



THINGS THAT HINDER FELLOWSHIP

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





Things That Hinder Fellowship

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Things That Hinder Fellowship

SERMON REFERENCE: 1 John 1:5 – 2:6

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2101

If we feel distant from God, it could be because of sin. Adrian Rogers says, “Our sins are the secret faults that cause moral earthquakes.”

When we were born again, God dealt with our sins judicially: they were forgiven under the blood of Jesus Christ when we were “saved by grace, through faith” (Ephesians 2:8). Our sonship does not change based on our sins, but our fellowship with God can be strained if we do not deal with our day-to-day sins. 1 John 1-2 addresses the things that hinder our fellowship with God.

First, we need to understand how God convicts us of our sin: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8).

No matter if the sin is big or small, our sin is still there; and if we deny it long enough, we might even begin to believe our own lies. If we stay in darkness, there will be no conviction of our sins. But when we expose ourselves to the light once more, the Holy Spirit of God will convict us legitimately, specifically, and redemptively.

After we’ve been convicted of our sins, God is faithful to cleanse us of them.

1 John 1:9 assures us, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” When we confess our sins, we must do so immediately and specifically: remaining sensitive to sin, calling it by name. But we must also confess our sins confidently, knowing He is faithful to forgive us and cleanse us of every sin-stain.

Finally, remember the conquest of sin. 1 John 2:1 says, “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” Jesus Christ has satisfied the demands of a righteous and holy God. We are encouraged to live holy lives, yet when we sin and fall out of fellowship with God, there is hope that it can be restored.

Life Application

Has God convicted you of any sins in your life? Obey the Holy Spirit, and confess your sins immediately, specifically, and confidently; He is faithful to forgive and cleanse you so that your fellowship with God can be restored.



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Today's message will take a look at those things that hinder fellowship.
 - i) We can let things come into our lives that will defraud us of the fellowship that is our heritage in the Lord Jesus.
 - ii) We need to evaluate ourselves to see if there is anything in our hearts and lives that is keeping us from having the sweetest fellowship this side of Heaven.
 - (1) If there is, it is most likely sin.
 - (2) Secret faults cause moral earthquakes.
 - (a) Secret faults are things that we hide and disguise that keep us from fellowship with God.
- b) 1 John 1:5 – 2:6
- c) The Bible is the only book that has the answer to the problem of sin.
 - i) The way to deal with sin is to recognize it for what it is.
 - ii) We have a generation today that doesn't even like the word "sin."
 - (1) It seems that the only sin today is to call sin "sin."
 - (2) We call sin a mistake or a misjudgment.
 - (a) But Jesus did not die for errors, mistakes, or for misjudgments; Jesus died for sin.
- d) We live in a day of behavioristic psychology.
 - i) Psychologists say that we are the sum total of our genes, chromosomes and environment.
 - (1) They say that man is not wicked, he is weak.
 - (2) Man is not sinful, he is sick.
 - (3) Man is not evil, he is ill.
 - ii) Therefore, we never really deal with the root of the problem.
 - iii) We have been taught that man was not created, but that he evolved.
 - (1) But man did not evolve.
 - (2) We have been created in the image of God, and man sinned willfully.
 - (a) Genesis 1:27
- e) Sin is not an accident or an incident; it is high treason against God.
 - i) If we don't understand sin for what it is, then we will never deal with sin.
- f) God has provided the remedy for sin.
 - i) If we think that sin is merely a problem to be fixed, then we will be looking for a cure rather than forgiveness and cleansing.
 - (1) We will try to compensate for sin or commiserate with sin.
 - ii) The book of 1 John tells us how to deal with the sin problem and how to have fellowship with God.
- g) Many people have lost the concept of sin today.
 - i) The evolutionist says that given time, we will progress onward.



- ii) Education says that if we get more learning, then we'll be able to deal with the sin problem.
 - (1) However, Nazi Germany was highly educated.
 - (2) Many of our universities today have become cesspools of sin and higher learning at the same time.
- iii) Science says that perhaps through genetic engineering, we can breed sin out of man and create a different race.
- iv) The sociologist says that man will be better if we just change the environment.
 - (1) If this were true, then we would expect those who live in the best environment to not be bothered with sin.
 - (2) But sin is no respecter of environment.
 - (a) Man fell in the Garden of Eden, and there is no better environment than that.
- v) The psychologist and psychiatrist say that these are just feelings that we have generated within ourselves, and we need to get rid of the guilt feelings.
 - (1) No, we need to get rid of the guilt that causes the feeling.
- h) The only book that has the answer to the sin problem is God's Word.
- i) When we repent of our sins and receive Jesus by faith as our personal Lord and Savior and trust Him, we are born again.
 - i) As a result, sin is judicially and legally dealt with forever.
 - ii) Hebrews 8:12
 - (1) When we get saved, every sin (past, present, future) is buried in the grave of God's forgetfulness.
 - iii) Isaiah 43:25
 - (1) That is the Gospel of grace.
 - iv) Jeremiah 31:34
 - v) Isaiah 1:18
 - vi) When God says that He will remember our iniquities no more, this does not mean that He cannot recall them.
 - (1) This does not refer to an intellectual remembrance.
 - (2) God says, "I will remember their sins against us them no more."
 - (3) God remembers our sins, but He remembers them as sins that have been forgiven and, therefore, as forgotten sins.
 - (a) Similarly, we can never forget intellectually the sin that we committed; but as Christians, we don't remember that sin as a sin held against us but as a sin forgiven and forgotten by the grace of God.
 - vii) Romans 4:8
 - (1) If God were to put one-half of one sin on our judicial record, then that would be enough to condemn us and doom us forever.
 - (a) We cannot behave our way into Heaven.
 - (b) We must be saved by the grace of God.
- j) How does God deal with our sins day by day?
 - i) If we are saved by God's grace and our sins are buried in the grave of God's forgetfulness, then He deals with us not as judge but as Father.



