”**.
3. The one who hates his brother **“does not know where he is going”**.
4. The one who hate his brother has been **“blinded by the darkness”**.

G. To claim fellowship with God and yet hold hatred for your brother indicates a lack of understanding of God’s love. One is in fact blinded to that love.

1. **1John 4:20**
2. This person is not in the light as He Himself is in the light, 1John 1:7.
3. This person has not passed from death to life, 1John 3:14.
4. This person is not in fellowship with God.

Illust: I am reminded of what Jesus said about the Pharisees in **Matt. 15:12-14**

1. Why would a blind person have another blind person as a guide?
2. Because they do not know the guide is blind. They can’t see!

Appl: So it is with those who hate their brother.

The hatred one holds for his brother keeps him blinded to the truth of God’s love. Because you can never truly see God’s love because of your hatred, you never learn to love as God in Christ loved, thus you remain in the darkness, you live in darkness, you are lost

Fellowship with God requires Christians to love one another with the love of God.

Con: Is it possible to believe that you are in fellowship with God and actually not be?

According to 1John the answer is yes. When someone has hate in their hearts toward their brother then that person does not know the love of God. You cannot not know the love of God and be in fellowship with Him at the same time.

One other caveat to the hatred one holds for his brother. **This hatred is not about degree's it is about the disposition. So you cannot hate your brother even a little.**

So which is it?

- 1. Abiding in the Light**
- 2. Walking in Darkness**

Fellowship with God requires Christians to love one another with the love of God.

As you consider your own life, consider these words of John. **1 John 4:7-10**

These Things You Know

1John 2:12-14

I. One of the common admonitions for all Christians is the need to grow in their faith.

1. Heb. 5:12-14
2. 2Pet. 1:5-11

II. There are several reasons why growing in our faith is necessary, but I believe Peter sums it up best in 1Peter 2:1-3.

III. Growing in our faith matures us in our faith and this maturity provides assurance of salvation.

IV. In 1John 2:12-14 John describes three basic stages Christian growth.

1. There is the infant stage (little children)
2. There is the youth stage (young men)
3. There is maturity (fathers)

IV. One of the difficulties faced by Christians as they are growing is the uncertainty of their own salvation. There can be a fear of not actually being saved or of not being able to maintain fellowship with God.

V. Although Christians are always moving forward in their growth, we should not think that we stand on uncertain ground in regards to fellowship with God. This is what John is writing about in 1John 2:12-14

VI. There are various stages of maturity in the Christian life, but in all stages as long as we are maturing in Christ we can be assured that we have fellowship with God.

Trans: Let's consider what John has to say about these various stages of Christian growth.

1. The infant stage

A. John refers to those in this stage as little children or children

1. Although this word is used as a term of endearment, 1John 2:1, here John uses it in reference to a stage of spiritual maturity.

2. In the original language both of these words normally refer to infants

a. teknion {tec-nee'-on} an infant

b. paidion {pie-dee'-on} a childling (males or female), an infant, or a half-grown boy or girl (cf. Mk 5:39-42)

B. New Christians, or immature Christians, are referred to in terms such as this, **1Cor. 3:1**.

C. This is the stage when one begins to walk as a Christian and at times it can be difficult.

1. Old temptations, and friends still exist, still fresh in the mind.
2. There are the new questions and understandings that arise.

D. This is when the early stages of Christ likeness is occurring, Gal. 4:19

F. The focus here should be on the "milk" of the Word, Heb. 5:12-13

G. With all that said it is still clear that those who are infants in Christ are in fellowship with God. They are not growing so that they can someday be in fellowship.

1. 1John 2:12 (Your sins have been forgiven)
 - a. Have been – is perfect passive
 - b. At one point it started and it continues onward, 1John 1:7
2. 1John 2:13 (You know the Father)
 - a. ginosko - ginosko
 - b. In a relationship

Appl: Every Christians begins their walk in Christ at this stage. As “babes in Christ” we all feed upon the pure milk of the Word.

Through the power of that word to change our lives we remain in fellowship with the Father as the blood of Jesus continues to wash us when we stumble along the way.

2. There is the youth stage (young men)

A. As with the other terms "young men" is used in figurative way.

B. This would be all Christian, male or female, young or old.

C. John describes their current condition in the Lord and this is indicative of this stage of spiritual maturity, 1John 2:14

- a. “You are strong”, a reference to spiritual strength, 1Pet. 1:3-9
- b. “The word of God abides in you”. Though not without sin, 1John 1:8, they hearers and doers, James 1:21,22

D. Their fellowship with God is also assured, 1John 1:13,14

- a. "you have overcome the evil one"
- b. 1John 4:4
- c. 1John 5:4,5
- c. They are no longer slaves to sin, Rom 6:15-18

Appl: As we grow in maturity our faith will be tested by the world. But that testing should only prove our faith to be real and in the process we should become stronger in our faith. All the while we have the assurance of fellowship with God.

3. There is maturity

A. This group (the fathers) represents the mature in the congregation, male or female.

B. As with the others the word "fathers" is used figuratively

C. The word "fathers" implies they have experienced the earlier stages of the Christian life (infancy, youth)

D. At this stage of spiritual growth they also have the assurance of fellowship with God.

1. 1John 2:13,14

2. "Because you know Him who has been from the beginning"

3. This seems to refer back to 1John 1:1

E. As mature Christians these have truly come to know Christ. Through their spiritual battles they have experienced what it means to follow His example.

1Pet 1:21

F. The Fathers have grown in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" - 2Pet. 3:18

G. The Fathers have developed the maturity described in 2Pet 1:5-8

There are various stages of maturity in the Christian life, but in all stages as long as we are maturing in Christ we can be assured that we have fellowship with God.

“Love Not The World”

I. I think we all understand that at times there are certain relationships that should not exist.

II. For example, have you ever heard of the parent who tells their child that the one they are “in love with” is not the right person for them?

III. As odd as it might seem the same can be said for every person in regards to the kind of relationship they have with the world.

IV. For those who choose to be in fellowship with God it is important to understand that worldly things must not be attractive to us.

V. Maintaining fellowship with God requires not maintaining a relationship with the sinful things of this world.

VI. Fellowship with God requires fidelity and John warns us that to turn our affections to the world is to break fellowship with God.

VII. In our text under consideration we see the need to commit ourselves to God fully so that fellowship will be maintained. **1John 2:15-17**

VIII. John, in his warning notes two things that Christian must do to maintain fellowship with God.

- 1. Do not love the world.**
- 2. Do the will of the God.**

Trans: In any human relationship we understand and accept the need for a couple to be faithful to one another. But there have been times when someone had a wandering eye and before long they were involved in a relationship that should not exist.

1. Do not love the world.

A. Prior to John’s warning he established some things about the Christians he was writing to. 1John 2:12-14

- 1. Their sins are forgiven, 1John 2:12**
- 2. They know Christ, 1John 2:13-14**
- 3. They have overcome the evil one, 1John 2:13**
- 4. They know the Father, 1John 2:13**
- 5. They are strong, 1John 2:14**
- 6. They have the Word of God in them, 1John 2:14**

B. As those who are walking in the light fellowship with God exists.

C. But for fellowship to be maintained we must be faithful to God, **1John 3:3**

D. The fidelity of fellowship with God requires us not to love the world.

1. The world, *Kosmon*, refers to anything standing in opposition to God, **1John 5:19**.

2. The word love is agape. This means our attention or desire cannot be devoted to those things that stand in opposition to God.

3. This is not the totality of mankind, but the desires of humanity that stand in opposition to God, **Prov. 24:1,2**

a. **The lust of the flesh**, Gal. 5:19-21

1. This is a life given over to our senses

2. Gratification is found in material things

b. **The lust of the eyes**, Eph 5:5-7

1. Seeking happiness through what is seen and possessed.

2. Anything that brings sinful pleasure by looking upon it, including violence.

c. **The boastful pride of life**, **Dan 4:28-33**

1. The vain assurance of one's own resources

2. Worldly wisdom

3. It is a self-exalting attitude.

Appl: To love the things of the world is to be absent of God's love.

When we become consumed with pursuing the things of the world we do not show God's love back to Him, because we are filled up with a desire for those things in opposition to Him.

Maintaining fellowship with God requires not maintaining a relationship with the sinful things of this world.

Trans: So if we are not to love the things of the world, what are we to do to maintain fellowship with God?

