

Don't Sin, but If You Do

1Jn 2:1-2

December 4, 2016

I. Thoughts from 1Jn 1:5-10

The Bible Guide

How can John sum up all that he has learned about God through Jesus? He puts it as simply and powerfully as he can. God is light - vastly brilliant in power, majesty, beauty and holiness. Like light, God makes his presence known. Like light, his power shines out. Like light, he rescues those in darkness.

God's pure character affects the way we live. Light and darkness can have nothing to do with each other. We can't walk in the light of God and still indulge our secret and shameful sins. We must either turn to his light or hide from him.

Because Jesus has died for us, and his blood has blotted out our guilt, we are free to live a holy life. We walk in the light of God, in open friendship with all his forgiven people.

But what if we sin? -

Walking in the light of God doesn't mean we're perfect. No doubt we will still sin, because our human nature is sinful. John says that if we claim we are sinless we are merely deceiving ourselves. Worse than that, we imply that God is lying when his light reveals our sins.

So what can we do when we fall into sin? John says that we can confess our sins to God and receive his forgiveness and cleansing. God will always do this for us - not because we deserve it, but because Jesus has died for our sins. God responds to the request of Jesus to give us his righteousness. This special offer is open to everyone in the world. All we have to do is turn to him.

Word Studies from the Greek New Testament; by Kenneth Wuest

The words "one with another" are the translation of a preposition and a reciprocal pronoun in the Greek text. A reciprocal pronoun shows reciprocity. Wonder of wonders, not only do we have fellowship with God, but He reciprocates in having fellowship with us! This fellowship is not a one-sided affair like that of a couple, only one of which is in love with the other. God condescends to have fellowship with worms of the dust, sinners saved by grace, creatures of His handiwork.

And while we are having this fellowship with Him, the blood of Jesus, His Son, keeps constantly cleansing us from sins of omission, sins of ignorance, sins we know nothing about in our lives and for the reason that we have not grown in grace enough to see that they are sin. These would prevent our fellowship with God if this divine provision of the constant cleansing away of the defilement of sin in our lives was not taken care of by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. So holy is the God with whom we have fellowship.

Sin is both:

"commission" (wrong things done) and
"omission" (failure to do the right thing)

II. Word and phrase study of 1Jn 2:1-2

1Jn 2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;

"My little children"

Spiritual growth:

"born of God", "born of Him" = New born; used 9 times; (1Jn 2:29; 3:9, 9; 4:7; 5:1, 1, 4, 18, 18)

"little children" = perhaps pre-adolescence; used 7 times; (1Jn 2:1, 12, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21)

"children" = perhaps adolescence; used 6 times; (1Jn 2:13, 18; 3:1, 2, 10; 5:2)

"young men" = used 2 times (1Jn 2:13-14)

"you are strong"

"the word of God abides in you"

"you have overcome the evil one"

"fathers" = used 2 times (1Jn 2:13-14)

"you know Him who has been from the beginning"

"I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin"

John is making a definite distinction between an ongoing habitual lifestyle of sinning and individual acts of sin committed by struggling and tempted Christians.

1Jn 3:6 No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.

1Jn 3:9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

He is trying to bring a balance between two extremes; two different schools of Gnostic teachings.

1. Antinomianism - taking sin too lightly (1Jn 1:8-10)

Taught that salvation was an intellectual matter; it did not matter how one lived because the body was evil. (1Jn 3:6-9; 5:16)

2. Asceticism, legalism - personal sins are dealt with in harshness and severity.

They also believed that the body was evil and, therefore had to be limited in its desires.

"and if anyone sins"

Cannot possibly mean that sinless perfection is possible in this life. Rather, it means that sin should not characterize the believer's life.

"we have an Advocate with the Father"

Advocate is the Greek word *paraklētos* literally means "one who is called to our side." This was a legal term for a defense lawyer or "one called alongside to help" (from *para*, beside and *kaleō*, to call).

This could be a comforter, someone who consoles, or a defense attorney. The word denotes one who acts on someone else's behalf as a mediator, an intercessor, or an encourager.

The Holy Spirit is our "Comforter," He works within us to comfort and help us,

Jn 14:16 "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever;

Jn 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

Jn 15:26 "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me,

Jn 16:7 "But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.