- ii) We have two vital relationships as Christians:
 - (1) Sonship
 - (a) When we're born into the family of God, sonship is established and will never change.
 - (i) Once you're born into the family of God, you are in the family of God.
 - (2) Fellowship
 - (a) This relationship can change.
 - (b) In 1 John, John is not talking about sonship but about fellowship.
 - (c) Disobedience affects the fellowship we have with our heavenly Father, just as disobedience can sometimes rupture the fellowship between a child and his earthly parents.
 - (d) Hebrews 12:6
 - (e) Sonship is established by birth, and fellowship is established by conduct.
- k) In 1 John, John shares how God deals with us, not as judge but as Father.
 - i) 1 John 1:3
 - (1) This is not referring to judicial or legal forgiveness, but parental forgiveness.
 - ii) Matthew 6:12
 - (1) This is a family prayer.
- l) Today's message will share how we can get rid of those secret faults and hidden sins and restore our fellowship with the Father.

2) THE CONVICTION OF SIN (1 John 1:5-10)

- a) 1 John 1:5-7
- b) In each of the following verses, John states, "If we say:"
 - i) 1 John 1:6
 - ii) 1 John 1:8
 - iii) 1 John 1:10
 - iv) What John is sharing in these passages is that we are saying one thing and doing another; we are pretending.
- c) Following each of the above "If we say" statements, we see the evolution of a lie in these three steps:
 - i) We lie to deny sin.
 - (1) 1 John 1:5-6
 - (2) There are people in our churches who are just playing a game.
 - (3) We get sin in our hearts (it may be big or small), and then we go to church and teach a Sunday school class or sing in the choir with that secret fault in our hearts.
 - ii) We deceive ourselves and others.
 - (1) We begin believing our own lies.
 - (2) 1 John 1:8
 - (3) When we set out to deceive someone else, we deceive ourselves most of all.
 - (4) When we blur the distinction between the truth and the lie and we continue to sing in the choir or teach Sunday school and nothing seems to happen, we then begin to smooth over our sin.
 - iii) We defy the Savior.



- (1) We deceive others, then we deceive ourselves, and then, finally, we lie to God.
- (2) 1 John 1:10
- (3) When we call God a liar, we are the ones who are lying.
 - (a) God cannot lie.
- (4) God brings us under conviction, but we excuse the sin as a mistake or an error.
 - (a) We blame it on the environment or claim that it was righteous indignation, etc.
 - (b) We don't let the Holy Spirit convict us of that sin.
 - (c) We lie to deny sin, we lie to deceive self, and we lie to defy the Savior.
 - (i) When we do this, fellowship is completely broken.
- d) God will not bring us back into fellowship unless we expose ourselves to the light.
 - i) If we stay in the darkness, there will never be any conviction.
 - ii) If we will step back into the light, then God will shine His light of holiness upon our lives and will bring us under conviction.
- e) As a child of God, it is very important that we learn the difference between Holy Spirit conviction and satanic accusation.
 - i) The devil is the accuser of the brethren.
 - (1) Revelation 12:10
 - ii) The Holy Spirit loves us and convicts us.
 - iii) The devil will entice you to sin and then condemn you because you did.
- f) How will the Holy Spirit convict us of sin?
 - i) The Holy Spirit convicts legitimately.
 - (1) He will never convict us of any sin that has been confessed and cleansed.
 - (a) If it comes up again, that is not the Holy Spirit doing that; it is the devil going into your past, digging up things that have been cleansed and forgotten.
 - (b) Confess your sin once, and then praise God for His forgiveness.
 - (2) The devil will try to accuse us of sins that are already forgiven and cleansed.
 - (3) The Holy Spirit will never go back into our past and deal with something that has already been dealt with.
 - ii) The Holy Spirit of God convicts specifically.
 - (1) If the devil cannot go into our past and convict us of something that has already been dealt with, then he will convict us vaguely and try to make us feel unworthy and of no good.
 - (a) As Christians, we are not unworthy sinners; we are the righteousness of God in Christ.
 - (i) Jesus is not ashamed to call us his brethren.
 - 1. Hebrews 2:11
 - (2) When we commit a sin and it has not been cleansed, the Holy Spirit will put His finger on that specific sore spot and push.
 - (a) He will convict us of that specific lie or that specific time when we were rude to that person.
 - iii) The Holy Spirit convicts redemptively.
 - (1) Accusation discourages and drives us away from God.
 - (2) Holy Spirit conviction tells us what we have done, but that God will forgive us and cleanse



us if we will come to Jesus.