2. Do the will of the God.

A. Fellowship with God cannot be maintained when we push Him out for things of the world.

B. Our desire should be to live in such a way as to demonstrate God's love, **Titus 2:11-13**

C. John provides several reasons why we should seek to do this.

1. To devote oneself to the world is a futile life, because this world and its lusts are passing away.

- a. Passing away in present, indicative, middle
- b. The world is presently in the process of passing away.
- c. This process is in operation at this present time and will continue until the present evil world is no more.
- d. **2Pet 3:10ff**

2. The one who does the will of the God lives forever. Fellowship with God assures us of the promise of eternity and our devotion should be on those eternal things not the temporary things of this life,

Rev. 14:13

Appl: I read the other day where someone said, "you cannot obey your way into heaven."

His belief was that heaven was a gift extended strictly based upon God's grace.

Although it is true that we are saved by grace, Eph 2:8, John makes it clear that God's grace, which puts us in fellowship with Him, will not cover us if we do not do the will of the Father.

By doing the will of the Father we maintain fellowship with Him.

Maintaining fellowship with God requires not maintaining a relationship with the sinful things of this world.

Con: How do we maintain fellowship with God?

- 1. Do not love the world.**
- 2. Do the will of the God.**

Abiding Fellowship Abides In Truth

I. Have you ever heard of someone whom you thought was a faithful member of the Lord's church only to find out that they never really believed what was plainly in written in the Scriptures?

II. I have been in conversations with individuals who have stated that they could see what the Bible said but just didn't believe it, yet claimed to be members of the Lord's church.

III. In **1John 2:18-29**, John is speaking of a similar situation. The group he is speaking about is referred to as "antichrists" and he warns that to give heed to their words is to move away from the truth and will only lead to a breaking of fellowship with God

IV. To remain in fellowship with God we must determine to abide in the truth.

V. To keep fellowship with God from being broken two steps need to be taken.

1. Identify those who are antichrist.

2. Safeguard against the antichrists.

Trans: The focus of 1John is fellowship with God. John is writing to assure these Christians that they are in fellowship with God, but he is also warning of a group of individuals who are seeking to disrupt that fellowship through false teaching. John tells these Christians they need to know who these false teachers are.

1. Identify those who are antichrist.

A. First John refers to these false teachers as antichrist. **1 John 2:18**

1. John is the only New Testament writer to use this term.

2. He uses five times total.

a. Twice in 1 John 2:18

b. 1 John 2:22

c. 1 John 4:3

d. 2 John 7

3. The original Greek word is antichristos. ajntivcristo?

a. John alludes to the idea that they are familiar with the concept of the antichrist, **(just as you heard)**

b. John states that there is more than one, there are many **(many antichrists have appeared)**

c. **The phrase refers to any who are opposed to Christ.**

B. John describes two identifying marks of those who are antichrist.

1. They separate themselves from those in fellowship with God, **1John 2:19**

a. **"they went out from us",**

1. Indicates that they were once a part of the community of those in fellowship with God.

2. They have physically departed from this group.

b. **"but they were not really of us",**

1. They departed physically because they were not really of us spiritually.

2. They did not share the same beliefs.

c. ***“for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us;”***

1. This phrase expresses the idea of continuity.
2. It is something from the past occurring into the present.
3. They could not remain because they never “were of”.

d. ***“but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are “not of us.”***

1. They went out, which establishes Christians being in fellowship with them.
2. It was shown, “manifested”. The fact that they went out substantiated that they were “not of us.” 1John 4:4,5

2. They deny that Jesus is the Christ, **1John 2:22.**

a. They **deny the deity of Jesus.**

b. They also deny the Father by opposing his declaration of Jesus as the Son,
1John 1:1-3

Matt. 3:16-17 (Jesus’ Baptism)

Luke 9:28-35 (Jesus’ transfiguration)

c. The word **“denies”** is to disclaim, disown, or renounce.

d. To oppose the Father’s declaration is to renounce Jesus’ claim as the Son and thus disown both the Father and the Son.

Appl: The antichrists John speaks of are not in fellowship with God. In fact they stand against Him.

What they hold to puts them at odds with God. One cannot deny the Sonship and deity of Jesus and suppose they are in fellowship with God.

To deny these things about Jesus is to contradict what the Father has clearly stated. Thus they call God a liar and deny Him as well.

Trans: Knowing how to identify who the antichrists are helps us to safeguard against them.

2. Safeguard against the antichrists.

A. John says that these Christians, **“have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.” 1John 2:20.**

B. It is this anointing that provides the assurances needed to keep these Christians from following after those who are antichrist,

1. **1John 2:21**

2. John speaks of a truth they know.

3. It is the truth they heard from the beginning, **1John 2:24**

4. It is also the truth they abide in, **1John 2:27.**

C. What is the anointing that provides this assurance of fellowship with God?

1. The word anointing is *khristos*.

2. Some believe this is the miraculous knowledge given by the Holy Spirit. Yet this is said to apply to all Christians.

3. I suggest that the anointing John is speaking of is their baptism into Christ.

4. From OT usage this word is connected to being set apart for God.
5. The message of Christ was proclaimed to them. They heeded that gospel message, **1John 2:3-6**.
6. Because they have given their lives to God in obedience to the Gospel, they have been anointed. They are set apart. They know they are in fellowship with God.
1John 2:12-14
7. They have been taught that Jesus' blood cleansed them of their sin, 1John 1:7.
8. They have no need to be taught by the antichrist, their anointing from the Holy One has already taught them that they are in fellowship with God, **1John 2:25**.
9. Their anointing teaches them that what the antichrists are teaching is not true nor necessary.

Illust: Imagine if you did something that left a permanent scar across your face. That scar would always be a reminder to you, always teaching you something.

Appl: This is the way it is when we are baptized into Christ. Because of God's grace and the sacrifice of His Son, when we commit ourselves to His will through repentance, confession and baptism, we can be sure that our sins are forgiven.

The fact that these Christians are in fellowship with God because they have obeyed the gospel of Christ, they have no need for someone to teach them anything different. Any teaching contrary to what they have heard and done is a lie.

They have the truth. How do they know this? Because John says they are in fellowship with God. They have been anointed, set apart.

If they understand this then they will not be persuaded to follow after the antichrists.

Their current state of being anointed safeguards them from the antichrists, if they will hold fast to the knowledge of that truth, **1John 2:28,29**

To remain in fellowship with God we must determine to abide in the truth.

Fellowship with God Has Its Rewards

1John 3:1-3

I. Have you ever been involved with someone or something where that association provided certain personal benefits?

II. Think about being a friend to someone who happens to have access to large sums of money. Imagine the benefits in that relationship.

1. Your friend would probably pay for everything when dining out.
2. You would have access to that persons "toys" and property.

III. In 1 John 3:1-3 John further clarifies what fellowship with God means.

IV. Fellowship with God provides the greatest of benefits.

V. Not all relationships have the same benefits, but fellowship with God provides the greatest of benefits.

- 1. Being in Fellowship with God means we are children of God.**
- 2. Being in Fellowship with God means we share in Jesus' eternal state.**
- 3. Being in Fellowship with God means we keep ourselves pure.**

Trans: Imagine being orphan for many years and then a very loving, well to do couple comes along and adopts you. Imagine how different your life would now be. This is similar to the first benefit we have from being in fellowship with God.

1. Being in Fellowship with God means we are children of God.

A. There are some who like to refer to all of mankind as God's children. Yet, John shows that one of the benefits of being in fellowship with God is that we are His children.

1. Those who are God's children are a separate group from those of the world.
2. 1John 3:1

B. Those who are called children of God are such because of the great sacrifice of God.

1. The great love bestowed upon us so that we could be called of God is an agape love.
2. This love involves selflessness. It is to seek the highest good for another.
3. The Father sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. When Jesus sacrificed Himself on the cross the guilt requirement for our sin was satisfied, 1John 4:9,10
4. John 15:12-14
5. God came in and paid the highest price to adopt us as His own.

C. Those who are called children of God are such because of choice.

1. The world doesn't know us because it did not know Him.
2. He knows us because we know Him. 1John 2:12-14
3. To know God is to be in a personal relationship with Him.
4. This relationship comes about because of choice, 1John 1:7

Illust: One individual stated at an adoption, "It was then that I realized that my Heavenly Father loved me so much that, without coercion, He gave His all to me. On that day, He changed my name and I gladly bear His name and His image."

Appl: Fellowship with God is not merely being united with Him as a companion.

