

# Apostolic Ethic: Our Fellowship in Judgment

"God is light and in him is no darkness" (1 John 1:5)

3 QUESTIONS THAT PROVE

THE MAJOR PREMISE

THE MINOR PREMISES

ONLY

THE LOGIC OF LIGHT

CURES THE SIN PROBLEM

A LIVING WORD FELLOWSHIP BIBLE STUDY

JOIN US! 3102 BAUCOM RD. CHARLOTTE NC  
FROM 10:30 - 11:30 AM

This then is the **message** . . .

THE MESSAGE

which we have heard of him,  
and (which we) declare unto you,

. . . that **God is light,**  
and in him is **no darkness** at all.

we lie,  
and (we) do not the truth

CONCLUSION  
THE MEASURE

If we **say**

that we have fellowship  
with him,  
and (we) **walk** in darkness,

But... **we have fellowship**  
one with another,  
and  
the blood of Jesus Christ his Son  
**cleanses us from all sin.**

CONCLUSION

if we **walk** in the light,

**as he** is in the light,

**We deceive ourselves,**  
**and the truth is not in us.**

CONCLUSION

If we say

that we have no sin [to **cleanse**]

He is faithful and just  
to **forgive** us our sins,  
and to **cleanse** us from all  
unrighteousness.

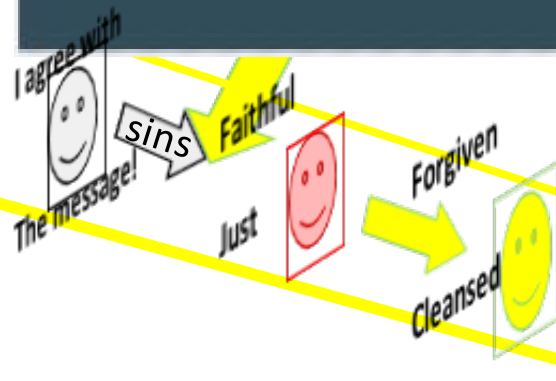
CONCLUSION

**If we confess our sins**

**We make him a liar,**  
**and his word is not in us.**

CONCLUSION

If we say  
that we have not sinned.  
(no sin to confess)



## OPEN

### Review: Aim and Central Question

- Reassure the church with certain knowledge about their possession of eternal life because of their fellowship in the covenant of Christ.
- *If reassurance of fellowship in the faith arises from the possession of eternal life. What proves the possession of eternal life?* [Look for **KEY's**]
- Discover what the logic of light tells us about the message and measure for judging apostolic credibility?

### Problem and Setting: Assessment and Activity

- What feelings and thoughts occur with the idea of fellowship in judgment?
  - An example of negative judgment includes fault finding to elevate one's status (cf. Rev. 2:2). An example of positive judgment includes comparing against a righteous standard (cf. Rev. 2:2).
  - Revelation 2:2: "I know what you have done-how hard you have worked and how you have endured. I also know that you cannot tolerate wicked people. You have tested those who call themselves apostles but are not apostles. You have discovered that they are liars."
- "To Tell the Truth" illustration: Would you prefer to be deceiver or detective?

## BRIDGE

- Apostles' dilemma how to distinguish themselves and defend their credibility?
- How to empower the judgment of those who must trust the Apostolic testimony concerning the manifestation of the word of God?
- **KEY:** The Apostle knows nothing more than what he declares and what he declares empowers the receiver by message and measure to participate in a fellowship of judgment (cf. Top of lesson cover-reflecting/declaring illustration).

## EXPLORE

- Where did John say that the Apostles come up with Jesus' message ("That which he declared to us, we declare to you.") (Notice face-to-face illustration at top of lesson cover.)
- How does John define the moral nature of God to make moral knowledge (right vs. wrong; good vs. evil) an objective and absolute certainty?
- What are the terms of fellowship and the conditions that confirm the terms?
- Why use the light vs. darkness concept as figures for his exhortation?

## YOKE

- Need to keep the light-dark concept in mind as referring to both the definition of sin and of its diagnosis—the nature of sin and the cause of it.
  - Definition of sin 1 John 3:4, "Sin is the transgression of the law." This means that sin occurs when one permits what the Bible forbids or forbids what the Bible permits.
  - Diagnosis of sin 1 John 3:8, "He that commits sin is of the devil." This means that sin resides in human nature as a spirit in enmity with God (cf. Gen. 3:15).

- **KEY** Deception occurs when teachers attribute sin to external causes or when teachers deny the existence of evil inherent in human nature.
  - Contemporary examples of attributing sin to external causes?
  - Contemporary examples of denying the existence of evil inherent in human nature?

## **IMPLEMENT**

- Like the Apostles, our ethic subjects us to the same terms and conditions for proving our credibility that we use to judge the credibility of others.
- Living by the Apostles' ethic preserves our ability to define and diagnose sin in another party's life and to present the gospel as the only cure for the sin problem.
  - See lesson cover, the bottom illustration.
  - **KEY** We don't walk in the light to be cleansed. Our cleansing allows us to walk in the light!
  - "If thou shalt confess thyself a sinner, the truth is in thee; for the truth is itself light. Not yet has thy life become perfectly light, as sins are still in thee, but yet thou hast already begun to be illuminated, because there is in thee confession of sins" [AUGUSTINE].

## 3 Questions that Expose the Sin Problem & Prove the Need for Its Cure

### The Sin Problem

- Alienated from the light by choices we make ("Lie and do not the truth.").
- Unaffected by the impact of our denial on others ("We deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us," cf. Gal 6:3 "Be not deceived, God is not mocked. You must reap what you sow.").
- Presumptive of the right to act with impunity ("We make him a liar and his word is not in us," cf. Ge 3:4-5 "God lied and wants to keep you in the dark.").

### Three Questions

- When you observe us walking in darkness and not doing the truth, what makes that happen?
  - Answer: The sin principle, the nature of sin transgresses when given the ability to just as easily choose obedience.).
  - The sin nature needs cleansing. To deny the reality of the sin nature also denies the need for cleansing.
- When you deny that sin exists in principle as an explanation for transgressing your own word and instead blame the sin on something external then what or who resolves the consequences?
- When you deny responsibility for the consequences and presume an impunity from accounting for them, what makes this possible? Accusing any absolute objective moral standard as a threat and as an evil is the unpardonable sin.

## TAKEAWAY