- (a) He invites us back into that fellowship.
- (b) We don't have to take the accusations from the devil.

3) THE CLEANSING OF SIN (1 John 1:9)

- a) This is not the judicial cleansing that we got when we were saved.
- b) This is talking about fellowship with God.
 - i) This is God dealing with us as children.
- c) The Greek word "confess" in this verse literally means "to say the same."
 - i) A confession of sin is an agreement with God.
 - ii) It is saying with God what God says about that sin.
 - (1) It is not merely admitting that we sinned.
 - (2) We get off the side of our sin, and we go over to God's side.
- d) How do we confess sin?
 - i) Confess sin immediately.
 - (1) 1 John 1:9
 - (a) "If we confess our sin" in the Greek language is in the present tense.
 - (i) It is not talking about something that we have done but something that we do.
 - (2) Confession is to be a habit of our lives.
 - (a) We don't just confess our sins at the end of the day.
 - (3) We need to be sensitive to sin.
 - (4) The Spirit-filled life is not a roller coaster of ups and downs.
 - (5) The victorious, Spirit-filled life is not living without any temptation, fault or failure; we all sin.
 - (6) The victorious, Spirit-filled life is learning these truths and confessing sin the moment the Holy Spirit convicts us of that sin.
 - (a) When we walk in the light, the moment we sin, the Holy Spirit tells us that we did wrong.
 - (b) At that moment, we confess that sin.
 - ii) Confess sin specifically.
 - (1) 1 John 1:9
 - (a) We are to confess our sins, plural.
 - (b) This passage is not talking about the sin nature or the whole body of sin, but it is speaking about what we did specifically.
 - (2) Call the sin by name.
 - iii) Confess sin confidently.
 - (1) 1 John 1:9
 - (a) God is faithful and just.
 - (b) He will cleanse us from all unrighteousness, not some.
 - (2) There is no sin that the blood of Jesus Christ cannot cleanse.
 - (a) 1 John 1:7
 - (b) 1 John 1:9



- (i) Not only does He forgive, He also cleanses.
- (ii) He washes out the stain.

4) THE CONQUEST OF SIN (1 John 2:1)

- a) God is not encouraging us to sin because of His cleansing and forgiveness; He is encouraging us not to sin.
- b) 1 John 2:1
 - i) The word “advocate” here is another word for “lawyer.”
- c) We have a Savior who is interceding for us.
 - i) Hebrews 7:25
- d) 1 John 2:2
 - i) Jesus died for everybody.
 - ii) “Propitiation for our sins” means that Jesus is the satisfaction for our sins.
 - (1) He satisfies the demands of a righteous and a holy God.
 - (a) This is why 1 John 1:9 says that He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.
- e) 1 John 2:5
 - i) When we keep His word, the love of God is perfected in us.
 - (1) A slave serves because He has to.
 - (2) An employee serves because he needs to.
 - (3) A child of God serves because He wants to.
- f) That God would save us to begin with and then cleanse us does not encourage us to sin.
 - i) The desire of our heart should be to never sin again.
- g) We have a wonderful Savior.
 - i) 1 John 1:4

5) CONCLUSION

- a) You can have forgiveness for your sins today.
 - i) God will forgive you of your sins, never to bring them against you.
- b) You can become a child of God by receiving the Lord Jesus Christ.
- c) Pray to Him today and ask Him to come into your life and forgive you of your sins.
- d) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



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Would you take God's Word and be finding First John? That's back near the book of the Revelation, and we're studying the book of First John. It's a short book, only five chapters. And we're entitling this study; "The Sweetest Fellowship This Side of Heaven." And when you do what John tells you, the only way that it can get sweeter is for us just to cut out and go to glory. But we're learning how to have fellowship, the sweetest fellowship this side of Heaven. And today, we're going to be looking at things that hinder fellowship. And you know, we can have the potentiality for fellowship, but we can let things come into our lives that will defraud us of the fellowship that is our heritage in the Lord Jesus.

I was listening to Billy Graham on the radio and he told the story that I enjoyed. He said, "A little boy went into a drug store and asked if he could borrow the telephone. The druggist said, 'Fine,' and the little boy dialed the grocery store in this little town. And when the grocer answered he said, 'Do you need a stock clerk, somebody who can come in and stock the shelves and carry the packages and so forth and sweep the floor?' And the man said, 'No, we already have a boy who does that.' And he says, 'Well, does he do a good job? Maybe you need someone else, maybe he's not adequate.' And the grocer said, 'No, he's very adequate, we're very satisfied with the boy that we have.' And the little fellow said, 'Well, thank you,' and he hung up. And the druggist said, 'Well,' he said, 'I'm sorry, son, that you didn't get the job.' 'No', he said, 'You don't understand. I already have the job over there. I was just checking up on myself. I wanted to see if he really appreciated me.'"