To be in fellowship with God is to be a child of His, adopted through the sacrifice of His Son and our willingness to accept that sacrifice.

Fellowship with God provides the greatest of benefits. (We are children of God.)

Trans: A judge once said at an adoption hearing, "From today on, he is your son. He may disappoint you, even grieve you, but he is your son. Everything you own one day will be his and he will bear your name.

2. Being in Fellowship with God means we share in Jesus' eternal state.

A. Naturally, one of the difficulties faced by claiming we are children of God is our natural makeup.

1. God is spirit, John 4:24
2. We are flesh.

B. John is saying that although we are God's children there is yet a benefit to be realized from our adoption, 1John 3:2

1. John boldly affirms that we are children of God.
2. The outcome of that relationship is not fully realized because of the differences in our natural framework.
3. But a time will come when we will know in full the full benefits of our adoption, 1Cor. 15:42-44, 50-53

C. A time will come when we will put off this earthly body and be transformed into the glorified image of our Father's Son.

D. We will have taken on more than a name. There will be full recognition of who we are as God's children.

Illust: Although it is true that an adopted child can bear the resemblance and characteristics of their adoptive parents, an awareness of difference remains.

Appl: Although we are children of God it is clear that we are not fully like Him. God is light and in Him is no darkness at all, 1John 1:5. On the other hand we still sin, 1 John 2:1.

Yet a time is coming when will fully realize that we do not simply bear some characteristics of our adoptive Father. Soon we will be transformed into a new glorious image, like unto the Son.

Fellowship with God provides the greatest of benefits. (We share in Jesus' eternal state.)

Trans: When a child is adopted into a family, that child is raised according to the characteristics of that family. The child takes on the nature of the adoptive family. This is the way it is when we are in fellowship with God.

3. Being in Fellowship with God means we keep ourselves pure.

A. As John said in the beginning of the epistle, "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all". 1John 1:5

B. Although we have the capacity to sin, adoption requires a change of direction concerning who and what we are.

C. John tell us that those who have the hope of one day fully realizing what it means to be a child of God will seek to live presently away from sin.

1. The word "purify" in the original language means "to make clean or pure".

2. This word is closely related to the word for "holiness", which has the idea of sanctification"

3. To purify oneself is to live a life "set apart" for God's holy purpose, Heb. 12:14.

D. The life of one who is a child of God takes on the character of God. Those in fellowship with God, His children, seek to look like God and not the world around them.

1. 1John 3:4-10

2. 2Pet. 1:3-8

Appl: Fellowship with God provides the greatest of benefits. (We keep ourselves pure.)

Con: What a great hope we have as those who are in fellowship with God.

1. Being in Fellowship with God means we are children of God.

2. Being in Fellowship with God means we share in Jesus' eternal state.

3. Being in Fellowship with God means we keep ourselves pure.

Fellowship with God provides the greatest of benefits.

Fellowship With God Avoids Fellowship With Sin
1John 3:4-6

I. Eph. 4:17-24

II. My wife likes to tell the story of the time she was at work and a coworker came up to her and said he had a joke he wanted to tell her, but it was a dirty joke. My wife told this individual, no thank you I'm a Christian; to which the person replied "So am I." My wife then stated, "No I really am a Christian."

III. Many people make the claim that they are Christians, but then live as if they don't even know what that means.

IV. As we have been studying through 1John a few things have been made clear in regards to who we are as Christians.

- 1. We can know that we are in fellowship with God. 1John 1:3**
- 2. We can know through whom fellowship comes. 1John 2:1,2**
- 3. We can know how to stay in fellowship with God. 1John 1:7,9**
- 4. We can know the truth. 1John 2:21**
- 5. We can know that we are children of God. 1John 3:1**

V. This morning I want to consider another point we should know if we are going to claim we are in fellowship with God. This is found in **1John 3:4-6**

VI. In these verses John is primarily addressing the teachings of those who are trying to deceive these Christians, **1John 2:26**

VII. The deceivers, false teachers, were teaching incorrect things about Jesus and sin, **1John 1:6,8,10**

VIII. John's goal is to show that the claim that one can live in sin and be in fellowship with God is incorrect. To be in fellowship with God one must have been taught correctly about sin and Christ' work.

IX. Those in fellowship with God know they cannot continue to walk in sin.

X. We can break this lesson into three points.

- 1. A clarification of what sin is.**
- 2. The work of Christ in relation to sin.**
- 3. Determining fellowship.**

Trans: To believe it is okay to live in sin as claim fellowship with God shows a misunderstanding of sin.

- 1. A clarification of what sin is,**
 - A. 1John 3:4**

B. John clarifies that he is not speaking of the occasional sin that the Christian might commit. 1John 2:1

C. The word “practices” in **1John 3:4** is present active participle. It refers to the continual act of sinning.

D. This continual sinning is referred to as lawlessness.

1. Sin is a violation of God’s law
2. Not the OT law, but God’s law in the fullest sense.
3. The person who practices sin is willfully ignoring God and His will for mankind.

E. Since the word sin literally mean’s “to miss the mark,” the one who practices sin is continually missing what God wants him/her to be doing with their life. **Eph 5:1,11**

Trans: Secondly John turns his attention to the work of Christ in relation to sin.

2. The work of Christ in relation to sin,

A. **1John 3:5**

B. John jumps right into what Christ came to do and establishes that His work is not new to them. Those in fellowship with God **know what Jesus came to do.**

C. Jesus was able to accomplish His work of taking away sin because no sin was or is currently in Him. Sin never found a place in Jesus’ life.

1. **2Cor. 5:21**
2. 1Pet. 1:18,19

D. This is a fundamental teaching of the Christian faith. One who is in fellowship with God understands what Jesus came to do. They understand that He is the sinless One and it is because of this that their sins can be taken away. **1John 4:10**

Trans: In John’s third point he drives home point by establishing just who is in fellowship with God.

3. Determining fellowship.

A. **1John 3:6**

B. John divides those in fellowship from those who are not in fellowship.

1. Those in fellowship with God do not go on **practicing sin.** (PT)
 - a. Since there is no sin in Him, Christ, no one who abides in Him practices sin.

b. **1John 3:9**

1. The seed is the word of God, which the one in fellowship has been taught and knows. **1John 1:3**
 2. The one in fellowship understands Jesus' work in regards to sin and so a decisive break from sin has been made.
 3. Those in fellowship with God fight against sinning.
 4. It is a constant work of purification, **1John 3:3**
2. The one who practice's sin is not in fellowship with God.
- a. This is not in reference to the Christian
 - b. This individual has neither seen nor knows Him.
 1. Both of these are indicative of the spiritual
 - a. Seen
 1. **Gen 3:5**
 2. Eph. 1:18
 - b. Knows,
 1. **1John 2:6**
 2. Not merely intellectual, but has a spiritual affect.
 - a. Walks in the light
 - b. Keeps his commandments
 - c. Does not practice sin
 2. The word "knows" is **perfect indicative active**
 - a. **The Greek perfect tense denotes the present state resultant upon past action.**
 - b. **These false teachers presently do not know Christ because they have never come to know Him.**
 - c. They have never been in fellowship with Him.
1John 2:19

Con: Those who claim that they can practice sin and be in fellowship with God are mistaken.

To believe you can live in sin and be in fellowship with God, clearly indicates that you have never been in fellowship with God.

If I claim to be a Christian at the least I should know that I cannot live in sin and be in fellowship with God.

Those in fellowship with God know they cannot continue to walk in sin.