Jesus is our Advocate in heaven

1Jn 2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;

We have two *Paraklētes*, or Comforters

We have an Advocate in heaven (Jesus), representing us before the Father in heaven (1Jn 2:1)

We have an Advocate within (Holy Spirit), to direct and guide us, helping us to follow Jesus, we are not alone.

They work together in perfect harmony (Rom 8:26-27, 34; 1Jn 2:1)

“Jesus Christ the righteous”

This is a title for God the Father in 1:9. It speaks of the sinlessness (holiness, God likeness) of Christ (cf. 3:5; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 2:18; 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:22). He was the Father’s means of bringing “righteousness” to a people.

1Jn 2:2 and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

"propitiation" (Gk. *hilasmos*) means atonement

This word is found four times in the NT

1Jn 2:2 and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

1Jn 4:10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Rom 3:25 whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;

Heb 9:5 - it is translated “place of atonement” or “mercy seat.”

Heb 9:5 and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; but of these things we cannot now speak in detail. (NASU)

This word is used in the Septuagint (*OT translated into Greek*) for the lid of the Ark of the Covenant, called the mercy seat or place of atonement. Under the law, once a year the high priest made atonement for Israel by sprinkling blood on the lid of the Ark, known as the mercy seat (Lev 16:13-19). Christ’s death is our place of atonement, as God’s holiness is satisfied by his blood.

The modern English translations differ on how to understand this word.

He Himself is the propitiation for our sins” (NASB, NKJV)

“he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins” (NRSV)

“Christ himself is the means by which our sins are forgiven” (TEV)

“He is the sacrifice to expiate our sins” (NJB, RSV)

Propitiation implies that Jesus appeased the wrath of God

Rom 5:9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. (Rom 1:18; Eph 5:6; Col 3:6)

2 Cor. 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, ... (Rom 3:25; Heb 2:17)

“for our sins; and not ours only, but also for those of the whole world”

Jesus died for the sin and sins of the whole world

1Jn 4:14 ... the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. (Tit 2:11)

Jn 3:16-17 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. 17 “For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

(Jn 1:29; Rom 5:18; Heb 2:9; 7:25; Gen 3:15)

Paraphrase = “Don’t sin! But if you do ...”

We should want to be free of sin. When we do sin, however, we can depend on Christ to defend us before God.

1Jn 2:1-2 - Thoughts from EW Kenyon

When we lose our sense of righteousness, and the adversary has gained the ascendancy: then we make the confession of our sins and we cry for mercy. Jesus takes up our case. He is the Righteous One. He can stand for us. When we lose our sense of righteousness, He can restore us again to our fellowship.

Righteousness is the ability to stand in the Father's presence without a sense of guilt or inferiority. When a believer sins he doesn't lose his place as a son, but he loses his fellowship.

Jesus is our family lawyer. He ever lives to watch over those for whom He died and suffered. Now we understand Heb 9:24 "For Christ entered ... into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us."

When the heart can remember that Jesus is there on our behalf, and that He loves us even as He loved us before He died for us, it can joyfully come with boldness (Heb 4:14-16). He loved us as sinners, now we are His redeemed ones, members of His very body.

Now He bids you to come boldly to the throne of grace. That means that you are to come into His presence with your needs. You are in the throne room, and the Father that loves you and gave His Son up for you is on the throne. The Man who loves you and gave Himself up for you is seated by His side, there to love you.

You come boldly now because they have made you a new creation (2Cor 5:17), the righteousness of God in Christ (2Cor 5:21). You are now His very righteousness, a partaker of the Divine Nature (2Pt 1:4). You are a son, daughter, and He is your own Father.

Can't you see what it can mean to you to come into a throne room under such conditions? There is your Advocate. There is your Savior. There is your Lord on your side. Can't you hear him say, "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? How will He not with Him freely give us all things?" (Rom 8:31-32)

There is no sense of unworthiness. You become His righteousness. Jesus is your Sponsor. You have a legal right to stand in His presence without a sense of guilt or inferiority if you are His (Heb 4:16). (Advanced Bible Course; pg. 303--305)

Can't you see what it means to have a Savior, a High Priest, a Mediator, an Intercessor, an Advocate and a lover in the highest seat of authority in the universe?

The following references were used in this study

I John Study Guide (by R. J. Utley)
With the Word Bible Commentary (by Wiersby)
Wilmington's Bible handbook
Holman Treasury of Key Bible Words
The Bible Guide, by A. Knowles
Advanced Bible Course; Studies in the deeper life, by EW Kenyon