Now what I want you to do today is to check up on yourself and see if there is in your heart and in your life something that is keeping you from having the sweetest fellowship this side of Heaven. That something is most likely sin. It is secret faults that cause moral earthquakes. And we're going to be talking today about secret faults, things that we hide, things that we disguise, things that keep us from fellowship with God. Look if you will now, First John chapter 1 verse 5 and we'll read through chapter 2 verse 6, "This, then, is the message which we have heard of Him and declare unto you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all," and I love that word all, "from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned we make Him a liar and His Word is not in us. My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not, and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world, and hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, 'I know Him' and keepeth not His commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him, but whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected. Hereby, know we that we are in Him. He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked."

Now we're talking about things that keep us from fellowship and primarily secret faults, hidden sins. You know, the Bible is the only book in the world that has the answer to the problem of sin. And the way to deal with sin primarily with specificity is to recognize sin for what it is. We have a generation today that



doesn't even like the word sin. The word sin is out of date. About the only sin today is to call sin, sin. We want to call sin anything, we want to call it a mistake, a misjudgment. But Jesus did not die for errors, He did not die for mistakes, He did not die for misjudgments; Jesus died for sin!

Now we live in a day of behavioristic psychology. Where the psychologist says that we're just the sum total of our genes and chromosomes and environment. And so man is not wicked, he's weak. He's not sinful, he's sick. He's not evil, he is ill. And so therefore we never really deal with the problem because we never really get to the root of the problem. We've been spurred on by evolution. We've been taught that man was not created, that he evolved from some primordial soup. They never tell us where the soup came from. But we have sort of a, from a one-cell organism that life spontaneously began in some primordial soup. Well if that's true, we've come from soup to nuts, I can tell you that. Man did not evolve, man was created in the image of God and man sinned willfully. And sin is not an accident, it's not an incident, it is high treason against God. You see, if you don't understand sin for what it is, you will never ever deal with sin. Understand the remedy that God has provided. If you think that sin is merely a problem to be fixed, you're going to be looking for a cure rather than forgiveness and cleansing. You're going to try to compensate for sin or commiserate with sin. But thank God for First John that tells us how to deal with the sin problem and to have fellowship with God.

Folks, I'm telling you, the boys and girls in school today and many of our adults as I've seen by watching television, have lost the concept of sin today. They don't understand what sin is. The evolutionist says, "We're just on our way upward and you know, time will kill the beast within us. Just give us time and we will progress on and on." Well, you can believe that if you want to, I'm not a cousin of King Kong and you can believe that if you want to. And education says that, "What we need to do is just to educate people and if we get more learning then we'll be able to deal with the sin problem." Is that true? What about Nazi Germany? They were highly educated, the Nazis. What is happening on some of our universities today? They have become cesspools of sin and higher learning at the same time. When I was in college, I had a professor who taught psychology and logic. I admired him very much; he was one of the most intelligent men I've ever met. He had a brain full, but he committed suicide, my college professor. Science says that, "Perhaps by genetic engineering we can just breed this thing out of man till finally we create the bionic woman and the superman and a different race." And we're actually trying to do that now with genetic engineering and parents are trying to pre-arrange the birth of their children. The sociologist says, "Well just change the environment and then man will be better." Well if this is true, we would expect people who live in the best environment not to be bothered with sin, but that's just not true. Sin is no respecter of environment, whether it's the ghetto or the high-rise. And I remind you that man fell in the Garden of Eden. You can't have a better environment than that. The psychologist and the psychiatrist are just saying, "Well these are feelings that we have generated within ourselves and we need to get rid of the guilt feelings." It's not the guilt feelings we need to get rid of, it's the guilt that causes the feelings. Thank God for this Word, I'm telling you, folks, listen to me, the only book, the only book, the only book, the only book that has the answer to the sin problem is God's Word.

Now, this is what we're dealing with today, it is the sin problem, it is the secret faults that cause the moral earthquakes. Now, how does God deal with sin? Well, when I received Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior, when I repent of my sin, I trust Him, I receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, I am born again. And then as a result of that, sin judicially, judicially, now listen to the word, judicially, legally, is dealt with forever and ever. Hebrews 8 verse 12, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." When you get saved; every sin, past, present, and future, is



buried in the grave of God's forgetfulness. Now you need to understand that. Isaiah chapter 43 and verse 25, "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake. I will not remember thy sins." Folks, that's good news; that is the Gospel of grace.