Who Is Your Father? 1John 3:7-10

- I.** In this life we are not given the choice of the family we are born into.
1. Some people are born into families where love abounds. These are families where you find kindness and care.
 2. Other people are born into families where hurt is an everyday occurrence. These are families where abuse and lack of affection are a part of life.
- II.** Sometimes it is easy determine what kind of a family a person is from. Many times you can tell by how a person acts. *For example, I saw a video on the news where a little boy, around 2 years old, was being taught to say some very vulgar. The parents would laugh whenever the child would repeat what he was told. In all likelihood that child will grow up using that type of language and worse.*
- III.** Although it is true that we cannot decide which family we are born into and that that family can influence us in good or bad ways, it is also true that there comes a time in our lives when we begin to make our own decisions.
- IV.** Many adults continue to do the same bad things they were taught as a child. But there are those who have determined to make a break from that kind of life.
1. The son of an alcoholic never touches alcohol.
 2. The girl who was beat loves and cherishes her children.
- V.** In this life we may not have been able to choose which family we were born into, but everyone gets to make the choice of the kind of family they will become. **1John 3:7-10**
- VI.** John is telling us everyone has a choice to make concerning which spiritual family they belong to. **We choose our family by choosing the kind of life we will live.**
- VII.** When speaking of spiritual families, there are only two, **1John 3:10.**
- 1. The children of God**
 - 2. The children of the devil**
- VIII.** Today we will be considering these two families and seek to determine which one we are a part of. As John says, it's obvious.
- Trans:** When it comes to determining which family you belong to John says look to your behavior. **Let's consider our first point.**
- 1. The children of God**
- A. John has already established that those in fellowship with God are His children, **1John 3:1-3**

B. What follows is the means to determine whether you are part of His family.

1. The children of God are a close-knit family.
 - a. **1John 3:7**
 - b. By using the phrase “little children” John speaks like a protective father.
2. The children of God seek to live free from sin. **1John 3:3**
3. The children of God do not practice sin. **1John 3:4-6**
4. The children of God have His word abiding in them.
1John 3:9
James 1:21-22

C. Ultimately being a child of God preserved through practice righteousness.

1. **1John 3:7,10**
2. To practice righteousness is to be righteous like Him. If I am not practicing righteousness I am not of God. Not of His family. Not one of His children.

Trans: Not practicing righteousness leaves you practicing sin. There is not middle ground. Practicing sin puts you in the family of the devil. **This is our second point.**

2. The children of the devil

A. This might be a hard pill to swallow but the fact of the matter is many people are members of devils family, and they are members by choice.

B. John shows us how we can determine if we are part of the devils family and it really boils down to one thing,

1. The children of the devil practice sin. **1John 3:8**
2. Those who are of the family of the devil are his because they follow his work,
 - a. The has sinned from the beginning,
Gen. 3:1ff
John 8:44
 - b. The devil has never ceased from sinning.
 - c. The reason one is a child of the devil is because they have yet to cease from practicing sin, **1John 3:9**

C. John says that Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil,

1John 3:8
1John 3:5

D. If someone chooses to continue to practice sin then they are fighting against the work of Christ and are not allowing that work of Christ to have its intended outcome for them. By doing this they stay in their sins and in the family of the devil.

Con: John says it is obvious. We can know whose family we are in.

As adults we do not have to repeat the mistakes of our upbringing.

Those who were raised poor can have wealth

Those who were abused can show love

Those who were taught hatred can show compassion

And those who were the children of the devil can become Children of God.

We choose our family by choosing the kind of life we will live.

The Fellowship of Love **1John 3:10-15**

I. One of the greatest benefits that comes from being in fellowship with God is sharing in His love.

II. The love we share as Christians is a direct result of our joint fellowship with God. This love comes from God and is a common bond between those who seek His righteousness.

III. In fact, brotherly love is a principal characteristic of fellowship with God,

1John 3:10

V. In our lesson today we are going to consider the love that Christians share because of the fellowship they have with God.

VI. As we will see; **"Fellowship with God requires us to practice brotherly love.**

VII. I know this might seem like a no brainer, but the possibility exists that some who claim fellowship with God don't actually demonstrate brotherly love. For example, those who are trying to deceive these Christians do possess brotherly love,

1John 2:26

2Peter 2:17-19

VIII. There are two points we want to consider in this lesson.

1. The basis for brotherly love

2. Demonstrating brotherly love

Trans: What creates this bond of love we share as Christians? Why is it that we have this brotherly love relationship in the first place? Our first point answers these questions.

1. The basis for brotherly love

A. First, brotherly love is based upon the love God has for us.

1. God's nature is one on love, **1John 4:8**

2. Love is the driving principle behind God's work, **Rom 5:8**

3. God, through His Son has taught and showed love.

1John 3:16

John 3:16

4. Because of this God brotherly love is commanded, **1John 4:7,8**

5. Brotherly love then is not something Christians should be unfamiliar with. It is part of the gospel message, **1John 3:11.**

- B. Second, brotherly love is a result of fellowship with God, **1John 3:23,24**
1. Anyone in fellowship with God should possess brotherly love.
 2. In fact, we cannot claim fellowship with God and not love our brethren,
 - a. **1John 3:14** “Abides in death”
 - b. **1John 3:15** “Does not have eternal life abiding in him”
 - c. **1John 3:17** “How does the love of God abide in him?”

Appl: Brotherly love is a direct result of fellowship with God.

Since God is love, whoever is born of Him will possess this same characteristic.

Those in fellowship with God were drawn to Him because of His demonstration of love.

Likewise, we are called to demonstrate that love to our brethren.

”Fellowship with God requires us to practice brotherly love.

Trans: God did not just tell us of His love He showed us. The same is required of those in fellowship with God. This is our second point.

2. Demonstrating brotherly love

A. How do we know if we possess brotherly love? It will be demonstrated in what we do.

B. John provides several examples for us to consider in regards to brotherly love.

1. First there is the negative example of Cain, **1John 3:12**

a. Cain did not possess the kind of love those in fellowship with God possess.

b. Cain was in fellowship with the devil and so he demonstrated what is of the devil, hatred towards his brother.

c. This hatred was based upon the fact that Able exposed Cain’s heart,

1. Ables righteous exposed Cain’s evil.

2. **Heb. 11:4**

3. **1John 3:13**

2. John then provides two positive examples of brotherly love

a. Jesus is the first example, **1John 3:16**

1. Jesus’ death compels us to die for one another.

2. We must be willing to give our all for each other

b. Helping a brother in need is the second positive example

1. **1John 3:17,18**

2. Brotherly love is demonstrated. It is not just spoken it is lived out.

Appl: We cannot claim fellowship with God, without demonstrating brotherly love.

Our actions will tell the tale. If I desire fellowship with God I will follow the example of Jesus and live in such a way as to practice brotherly love.

”Fellowship with God requires us to practice brotherly love.

Con: Often people view love as something that just happens. Some say that you can’t choose whom you love, it just happens.

Yet Christian love, brotherly love is actually a love we are commanded to possess. It is something that we determine to do because of God’s love for us.

All who are in fellowship with God will possess brotherly love

”Fellowship with God requires us to practice brotherly love.

Assuring Your Heart Before God
1John 3:17-22

I. Imagine if you came upon a house fire and discovered that there was a child trapped inside. Then imagine **that the fire is so intense** that you are unable to go into that burning home and save the child.

II. Situations like this can haunt a person even though it was unavoidable. There could be lingering guilt for not being able to do something.

III. Now imagine that you were actually able to do something but you didn't.

1. Maybe you were afraid for your own safety.
2. Maybe you thought it better to wait for the fire department.
3. Maybe you just didn't think at all. You just watched while the parents screamed for help.

IV. It's one thing to not be able to help someone in need when there is nothing you can do to help. It is another to not help when you are actually able.

V. In 1John 3, beginning in verse 11 John is discussing the need for Christians to possess and practice agape love for their brethren in the Lord. This is something we are commanded to do.

VI. But what is the outcome when we see a fellow Christian in need and we have the means to help them but we don't? Especially when we know that by doing as God instructs we can know that we are of the truth. **1John 3:19**

VII. We all know that there are times when we simply fail to follow the command to demonstrate our love for our fellow Christians, **1John 3:11,17.**

VIII. What God wants us to know is that when we fail at fulfilling His command to love the brethren in seeking their highest good, that doesn't break fellowship with Him.

IX. Because God knows our true spiritual state, we can be assured before Him even when we fail to love as He commands.

X. John clarifies this for us in **1John 3:17-22.**

- 1. Responding to God's command to love.**
- 2. The assurance of continued fellowship.**

Trans: Like all of God's commands we have two choices. We either obey or we don't. How do we respond to God's command? This will be our first point.

1. Responding to God's command to love.

A. As we saw back in verse 1John 3:11 we are commanded to love one another.

B. The importance of this command is seen in **1John 3:17** x2

C. Seeking the highest good for our Christian brethren is a determining factor for the status of our relationship with God. **1John 3:18-20** x2

D. How do we respond to God's command to love? John says either in a condemning or non-condemning way

1. Non-condemning

a. **1John 3:18,21** x3

b. We do as God tells us and we love in deed and truth and our heart is not condemned before God.

