

Message #3**I John 1:5-10**

There is a term we throw around in Christian circles that I am afraid we know very little about—the term is “fellowship.” To most, fellowship means eating some dinner or going to a gathering and talking to each other about the family or job or some other interest. We slap each other on the back and then go home thinking “My, what great fellowship.”

The Greek word for “fellowship” is the word “koinonia.” The idea behind this word is a common sharing, which includes sharing sociably, communicatively, sympathetically, and contributively (G. Abbott-Smith, p. 251). Fellowship, Biblically speaking, is more partnership and companionship, a mutual joint sharing. Now the church is to be a place of fellowship. It is to be a place where God’s people share life in fellowship with God and with each other. We are to have communion with God and each other.

The big problem we have concerning deep fellowship with God is the problem of sin!

IF WE ARE TO HAVE THE KIND OF INTIMATE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD THAT GOD LONGS TO HAVE WITH US, WE MUST MEET HIS CONDITIONS FOR THIS KIND OF FELLOWSHIP.

What will immediately catch your eye if you carefully read these verses are the “if” clauses. There are five of them beginning with **verse 6**.

PART #1 – The certainty we must have about God in order to have fellowship with God. **1:5**

Every single verb used in this verse is in the indicative mood, meaning it is a statement of fact. To have fellowship with God, one must begin with a proper view of God and John says there are two factual realities which must be agreed to: 1) God is light; 2) God has no darkness in Him. The Greek text uses a double negative, meaning there is absolutely not one possible hint of darkness or evil ever in God.

God is totally and completely set apart from any other creation. He is absolutely holy and He is absolutely pure. The God of the Bible is emphatically light and non-darkness. Now John says we heard this message “from Him.” Who told them this about God? Jesus Christ!

PART #2 – The conditions we must meet before God in order to have fellowship with God.
1:6-10

The “if” clauses present five probable hypothetical cases which existed in the thinking of some believers in the Church:

Condition #1 - If we are to have fellowship with God, we cannot continually be living a lie and secretly be living in sin. **1:6**

There are many people who “say” they have fellowship with God, and frankly many who say it are liars! They make this statement (aorist tense) at some point in time. They make the claim they have fellowship with God, but they are living a lie. The continual, habitual practice of their life is that they walk in darkness. They continually and habitually (present tense) walk in darkness. This describes a lifestyle pattern. It means to habitually live life in the sphere of evil and sin. Fellowship with God does not mean one is sinless perfect, but it does mean one is not sinfully pursuant.

Condition #2 - If we are to have fellowship with God, we must continually be living a life that walks in the light. **1:7**

We must walk in the light, which means we must allow God’s Word and Spirit to shine on dark areas and we must face them and deal with them. If we want fellowship with God, we must continually allow God to expose dark areas through His Word and Spirit. Notice the text says walking “in” the light, not “according to” the light. The important thing here is where we walk, not how we walk. Live life “in” the Word and it will clean up your walk and life. There are two wonderful blessings for one who does: 1) He will have continual fellowship with others; 2) He will have continual cleansing from God. The pronoun “another” is another of the same kind, others of the same status.

Condition #3 - If we are to have fellowship with God, we cannot be saying we are sinless perfect. **1:8**

Receiving a new nature does not eliminate the old nature. People who say they don’t sin deceive themselves and the truth is not continually in them. Here is a very important key to fellowship with God—**His truth must be continually allowed to work in us.**

Condition #4 - If we are to have fellowship with God, we must continually confess our sin. **1:9**

The Greek verb “confess” is an iterative present, meaning to confess as a practice for each sin. There is to be an interval of confession after each sin. The word “confess” means to enter into conformable agreement about the sin we have committed (Smith, p. 318). There is an article before the noun “sin,” meaning we must confess the **specific** sin to God in total agreement with what He says about it. This is not a generic prayer. This is naming the sin, pin-pointing it to God! If we do this we have continual fellowship with God. God cannot withhold forgiveness because of His faithfulness and justice.

Condition #5 - If we are to have fellowship with God, we must not continually say we have no sin. **1:10**

If we are to have fellowship with God, we must meet these conditional requirements!