Jeremiah 31 verse 34, "For I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more." Isaiah 1:18, "'Come now and let us reason together,' saith the Lord. 'Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'" Now when God says that He will, "Remember our iniquities no more," does that mean that God cannot recall them? No, no, no, no. God is not talking about an intellectual remembrance. God says, "I will remember their sin against them no more." God remembers our sin, but He remembers them as sins that have been forgiven and therefore forgotten as sins. And in the same way, I can never forget the sin that I have committed intellectually, but when I remember that sin I don't remember it as a sin held against me. I remember it as a sin forgiven and forgotten by the grace of God. Thank God for that. Now, that's the way God deals with us judicially. Romans 4:8, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." If God were to put one half of one sin on my judicial record, one half of one sin would be enough to damn me and doom me forever. Therefore I cannot behave my way into Heaven. If I'm going to be saved, I've got to be saved by the grace of God. You agree with that?

Now that's the way God deals with our sins judicially. But then how does God deal with our sins day by day? If I'm saved by grace and kept by grace, and no sin will ever be brought up against me anymore, and my sin is buried in the grave of God's forgetfulness, how does God deal with me, Adrian, day by day, when I'm proud or arrogant or when I tell a lie, when I exaggerate, when I have a lustful look? How does God deal with me day by day? Not as judge but as Father, as Father. Now we're not talking about legal judgment, but we're talking about, in this chapter, God dealing with us in a parental way. You see, we have two vital relationships as a Christian. One is son-ship; when I'm born into the family of God, son-ship is established and son-ship will never change. In a parallel way, I was born into the Rogers family. There's nothing can ever undo that. I was conceived, born, I am a Rogers, I'm Adrian Rogers. When the sun, the moon, the stars have grown cold, what happened when I was born, it still is an event, it can never ever be undone. That's the way it is when you're born again. Once you're born into the family of God, you're in the family of God. That relationship we call son-ship.

But there's another relationship that can change, and that is called fellowship. Now John here is not talking about son-ship, John here is talking about fellowship. You see, I am my father's son, and when I was growing up I always had relationship but I didn't always have fellowship. There'd be times when my dad would tell me to do thus and thus or not to do thus and thus, and I would do what he told me not to do and didn't do what he told me to do. And there would be, sometimes, a rupture in fellowship and my dad would carry me out. We didn't have a woodshed but we did have a pump house, carry me out to the pump house and apply the board of education to the seat of knowledge. And my dad, don't get a wrong idea, he never whipped us on an empty stomach, he just turned us over and there's where he did it. Now, he did that because he loved me. As a matter of fact, the Bible says in Hebrews 12 verse 8, "Whom the Father loves He chastens and scourges every son whom He receives." Son-ship is established by birth, fellowship by conduct.

Now what John is talking about here in this book, and the forgiveness of sin and the cleansing of our daily sins, is not a matter of, He's not dealing with us as judge but He is dealing with us as Father. This is the way that the Father deals with His son. For example, look if you will in First John 1 verse 3, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you that you may have fellowship with us and truly our fellowship



is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.” So He’s not talking about judicial or legal forgiveness here, He’s talking about parental forgiveness. Even as Jesus Christ taught us in Matthew chapter 6 verse 12, when He taught us to pray, “Our Father, forgive us our trespasses.” You see, this is a family prayer.

We’re talking now about how to have fellowship with God. Many of you are saved, you’re on the way to Heaven, but you’re going second class because you’re not enjoying that fellowship, that koinonia that we were talking about so long ago. Now, having set the stage, I want us to see now how we can restore that fellowship, how we can get rid of those secret faults, those hidden sins, that divide us from the Father’s smile and the Father’s face and have that sweet, wonderful fellowship with God.

Now the first thing I want you to see is **how God convicts of sin**. How the Father convicts of sin. Notice in First John 1 verses 5 through 7, look at it, “This, then, is the message which we have heard of Him and declare unto you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness we lie and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Now, take your Bible and I want you to look at some verses here. Look at the times he talks about lying, here. Look, if we can in First John 1 verse 6, “If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie,” just underscore that. Then look if you will in verse 8, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.” Then look in verse 10, “If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar.” Each time he says, “If we say...if we say...if we say.” Now what he’s saying is this, “We’re saying one thing and doing another.” We are pretending here, and what he is talking about here is what I want to call **the evolution of a lie**.

I want you to notice the three steps that follow each one of these, “If we say.” First of all we may say we may lie to deny sin, verses 5 and 6 of First John chapter 1, “If we say we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie.” Now that’s what happens this morning in church. Look around. I mean, here we are, in this building, thousands and thousands of people in one building. Every one of you looks so holy, every one of you looks so clean, each looks so happy in Jesus. But do you think everyone has his or her heart right with God this morning? They’re not. I’ve been preaching long enough to know that is not true. I’ve been preaching long enough to know that people can come in church, hold a Bible in their hand, sing the songs, nod their heads and say, “Amen,” and down in their heart, things are not right. “If we say we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie.” There’s some living lies sitting on seats in this building this morning. And you know in your heart that you are playing a game. You’re playing the church game, you’re playing a role. But that’s what happens. We get sin in our hearts, it may be big, it may be small, but it is there, and we come to church, we go to Sunday School, we teach the class, we sing in the choir, we do whatever we do, but there’s that secret fault. “If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie.”