2. Condemning

a. **1John 3:17,18**

b. We don't do as God commands and we close our heart against our Christian brother, only loving in word or tongue,

E. The question is what is the result of not loving my Christian brethren as I should?

1. We all know that at times we don't do as we should, and we fail to demonstrate our love for the brethren.

a. **We don't help when we could and should have.**

b. **We helped but there was more we could have done.**

2. Because of this our heart will condemn us, **1John 3:19,20** x2

Appl: We it comes to responding to God's command to love the brethren does our heart condemn us?

We will either love as God instructs or we will fall short of God's will.

Trans: The next question we need to address is how does failing to love as God commands affect our relationship with Him? This is our second point.

2. The assurance of continued fellowship.

A. You would suppose that if someone claimed to be a Christian that they would love their Christian brethren.

B. Remember we are not talking about an emotional love, but a love that puts others before self, a sacrificial love. This is the love seen on the cross.

Phil 2:1-4

- C. When I fail to love as I should is fellowship with God broken?
1. John tells us NO! **1John 3:19,20** x2
 2. Why will our heart not condemn us knowing we have disobeyed God? **1John 3:19,20**
 - a. God knows us better than we know our own self. He knows why we do what we do.
 - b. Just because we fail on occasion to love the brethren as we should does not mean that the love of God does not abide in us.
 1. Sometimes we just don't act as we should, 1John 1:9.
 2. Sometimes we overlook the need.
 3. And yes at times we just don't help out of selfish reasons.
 - c. But this does not mean fellowship with God is broken, it just means we are still in the flesh and we are growing in our Christ-like character.
 3. Secondly John says we know fellowship is not broken between us and God when we fail to love as we should because of answered prayer, 1John 3:22.
 - a. To clarify our prayers must be in accordance with God's will.
 - b. **1John 5:14**

Appl: This is a blessed assurance. As we have seen in 1John, God wants us to know we have fellowship with Him.

He has done and does what is necessary for fellowship to continue. If we will walk in the light seeking to do His will, fellowship exists.

When we fall short of our goal fellowship still exists as long as we keep seeking to do right.

God knows our heart.

Con: Because God knows our true spiritual state, we can be assured before Him even when we fail to love as He commands.

Apply this to more than financial help

Spiritual
Physical
Emotional.

Knowing You Are In God
1John 3:23-24

I. Let me begin by asking a question. How do you know whether you are in fellowship with God or not?

II. Most today will say they know because of how they feel. They feel like they are in a relationship with God because they feel like he is fine with them. It's almost a gut feeling. Some will even say, "you just know because of how you feel."

III. Yet, it is clear that how I feel about something provides no real means for determining whether I am right. I felt like the Denver Broncos were going to win the Super Bowl, but we know how that turned out.

IV. When considering fellowship with God, we are told that there is a clear means to determining whether we are in fellowship and it is not based upon feelings.

1John 3:23-24

V. Here John provides two ways we can know that we are in fellowship with God.

- 1. We must believe in the name of Christ**
- 2. We must obey His commands.**

VI. What we should take from this lesson is this. **I can know I am in fellowship through faith and obedience.**

Trans: There should be no question that belief is one aspect of knowing we are in fellowship with God. **This is our first point**

1. We must believe in the name of Christ

A. **1John 1:32**

B. The Christians John is writing to are dealing with false teachers who did not believe in the name of Jesus, **1John 2:22,23**

C. John says one measure of fellowship is found in our belief. The command is not that we believe just anything, but that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ.

- The opening of John's letter establishes whom we are to believe in.
- 1John 1:1-4**
- 1John 5:13**

C. God never intended for us to have a vague belief in something. Our faith is specific and directed towards the one who can save us.

- Acts 4:12**
- John 20:30,31**

- D. To believe in the name of God's Son is to believe in His entire being.
1. It is to accept His deity, **John 1:1**
 2. It is to accept His incarnation **John 1:14**
 3. It is to accept His work, **1John 3:5**
 4. It is to accept His authority, **Matt. 28:18**
 5. It is to accept that the names he wore which represent who He is.
Son = Deity
Jesus = Savior
Christ = God's anointed King and Messiah

Trans: Belief in the name of Jesus is a foundational principle of fellowship, but belief is not genuine if it fails to comply where compliance is required. **Let's consider our second point.**

2. We must obey His commands.

A. 1John 3:24

B. In this passage we see two commands that are required to be in fellowship with God.

1. We are commanded to believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ.
2. We are to love one another as God has instructed.

C. But when John says, "The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him." He is speaking of more than just these two. **1John 2:3-6**

D. Throughout 1John we have seen several command's that those in fellowship with God are called to keep.

1. **1John 1:7** - Walk in the light (1John 3:4-9)
2. **1John 1:9** - Confess our sins
3. **1John 2:9** - We cannot hate our brother
4. **1John 2:15-17** - We cannot love the world

E. Fellowship with God requires us to live a certain way. That way is God's way and we cannot accomplish that without obedience to His will.

1. 2John 9
2. John 14:15

Con: What is the end result of believing in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and obeying His commands?

1John 3:24 "The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us."

Scrutinize the Teachers

1John 4:1-6

I. One of the most surprising responses I get from people when I ask them why they believe what they believe about God's word is, **"that's just what I believe."**

II. The reason this is especially surprising is because when we are speaking about the Bible we are dealing with life and death questions.

III. What I believe concerning the word of God has eternal consequences, and it is important that I know why I believe what I believe. **1Pet. 3:15**

IV. As we have been studying in first John it has been noted that false teachers are seeking to deceive these Christians John is writing to, **1John 2:26**

V. Because we can be deceived it is important that we be able to determine whether what we are being told is truth or not.

VI. In **1John 4:1-6** John provides a formula that can be used to determine if the one speaking is actually a trustworthy source.

- 1. Scrutinize every teacher to determine fellowship.**
- 2. Determine fellowship by what is said and done.**

VII. Theme: **The existence of fellowship can be determined by testing what someone believes and does.**

Trans: John is not giving an exhaustive formula because he is dealing with a specific problem. So in part the formula applies specifically to that problem. Nevertheless, his formula has validity beyond his specific problem. Let's consider our first point.

1. Scrutinize every teacher to determine fellowship.

A. 1John 4:1

B. Clearly there is a need for Christians to be ready and willing to examine whether what they are being taught is actually from God or not.

- 1. "...do not believe every spirit."**
- 2. "...but test the spirits to see whether they are from God."**

C. Throughout the Scriptures we are warned about those who claiming to be teaching God's word when in fact they are not.

- 1. 2Pet. 2:1**
- 2. 2Cor. 11:13-15**

D. Because false teachers exist we need to **test** whether they are from God.

- 1. Examine, prove, scrutinize (to see whether a thing is genuine or not),**

2. **As with metals to recognize as genuine after examination,**
3. **To approve, deem worthy**

Appl: Christians must be able to determine whether what they are being taught is scriptural or not. If we are to test those who are claiming to teach God's word we must also know what God's word teaches.

If what one is teaching is not inline with God's word then there is reason to question whether fellowship exists.

The existence of fellowship can be determined by testing what someone believes and does.

Trans: So we know we should not believe someone just because they claim to be preaching God's word. We are to test them. But, what test should we give them. This is our second point.

2. Determine fellowship by what is said and done.

A. 1John 4:2-6

B. John tells us that there are several ways for us to determine whether the one teaching is actually in fellowship with God.

1. Does the teacher confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh?

- a. If the teacher he does not he certainly a false teacher.
- b. 1John 2:18-23
- c. **1John 1:1-3**
- d. Brother Jason Jackson states, "Such a one may preach some truth, and he may be warm and charismatic, but he is obviously a false teacher."

2. Does the teacher incorporate worldliness into his message?

- a. **1John 4:5**
- b. Many will teach a gospel that involves worldly desires.
- c. 1John 3:4-10
- d. 1John 3:13-15
- e. 2Pet. 2:12-19

3. Does the teacher reject the apostolic teaching?

- a. **1John 4:6**
- b. **Luke 10:16**
- c. The test of truth involves more than the teaching about Christ Himself. A teacher is not "of God" if he proclaims some "core" truths but rejects other inspired instruction.
 1. **2Pet. 1:19-21**
 2. **2 Timothy 2:2**

Appl: The existence of fellowship can be determined by testing what someone believes and does.

- 1. Scrutinize every teacher to determine fellowship.**
- 2. Determine fellowship by what is said and done.**

The Manifestation of God's Love

1John 4:7-21

I. In 1John 4:1-7, John tells us that we are not to believe every spirit, but tests the spirits to see if they are from God.

II. It is important for us to recognize that a test can be applied to determine if someone is in fellowship with God.

III. The reason this is important is because we can also apply a test to ourselves. We don't have to just wonder if we are right with God. A test can tell us whether we are in a right relationship.

IV. In 1John 4:7-21 we are given what I would call the answers to a test that determines if someone is in fellowship with God.

VII. The test of fellowship is the manifestation of God's love in your life.

VIII. When I say the manifestation of God's love, I am speaking of the ways we know God's love is in us thus establishing the existence of fellowship with God.

Trans: Let's consider what John says about that the manifestation of God's love proving fellowship.

1. God's love is manifested in us through His Son

A. 1John 4:9-12

B. God manifested His love for humanity when He sent His Son to die for the world. 1John 3:16

C. We manifest that His love is in us when we accept His Son as our Savior.

1. 1 John 4:14

2. 1John 3:8

3. 1John 4:15,16

D. If I have accepted Jesus as my savior then I know God's love abides in me. It is manifested in me through His Son. 1John 2:24

2. God's love is manifested through His children.

A. 1John 4:7,8

B. John says that God is love. Love, agape love, is active goodwill. It is seeking the higher good of another. Because God is love His actions toward us are selfless.

C. If I am born of God, God's love will be manifested in me. I will possess the characteristics of God. Here John says I will possess His love. Thus it is manifested that I am a child of God, 1John 3:1,2

D. If I am not born of God I will not love as He instructs. This means I don't know Him. If I don't know Him I am not a child of His. If I do love my Christian brethren as He commands then I am in fellowship with Him.

3. God's love is manifested through love of my Christian brethren.

A. 1 John 4:20

B. Love for our Christian brethren is something fellowship with God creates.

1John 3:10

1John 3:16-18

C. Loving our Christian brethren is something that we are commanded to practice.

1John 3:23

1John 4:21

D. When I love my Christian brethren as God instructs it is manifested that I am in fellowship with Him, 1John 4:12

4. God's love is manifested when fear is cast out.

A. 1John 4:17,18

B. In 1John 2:15-17 we are told that the one who loves the world or the things in the world does not have the love of the Father in Him. He is not in fellowship with God.

C. The things of the world are going to pass away, but the one who does the will of the Father, the one in fellowship with Him lives forever.

D. Thus fear exists for the one not in fellowship with God.

1John 3:8-10

E. Those in fellowship with God do not fear the day of judgment. This lack of fear is a manifestation of His love, 1John 2:26-29

5. God's love is manifested through the Spirit given us.

A. 1John 4:13

B. Paul tells us that God's Spirit is our seal of promise, Eph. 1:13,14

C. God's Spirit was given to me when I obeyed the Gospel of Christ, Acts 2:38

D. I know I am in God's love, thus in fellowship with Him because of His Holy Spirit which indwells me.

Appl: The test of fellowship is the manifestation of God's love in your life. We can know if God's love is in our life.

1. God's love is manifested in us through His Son. Gal 3:27, clothed in Christ.
2. God's love is manifested through His children.
3. God's love is manifested through love of my Christian brethren.
4. God's love is manifested when fear is cast out.
5. God's love is manifested through the Spirit given us.

The test of fellowship is the manifestation of God's love in your life. Do you pass the test?

The Threefold Test of Fellowship

1John 5:1-5

I. Most would agree that the concept of testing ourselves is an important part of life.

- A. A test can evaluate the progress of our learning.**
- B. A test can determine our understanding of the subject matter.**

II. Spiritually speaking, tests are not something new. As a matter of fact God will himself initiate a test.

A. Gen. 22:1

B. The word tested here in the Hebrew is naw-saw (hon) and it means try, prove, assay, put to the proof or test

C. Whatever the test, it is done to establish whether a particular thing is true or not.

III. Tests are also a big part of the Christian walk. In the Scriptures we are told that the testing of our faith has several purposes

a. James 1:2,3 – Creates endurance

b. 1Pet 1:6,7 – Proves your faith.

IV. Testing can also be used to determine whether we are actually in the faith or not, **2 Corinthians 13:5-6.**

V. Overall testing is a way to determine whether a particular thing is true or not.

1. 2 Corinthians 13:5-6

2. Test - pay-rad'-zo (peirazo)

3. To try, make trial of, test: for the purpose of ascertaining his quantity, or what he thinks, or how he will behave himself.

VI. The idea that we can test ourselves to see if we are in the faith is the point of our lesson today. **1John 5:1-5**

VII. In the previous two lessons it has been noted that we are able to test to see if someone is from God or not and if we are in God or not.

VIII. John now provides a threefold test that we can apply to ourselves to determine if we are in fellowship with God.

1. Do you believe?

2. Do you love the brethren?

3. Do you obey God's will?

V. **Christians must pass God's test if they are to be in fellowship with Him.**

Trans: The first test John gives is the basis of fellowship.

1. Do you believe?

- A. People believe in a lot of things, spiritually speaking.
Emma Watson, one of the stars in the Noah movie stated that she was more spiritually minded than she was religious.

- B. The belief John speaks of is explicit.
 - 1. 1 John 5:1 - Do you believe Jesus is the Christ?
 - 2. 1 John 5:5 – Do you believe Jesus is the Son of God?
 - 3. 1John 4:2 – Do you believe He has come in the flesh?

- C. Fellowship hinges on the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God come in the flesh. To deny this is a death sentence.
 - 1John 1:1-4
 - 1 John 2:22

- D. To deny that that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God come in the flesh makes fellowship impossible.
 - 1 John 2:23
 - John 8:24

Appl: To be born of God, to be a child of God one must believe that Jesus is the Christ. To overcome the world one must believe that Jesus is the Son of God. To be from God one must believe that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.

To be born of God.; to overcome the world; to be from God are all synonymous with being in fellowship with God.

Trans: The second test deals with taking on the nature of God.

2. Do you love the brethren?

- A. John has stated that love is an inherent part of God's nature, 1John 4:8

- B. As such if we are to be in fellowship with God we must possess this love and it will be manifested towards our brethren.
 - 1. 1John 2:10
 - 2. 1John 3:10
 - 3 1John 4:7-8

- C. Possessing this love is demonstrated in how you treat your brethren.
 - 1John 3:17

- D. Practicing this love is a mark of discipleship - John 13:34-35

3. Do you obey God's will?

A. Obedience to God is something that is a must if we are to be in fellowship with Him,

1John 5:2,3

1Jn 1:6-7

B. Notice how John establishes the connection between obedience to God and being in fellowship with Him.

1. 1 John 2:3-4

2. 1John 2:5

3. 1John 2:6

C. It is impossible to be a child of His without obedience to God's will.

1John 3:10

Con: It is a simple test of fellowship. There are only three questions. They all require a yes answer. To answer no to any puts you outside of fellowship with God.

1. Do you believe?

2. Do you love the brethren?

3. Do you obey God's will?

Christians must pass God's test if they are to be in fellowship with Him.

This is The Testimony
1John 5:6-13

I. I believe most people understand the importance of those who can testify in a court of law.

II. There are times in our criminal court system where circumstantial evidence is all that is available and it can be difficult to prove the guilt or innocence of the one on trial.

III. But when testimony from those who were witnesses is given the likelihood of coming to an accurate verdict is greatly increased.

IV. In consideration of Jesus we are not left to rely circumstantial evidence as to whether He is who He claimed to be.

V. Consider 1John 5:6-13

VI. In essence John is speaking as if a trial is taking place.

1. He is offering his readers the evidence necessary to determine whether those who claim that the Son of God did not come in the flesh (the antichrist') are correct or not.
2. Can the accusers support their accusation?

VII. With the evidence John provides, a resounding NO echo's in the courtroom of humanity.

VIII. But John's evidence doesn't just disprove the false teachers. The fact that the Son did come in the flesh provides a great hope for us.

IX. We live because He lives.

X. To support the claim that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, John provides the testimony of five witnesses.

- 1. The testimony of the three**
- 2. The testimony of God**
- 3. The testimony of God's children**

Trans: As John begins his defense he presents a group of three witnesses.

1. The testimony of the three

A. 1John 5:6-8

B. Although we could list these separately we will group these together because of what John says in 1John 3:7,8. *“For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.”*

C. These two verses are considered by some to be one of the most difficult passages in the NT to explain. Difficult or not the testimony still exists.