Now, what happens when a man does that? After he does that for a while, do you know what happens to him? **He gets to believing his own lie**. Now, notice what he says here, look at the next step here in First John 1 verse 8, “If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves.” When you set out to deceive somebody else, do you know who you’re going to deceive most of all? You are going to deceive yourself. A man who deceives himself, he’s on the verge of a mental breakdown. When a man cannot even believe himself, when he blurs the distinction between light and dark, between truth and the lie, there are many of you who have begun to say to yourself after you’ve stonewalled God for a while and after you have moved in and out of the fellowship and nothing seems to happen. You still sing in the choir, you still teach the Sunday School class, you still are in the congregation, you still shake hands, you still buddy with all the



people. But you say, "Well, maybe it's not sin at all. Maybe I'm all right. Maybe it was just an error. Maybe it's a psychological idiosyncrasy. Or maybe God doesn't call that a sin and maybe I am a pretty good fellow." And so you begin to smooth over your sin.

And first of all we deceive others, then we deceive ourselves, and then finally **we lie to God**. We lie to others, then we lie to ourselves and then we lie to God. Look if you will here in First John 1 verse 10, he says here, "If we say we have not sinned we make Him a liar and His Word is not in us." Well you see, when we call God a liar, we're the ones who's lying, isn't that true, because God cannot lie. And so, God brings us under conviction and we say, "Oh, no, no, God, you're wrong. It was a mistake, it was an error, it was a glandular malfunction, it was the environment, it is legitimate resentment, it is righteous indignation." Whatever it is, and we don't let the Holy Spirit of God convict us of that sin. First of all, we lie to others then we lie to ourselves and then we have the unmitigated gall and audacity to stonewall God and to lie to Almighty God. We lie to deny sin, we lie to deceive self, and we lie to defy the Savior. Now when we do that, fellowship is completely broken. It is gone. We have stepped out of the light; we're over in the darkness.

Now, how does God bring us back? Well, God will not bring us back unless we expose ourselves to the light. You stay over here in the darkness; there'll never be any conviction. But if you as a child of God will just step back into the light, God will shine the light of His holiness upon your life. And God will bring you under conviction. Now it is very important, very important, listen to me, it is very, very, very important as a child of God that you learn the difference between Holy Spirit conviction and satanic accusation. Now the devil is the accuser of the brethren. The Holy Spirit is the one who loves us and convicts us. And so many times people do not know the difference between Holy Spirit conviction and satanic accusation. Now the devil is very clever. Before you sin, do you know what the devil tells you? The devil says, "Go ahead and do it, you can get away with it." And after you sin you know what the devil tells you? "You'll never get away with it." Hey, now, that's exactly what he'll do. He will entice you to sin and then condemn you because you did. "Oh, you can get away with it." "You'll never get away with it." That's accusation. That's not the Holy Spirit of God.

Let me tell you how the Holy Spirit of God convicts you. When the Holy Spirit of God shines that light upon you, and there's nothing purer than light, God is light, and when the Holy Spirit of God, who is light, shines upon you, you will come under conviction as a child of God. If you will just turn to the light and face up to the light, He will pull the veil of darkness back of those lies that you've been telling others and telling yourself and telling God. He will expose that sin.

Now let me tell you how the Holy Spirit of God will convict you. And first of all, and listen very carefully, first of all, **the Holy Spirit of God will convict you legitimately**. Now you say, "What do you mean by that, Pastor?" He will never convict you over any sin that has been confessed and cleansed. If it comes up again, it is not the Holy Spirit of God doing that. It is the devil who is going back into your past, bringing up some sin that has been cleansed, forgotten, and put in the grave of God's forgetfulness, and he brings it up again. One man told his pastor, "Pastor, I can't get peace." "Why?" "Well, I did a terrible, horrible thing." Pastor said, "Have you confessed it to God?" He said, "I've confessed it a thousand times." He said, "That's 999 times too many." Confess it once; praise Him a thousand times, friend. If it comes up again, it is the devil trying to bring you into double jeopardy and the devil will accuse you of sin already forgiven and cleansed. The Holy Spirit will convict you legitimately. He'll never come into your past and deal with something that's already been dealt with. And if that happens to you, you just tell the devil, "I'm not going to take that stuff."

Number two, not only will the Holy Spirit of God convict you legitimately, but **the Holy Spirit of God will convict you specifically**. Now if the devil can't go into your past and drag up something that's



already been dealt with, the devil will just convict you vaguely, just make you feel bad, just make you feel unworthy, just make you feel no good. So many times you hear Christians pray, "Well, I know I'm just a poor, old unworthy sinner." Where'd you get that? You're not just a poor, old, unworthy sinner, you're the righteousness of God in Christ. You're a child of God, you're a prince and a king, you're next of kin to the Holy Trinity. Jesus is not ashamed to call you His brothers! The devil wants to just make you feel that you're no good, that you're unworthy. You feel bad mostly all over. That's just accusation. You don't have to take it.