1. The water and the blood

a. What is the water?

1. There are several interpretations but I will give two that seem most reasonable.

1. John is speaking of Jesus baptism, John 1:29-34

a. John is the author of the Gospel and 1Jhn

b. The Father and HS are present, Matt. 3:17

2. John is speaking of Jesus Birth, Matt. 1:1,18-23

b. What is the blood?

1. 1John 5:6, John emphasis that it was not by water only

2. John indicates more than a passing connection

3. Looking back at the water either interpretation refers to a beginning for Jesus

a. If the water refers to Jesus baptism, the beginning of His ministry

b. If water refers to His birth, the beginning of his life in the flesh.

4. The blood seems to point to His death.

a. His death brings to completion His ministry.

b. His death also brings to an end his life in the flesh.

c. Either way we look at this the testimony stands true. Neither interpretation diminishes the weight of the testimony.

Jesus was born of the flesh.

He was baptized to begin His ministry.

He sacrificed His flesh on the cross when he died.

He completed His work on the cross at His death.

a. John 19:30

b. "It is finished"

2. Included in this group of witnesses we also find the Holy Spirit.

a. As stated earlier the testimony of the Holy Spirit is connected to the first two witnesses, 1John 5:7,8

b. This connection corroborates the testimony of the other two witnesses,

1. 1John 5:6 *"It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth."*

2. John 14:17

3. John 15:26

4. John 16:13

c. The testimony of the Holy Spirit is seen throughout His work is Jesus life.

1. His birth, Luke 1:35

2. His baptism, Luke 3:21,22
3. His miracles, Matt. 12:25-28; Luke 4:18
4. His resurrection, Rom. 1:4; Rom. 8:11

Appl: As we close out our first day of testimony what can we conclude?

1. All three witnesses testify that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh! The Holy Spirit was present at His birth, baptism, death and resurrection.
2. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. His testimony is true.
3. The significance of having three witnesses is found in **Deut. 19:15**, "by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established."

Our first three witnesses all agree that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. He came in the flesh, lived in the flesh and died in the flesh, and although He died on the cross He lives.

And so..... **We live because He lives.**

This is The Testimony
1John 5:6-13

I. In last weeks lesson we were considering the fact that the claim of Jesus being the Son of God is not without evidence. 2Pet. 1:16-19 (Matt. 17:1-3)

II. If this were a case and it went to trial we have overwhelming testimony supporting what has been taught about Jesus. This case is not built upon circumstantial evidence, John 18:19-21.

III. In consideration of our case we were discussing. 1John 5:6-13

IV. There were those who claimed that Jesus was not the Son of God come in the flesh, John referred to these individuals as antichrist. 1 John 2:21-23; 2 John 1:7

V. But John's evidence that Jesus is the Son and He did come in the flesh. In establishing this provides a great hope for us. 1John 5:13

VI. We live because He lives.

VII. In 1John 5:6-13 John provides the testimony of five witnesses.

- 1. The testimony of the three**
- 2. The testimony of God**
- 3. The testimony of God's children**

VIII. Last week we considered the testimony of the three, the water, blood and Holy Spirit. As John said in 1John 3:7,8. *"For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement."*

IX. Today we are going to consider the last two witnesses.

- 2. The testimony of God**
- 3. The testimony of God's children**

Trans: As John begins his defense he presents a group of three witnesses.

2. The testimony of God

A. 1John 5:9

B. This testimony carries great weight.

1. "If we receive the witness of men..." is a simple conditional sentence that is true to fact
2. "Since we receive the witness of men..." (In a court of law we do.)
3. This being the case we should receive the testimony of God and it is far greater than that of man.

C. What then is the testimony of God concerning His Son?

1. God testified at Jesus' baptism. Matt 3:17
2. God testified at the transfiguration of Jesus. Mark 9:1-3
3. God testified in the works that Jesus did.
Acts 2:22-24
Heb 2:1-4
4. Jesus claimed the works He did was a testimony of the Father,
John 5:35-37

Trans: Another great witness that might be overlooked is the one who has had their life changed because of who Jesus is. This witness cannot be overlooked.

3. The testimony of God's children

A. **1John 5:10**

B. The one who believes in the Son of God has the witness in Himself.

1. **John 7:16-17**
2. Those who do the will of God (as taught by Jesus)... will know that the doctrine of Christ is truly from God.

C. This type of testimony is subjective. Nevertheless the witnesses aspect is not diminished.

1. Many people can easily deceive themselves into thinking that some feeling is an indication that they are saved, or that God has confirmed something to them.
2. But if we believe (and act upon) the witness of God concerning His Son, as revealed in His Spirit-inspired Word, we will have confirmation in ourselves that Jesus is truly the Son of God!
3. We truly see the testimony in God's children in the change that takes place in our lives as we grow in Christ
 - a. When we love the brethren as we should, 1 John 3:14
 - b. When we live righteous lives. 1John 3:1-10
 - c. When we live united in Christ. John 17:20-23

Appl: As we have seen in our testimony the case for Jesus being the Son of God does not lack evidence. In fact it is supported by the greatest of evidence.

1. **The testimony of the three**
2. **The testimony of God**
3. **The testimony of God's children**

Because the testimony is so overwhelming and convincing we can say... **We live because He lives.**

Knowing You Have Eternal Life

1 John 5:13

I. I believe in general people like the idea of knowing with certainty particular things in their life.

1. We like to know we have a job.
2. We like to know we are loved.
3. We like to know where our children are.

II. Knowing things with certainty changes the way I respond to the world around me. Knowing I have a job gets me up in the morning so I can go to work.

III. The same can be applied to our spiritual life as well. Knowing with certainty where I am spiritually changes how I live my life.

1. 1 John 3:2,3
2. Knowing I am a child of God I continue to purify myself.

IV. Now turn to John 5:24

1. Here Jesus speaks of the current spiritual condition of one responds to Him the proper way.
 - a. The word **has** is Present Indicative. (This indicates present state)
 - b. The second word **has** is perfect tense.
 1. The perfect tense denotes the present state resultant upon a past action.
 2. The perfect tense as tense is timeless, but in the indicative the time element is present.
2. This passage clearly states that we can know that we presently possess eternal life.

V. Now turn to 1John 5:13

VI. Christians can know that they have eternal life in Christ.

VII. To help us understand that Christians do have eternal life we are going to look at three ways John says we can know this to be true. All of these are found within the book of 1John.

- 1
 1. Eternal life is promised
 2. Eternal life was witnessed
 3. It was written

Trans: Let's now look at the first way we can know we have eternal life.

1. Eternal life is promised

1. 1 John 2:25
2. God made the promise to Abraham

Gen. 22:18
Galatians 3:16-18

3. It is impossible for God to break His promise, Hebr. 6:13-18
4. The conclusion, "Christians have eternal life," No if's, and's, or but's about it.

Illust: There are certain things in this life that are absolutes. For example a car can never be a person. This might sound silly it is true. This is not a matter of choice. Its nature will not allow it.

Likewise God being Holy and righteous can never be something He is not already.

1. Unrighteous or unholy.
2. He could never do something that is against His nature.
3. He cannot lie.
4. It is not a matter of choice He just can't do it.

Appl: The Apostle John wants all Christians to know that they have fellowship with God. Because of we are in fellowship with God we also possess eternal life.

Christians can know that they have eternal life in Christ. He promised it.

Trans: Not only was it promised that we would have eternal life, but people witnessed this as well. This is our second point.

2. Eternal life was witnessed
 1. 1 John 5:11
 2. Eternal life was witnessed in the resurrection of Jesus.
 - a. Jesus stated that He would be raised on the third day. John 2:18-22
 - b. Jesus ties His resurrection and eternal life together. John 11:25
 - c. After His resurrection many witnessed His eternal life. 1Cor. 15:1-8
 - d. John professes this truth when he began his epistle 1John 1:1-3

22

Appl: When Jesus was resurrected from the dead into eternal life He made Himself very visible.

He removed any doubt from people's minds that He was still in the grave. He wanted man to know that He had been resurrected into eternal life and that we could share in the same.

Christians can know that they have eternal life in Christ. Eternal life was witnessed.

Trans: Since Eternal life was promised and then it was witnessed the logical conclusion for us to know that we have eternal is found in our third and final point.