Let me tell you how the Holy Spirit of God will convict you. The Holy Spirit of God will convict you with specificity. If you do something and it has not been cleansed and forgotten and buried in the grave of God's forgetfulness, the Holy Spirit will say, "Hey! That was a lie you just told." "Hey, Adrian, you were rude to Joyce just then." "No!" "Yes you were, yes you were." And He, like a good doctor, will put His finger on the sore spot and push. Aah! "Does it hurt there?" Believe me, it hurts right there. See, that's the way the Holy Spirit of God does. With legitimacy! And with specificity! He will convict you of that particular thing! That's Holy Spirit conviction.

But not only will He convict you legitimately and with specificity, but **He will convict you redemptively**. Do you know what accusation does? It discourages. Accusation drives you away from God. Accusation says, "There's no way. Woe is me. I'm done for, I might as well quit. I'm finished. I've had it!" Holy Spirit conviction says, "Here's what you've done, but if you come to Jesus, He'll forgive you and cleanse you. And come on back into the fellowship; you're loved." That, my friend, is the way that God convicts of sin. And you don't have to take this mess from the devil, who is the accuser of the brethren, who is accusing you night and day before the throne and is accusing you to your own face. That dirty devil. Thank God for the precious Holy Spirit who is light!

Now, we talked about the conviction of sin. Let's talk a little bit more about **the cleansing of sin**. Once the Holy Spirit of God shows you that this particular sin in your heart and in your life and He does it now with specificity and He does it legitimately and not condemningly to draw you to Jesus. Now, notice what he says here in First John 1 verse 9. Take your Bibles and look at it, look at it, verse 9, "If," here's another if. You notice he says, "If, if we say, if we say, if we say." But now he says another if, "If we confess our sins," not stonewall God, not deny our sins, but, "If we confess our sins, He," God, "is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Now notice this is not the judicial cleansing that we got when we were saved. This is talking about fellowship with God. This is talking about God dealing with us as children. Now we're to confess our sins. Now the word confess is an interesting word. It is the Greek word *homologeō* which means to say the same, that's literally what the word means, to say the same. Two words, one word meaning to say, the other word *homo* meaning the same, to say the same. A confession of sin is an agreement with God. It is saying with God what God says about that sin. It is not just saying, "Well I did it, okay." That's not a confession. That is an admission. A confession of sin is to say about that sin what God says about that sin. Over here is the sinner; "I am the sinner, I've done wrong, I've sinned against God." The Holy Spirit of God puts the finger on me legitimately, specifically, redemptively, and I then confess my sin. I come over here with God and I say with God what God says about that sin. I agree with God. I get off the side of my sin; I get over here on God's side, and I say with God what God says about my sin. I've confessed my sin then, okay?

Now, let me tell you how to confess that sin, let's just break it down a little bit more because since we've broke down conviction with specificity, let's just break down confession with specificity. How should I confess my sin? **I need to confess my sin immediately**. Write down the word immediately, at least write it in your in your mind. "If we confess our sin," that in the Greek language is in the present tense. It's not talking about something that you have done, it is something that you do. I looked it up in one translation,



and it literally says, "If we are continually confessing our sins." That is, it is to be a habit of our lives. You don't just confess your sins at the end of the day, much less at the end of the week, much less during the annual revival meeting. If we make a habit of confessing our sins. If you get a speck of dust in your eye, when do you try to get it out? At the end of the week? No, immediately! Be sensitive to sin.

Now you know what many of us do? Many of us, we're down here living on such a low plane, way down here, just living way down here, and then somehow we hear Adrian preach or we'll get in a revival meeting or we'll read a book and we get right with God and we have a religious spasm. We're up here for a while, and then that lasts about that time and we get down here in the valley again. We're riding in the valley, and then we come up again, and then we're down again. Have you ever ridden that roller coaster? Sometimes I'm up, sometimes I'm down. "Oh yes, Lord." But most of the time you're down more than you're up. That's not the Spirit-filled life. Get off that roller coaster.

Let me tell you what the Spirit-filled life is. Let me tell you what the victorious life is. The victorious life is not living without any temptation, any fault, any failure. We all sin, that's what John is telling us. But here's the victorious life. We learn the truths that we're talking about today. We get up here on a higher plane, we get right with God, we're walking in the light, and when we're walking in the light, the minute we sin the Holy Spirit says, "You did wrong." That moment, what do you do? Confess it. That moment! Now here's the Spirit-filled life. Tsk-Tsk. Tsk-Tsk. Tsk-Tsk. Tsk-Tsk. Tsk-Tsk. Just like that. You just stay up there, the moment that happens, at that time, that moment, that self-same moment, you confess your sin. Do it! Immediately! Nobody else may even know you've done it. I mean, you may be at the dinner table and said something or done something, you say, "Oh, God, in the name of Jesus forgive me." He does, He does. You do it immediately.