3. It was written

1. John 5:13

2. John states at the opening of his epistle the purpose of him writing these things. 1 John 1:4

3. From a study of 1 John we come to see the Christians joy. Joy is made full in knowing we possess eternal life.

4. We know this because of what John has is written.
 1 John 2:13-14
 1 John 2:25-26

5. This follows what John wrote in His Gospel. John 20:30-31

Illust: I understand that just because something is written does not necessarily make it so.

For example I could write on this piece of paper that I am a car. That does not make it true. It just makes me seem a little crazy.

But in regards to God's word if it is written it is true. 2 Peter 1:20,21

Appl: It would have done little good for God to promise eternal life and for eternal life to be witnessed among many people and then for that truth to fade into obscurity.

The next logical step to helping us understand that we have eternal life is for it to be written down and preserved for us throughout the centuries.

With this in mind John writes to all Christians letting them know they have eternal life.

Christians can know that they have eternal life in Christ. It is written

Con: In John 5:24 Jesus says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

What a wonderful blessing to know that we have eternal life in Jesus. For one who lives faithful to Christ there should never be any reason for doubt that you have eternal life.

It was promised
It was witnessed
It was written

Sin Not Leading to Death
1John 5:14-20

- I. The greatest blessing giving to us by God is the forgiveness of sins. Rom 6:23

- II. The second greatest blessing is that because of the first blessing God hears and answers our prayers.

- III. Jesus offered His life on the cross for my sins. If I chose to accept His sacrifice for me then I am offered forgiveness for my sins. Accompanying that is the fact that even as one who follows Christ if I do sin the blood of Christ continually cleanses me if I strive to live faithful to God's will and ask for forgiveness.

- IV. With this in mind, this morning I want to remind each of us of the forgiveness of sins that we have in Christ.

- V. Because God hears the prayers of those who are in fellowship with Him, He will forgive them of their sins through the blood of Jesus.**

- VI. 1John 5:14-20**

- VII. As we strive to overcome the sin we might have in our lives, there is not a more encouraging passage than this.

Trans: Let's begin by considering what John is trying to tell these Christians.

1. The prayer of fellowship

- A. 1John 5:14-15

- B. Note that John is directing this to Christians, those who already have forgiveness of sins.
 - 1John 5:13
 - 1John 3:1,2

- C. This is important to understand, because what is offered in prayer is granted only to those who are God's children.

- D. John states that those in fellowship with God, Christians, can have confidence that God hears and answers their prayers.
 - 1. This word "confidence" means unreservedness in speech openly, frank.
 - 2. Nothing stands in the way of us asking God for anything according to His will.

- E. When we pray asking anything according to His will two things are absolute.
 - 1. He hears us.

2. He will respond to our prayers.

Appl: If you have not been washed in the blood of Christ God will hear and answer my prayer.

2. The prayer for forgiveness.

A. 1John 5:16-20

B. All sin leads to death, Rom. 6:23

C. Yet John says there is sin not leading to death and sin leading to death. What are these?

1. Sin not leading to death is forgiven sin. Acts 22:16

2. Sin not leading to death is conditional upon walking in the light.

A. 1John 1:7

B. The word cleanses is, 3rd person, singular, present, indicative, active. He, she or it is presently being cleansed and continually being cleansed.

C. The result of being baptized into Christ and walking in His ways cleanses of sins,

3. Sin not leading to death is conditional upon confessing our sin.

1 John 1:9

Psalm 32:5

4. Sin not leading to death is repented sin. 2Cor. 7:10-11

5. Sin not leading to death is conditional upon not practicing sin.

1John 3:3-10

1John 2:12-14

D. Sin leading to sin is sin not repented of. God says to pray for someone in this state.

Appl: we should realize that if we do sin we have an Advocate and that this Advocate covers our sins. 1John 2:1,2

An Advocate is one who goes with us, one who is on our side.

As we look at the life we live we are going to find ourselves sinning. Even though we strive not to we will. This is because of our weakness and sometimes because of our selfishness. Yet we have hope. God is there to forgive us through the blood of Christ. If we will walk in the light, if we will confess our sins, He will forgive us.

What a great blessing and Joy. I am a sinner, but I am forgiven. As Christians, the blood of Christ continually cleanses us of our sin, if we will only strive to follow Him. So when I preach a sermon on the way of God and the ways of man. Do not become discouraged. Know that you can work to overcome that sin and be forgiven while you are working on it as you are striving to walk in the light.

If you have sorrow for sin, a Godly sorrow let it work repentance. And let the blood of Jesus cleanse you of all unrighteousness.

What We Know (1John Recap)

I. It has been said that there are two things we can be certain of in this life, death and taxes. The problem is this is not true.

1. Death may not come to some because some will be alive when Christ returns.
2. Taxes always change sometimes they are even done away with. 1cor 15

II. I believe there is absolutely one thing we can be absolutely sure of. Whether or not we are in fellowship with God.

III. A second thing associated with the assurance of fellowship is the assurance of where we will spend eternity.

IV. As we have been considering 1John for these past few months the assurances I am speaking of have been made very clear. For Christians it is a wonderful blessing to know of these things.

V. Christians have the assurance that they are in fellowship with God

VI. Today as we conclude the epistle of 1John I want to remind us of what God wants us from this epistle. There are two main points.

- 1. Know of your fellowship with God**
- 2. Abide in fellowship with God**

Trans: Lets consider our first point.

1. Know of your fellowship with God.

A. Some form of the word know (using the both γινωσκω or οίδα) is found some 34 times in this epistle.

B. Being used that many times it is clear that there is something God wants us to know and something we can know. What is it? **1John 1:3**

C. John is dealing with false teachers who have planted seeds of doubts in the minds of some Christians. John is combating that by establishing the fact that there is no question of their relationship with God. **1John 2:26**

D. What are some of the things John wants us to know so we can be sure of our standing with God?

1. (We can know the truth), 1John 2:21
2. (We can know our sins are forgiven)
1John 3:5
1John 1:9
1John 2:12-14
3. (We know we have overcome the world) 1John 5:4,5

4. (We can know we are children of God) 1John 3:1,2
5. (We can know we are currently spiritually alive) 1John 3:14
6. (We can know life is in Christ)
 - 1John 1:1,2
 - 1John 4:9
7. (We can know we have eternally life)
 - 1John 2:17
 - 1John 2:25
 - 1John 5:13

Appl: Brethren it is imperative that we do not walk in darkness in regards to our understanding of our relationship with God.

It is imperative that we know where we stand with God. This understanding, this knowing encourages to not turn back to the world.

Christians have the assurance that they are in fellowship with God

2. Abide in fellowship with God.

- A. The word abide (μένω, meno in the Greek) is used some 23 times in 1John.
- B. The word is used in reference to a place, state or condition and demands that one not depart from, but remain in that place, state or condition.
- C. In the context of 1John it refers to the state of fellowship Christians find themselves in because of Jesus, **1John 2:1,2.**
- D. Being found in a state of fellowship, Christians are called to live in such a way as to maintain that condition.
- E. It doesn't take John very long to not only establish that fellowship with God is possible, and that fellowship can be maintained,
 - 1John 1:3**
 - 1John 1:7,9**
- F. Throughout 1John we find a constant reminder of how we can maintain our state of fellowship with God.
- G. Let's consider a few things John says are required to maintain fellowship with God.
 1. Fellowship with God requires accepting His Son,
 - a. **1John 3:23**
 - b. **1John 4:15**
 - c. Jesus must be our propitiation, **1John 2:1,2**

2. Fellowship with God requires obedience,
 - a. Keep His commandments,
1John 2:3-6
1John 3:24
 - b. Abiding in His word, **1John 2:24**
 - c. Abiding in Him, **1John 2:28**
3. Fellowship with God requires not practicing sin
 - a. We are to purify ourselves, **1John 3:3**
 - b. Not live in sin, **1John 3:4-10**
 - c. We are to confess our sins **1John 1:9**
4. Fellowship with God requires not loving the world, **1John 2:15-17**
5. Fellowship with God requires love of the brethren,
1John 2:10
1John 4:7,8
1John 4:21

Appl: Brethren it is imperative that we do not walk in darkness in regards to our understanding of our relationship with God.

It is imperative that we know where we stand with God.

This understanding, this knowing, encourages us to move forward in our relationship. It keeps us from turning back to the world.

God not only assures us that we can know we are in fellowship with Him, but that we can know how to maintain that relationship.

Christians have the assurance that they are in fellowship with God.

- 1. Know of your fellowship with God**
- 2. Abide in fellowship with God**