And number two, **you do it specifically**, specifically. You see, look, he says, "If we confess our sins!" Not our sin, our sins. He puts it in the plural. We're not talking about the sin nature. We're not talking about the whole body of sin. We're talking about what you did particularly. Call it by name. That's the painful part. You know, have you ever been in these prayer meetings, they say, "Lord, if we've sinned, forgive us." Huh? Or, "Forgive us all our sins." From my opinion, you're just wasting your breath to pray that kind of a prayer. I'll tell you, if you want to do business with God, you say, "God, forgive me for reading that dirty book. I dishonored You, I dishonored my wife, I dishonored my own body. God, I put filth in my mind, I'm so sorry, God, I shouldn't have done it. God, I won't do it again. Forgive me." He will. "Forgive me, Lord, for that lie. Forgive me, Lord, for that selfishness. Forgive me, Lord, for that pride." You name it and nail it.

Listen, you do it immediately. And you do it specifically. And let me tell you another thing. **You do it confidently**. Look if you will in First John 1 verse 9, "If we confess our sins, He is," listen to this, "faithful and just to forgive us our sins." "Faithful and just!" If He didn't do it, He would be a liar and a crook. He would be unfaithful and unjust. If you agree with God, "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Not some, all, all, all, all, a-double-I, all! You like that? I do!

Sometimes the devil will tell you, "You've done something so bad now you can't get forgiveness." That's a lie out of Hell. There's no sin that the blood of Jesus Christ cannot cleanse. Listen to what the Bible says First John 1:7, "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin," that's verse 7. Now look in verse 9, "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." I have that confidence, thank God, for the precious double detergent of the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, because not only does He forgive, He cleanses. He washes out the stain. He takes the inward part, it is gone, forgotten, washed whiter than snow.



Well, I've run out of time, I've got a third point to this message, we're only on two. First is the conviction of sin, secondly the cleansing of sin. Let me give you the third one with just that much, **it's the conquest of sin**. Look in First John chapter 2 verse 1. Do you think because cleansing and forgiveness is by grace and all you have to do is ask for it, that God is just encouraging us to sin by writing this down? No, He's not encouraging us to sin. He is encouraging us not to sin. Look at it, "My little children, these things write I unto you that you sin not!" He's not saying to sin, He's saying, "Don't sin." But He says, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," and that word advocate, that's just a fancy word for lawyer. I've a Savior who's interceding for me. And the Bible says in Hebrews 7:12, "He ever lives to make intercession for us, presenting His precious blood." Thank God for that! Hallelujah for that! And the Bible says in First John chapter 2 verse 2, "And He is the propitiation for our sin and not for ours only, but also for the sin of the whole world." That's the reason I don't believe in any limited atonement. He died for everybody, everybody, the whole world He died for. "And He is the propitiation for our sin!" What does that word propitiation mean? It means He's the satisfaction for it. He satisfies the demands of a righteous and a holy God, and that's the reason He says in verse 9, "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." Why? Because He is the satisfaction, He is the propitiation; for those sins He died. Thank God for that.

But He isn't saying therefore just to be light and cavalier about your sins. If you read on down there a few more verses in First John chapter 2 verse 5, He talks about when we live with Him, in us the love of God is perfected. A slave serves because he has to. An employee serves because he needs to. A child of God serves because he wants to. I mean there's the love of God. That God would save me to begin with, and then cleanse me. Do you think that encourages me to sin? No, my friend, the desire of my heart is never to sin again. I mean never, never again. But if I sin, thank God, I have an advocate and, "He's the propitiation for my sin." Don't we have a wonderful Savior? Hallelujah! What a Jesus, what a Savior that we have.

You know, it seems to me if people understand what we have in Jesus, you couldn't keep them away with a machine gun. But yet the old stubborn hearts, there are so many people just stonewalled themselves against God. John is saying in verse 4, First John chapter 1, "I'm writing this that you might have fullness of joy, that you might have fellowship with God and fellowship with one another." The sweetest fellowship this side of Heaven.

Would you bow your heads in prayer? Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. While heads are bowed and eyes are closed and no one is looking around; do you remember what we talked about, that legal salvation where God forgives your sins, never to bring them up against you anymore? You can have that today. You can become a child of God. You can become twice-born in a world of once-born people by receiving Jesus. If you would pray a prayer like this, "God, I am a sinner. I cannot save myself. I need to be saved. My sin deserves judgment but I want mercy. Jesus, You died to save me, You promised to save me if I would trust You. I do trust You." Tell Him that, tell Him that. "I do trust You right now, with all of my heart. Come into my life, forgive my sin, cleanse me, save me, Jesus." Pray that and mean it and He will save you. And then after He saves you, day by day He will cleanse you; deal with you no longer as a judge but now as a Father if you'll just put your faith in Jesus. Father, I pray that many will say that today, in His name, the name of Jesus, Amen.



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