

“Can We Really Have Fellowship with God?”

1 John 1:1-10

INTRO;

Can we really have a growing and deepening fellowship with God Himself? One of my favorite books is *The Pursuit of God* by A. W. Tozer. The premise of the book is that God wants us to walk in fellowship with Him. Tozer did not invent this idea. The Psalmist in several places talked about the fellowship he enjoyed with God. In **Psalm 62:1-2** David wrote about his waiting for God alone.

“Truly my soul silently waits for God; From Him comes my salvation. He only is my Rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved.”
David also wrote in **Psalm 63:1**,

“O God, You are my God; early will I seek You. My soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.”

In our text today, **1 John 1:10**, the Apostle John tells us that we can have a real and growing fellowship with God. This fellowship is built on three realities. First, this fellowship is made possible by the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Second, it grows out of God's self-revelation, and finally, it is enabled by our own confession.

- I. *Christ's Incarnation (v. 1-4)*
- II. *God's Self-Revelation (v. 5-7)*
- III. *Our Confession (v. 8-10)*

I. Christ's Incarnation (v. 1-3)

A. ***“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full”***(1 John 1:1-4).

B. We can really know and fellowship with the Living God even though we are sinners if we come through the Lord Jesus Christ. John begins his letter with an extended discussion of the evidence of a physical incarnation. Why does John do that?

1. The historical reason is probably because some were falling into an error that taught that the Lord Jesus did not really physically come to earth.

2. The important purpose of this revelation is so we understand that the Lord Jesus, the eternal life that John describes actually did come in a fully human body. He had to come in a body so that He could die on the cross for our sin. The Apostle Paul reminded us in **1 Corinthians 15:3-4** what the Gospel we believe is.

"For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."

For the Lord Jesus who was God the Son to die, be buried and rise again, He had to have a body. He had to be a real man and dwell among us. Before we can fellowship with God and with the Lord Jesus Christ, His Son, we must come to Him through faith in what He did on Calvary.

2. Without an incarnation there is no salvation from sin, and without salvation there is no fellowship.

C. Vs. 3 is very important.

"That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ."

The Apostle John declares this truth about this because without this truth we cannot have fellowship with each other or with the Father or His Son Jesus Christ. Our fellowship with each other and God Himself is anchored in the reality of salvation. You must believe in the incarnation and be saved in order to fellowship with God.

D. Finally, John underlines the fruit that flows from our fellowship with God. **"fullness of joy(?)**. The New Testament tells us a lot about how our fellowship with God should produce real joy in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. (**John 17:12-13**)

"While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves."

II. God's Self-Revelation (v. 5-7)

A. Our fellowship with God is built upon the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is where our fellowship begins because that is how we enter into our initial relationship with our holy God. Our sins are forgiven and we begin our pilgrimage on the road to heaven.

Second, our fellowship is also based on God's self-revelation. (**1 John 1:5-7**)

"This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to 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 practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

B. God is absolute light this is because God is totally holy. There are no spots of sin or corruption in Him. So, if we are to fellowship with God, we also need to be holy in a practical sense, John told us this in vs. 6,

"If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth."

C. He turns the coin over in vs. 7;

"But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

Can we really have fellowship and share in common with the Living God? Yes, we can but, it has to be in the realm of holiness. This is a major problem. How do we, who are unholy and sinful, fellowship with God who is sinless?

Here is the answer: ***"the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."***

How can that be? How can we have continued cleansing from our sins so we can walk in fellowship with the living God and His Son the Lord Jesus Christ?

III. Our Confession (v. 8-10)

A. This question very important question leads directly to our third basis of our fellowship with God. **(1)** Our fellowship is built upon Christ's incarnation. There cannot be a living growing fellowship with the Living God apart from our salvation in Christ. **(2)** Second, there cannot be a living growing fellowship between us unless there is a practice of practical holiness. **(3)** Finally, there cannot be a living growing fellowship with God and His Son unless there is continual confession of our sins.

B. John begins by giving us an example of one approach to sin. (vs. 8)

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

This means if we try to say that we do not sin. There are some who would declare that they are not sinners. This verse says two things about them. First, they are self-deceived. They are people who have no sense of sin, so they doubtlessly have no salvation. Second, the truth does not abide in them. They are ignorant of the revelation of God and it has not taken root in this person's heart.

C. The second possibility is found in **verse 10**.

"If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us."

The second problem is if we insist that we have never sinned at all. This means that God is wrong and we again probably do not know Him at all or we have a seared conscience and cannot hear the convicting voice of the Holy Spirit.

D. The way that we walk in the light as He is in the light is by actively practicing vs. 9;

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

First, this is a continuous confession. It literally says that if we keep on confessing our sins, He keeps on forgiving our sins and cleansing us from all unrighteousness.

This tells us how **vs. 7** works. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses our sin positionally and practically as we confess them to God.

So, can we actually have a living growing fellowship with God and the Lord Jesus Christ? The answer is yes. We can have it because Jesus came and died to make it available. We can have it if we will seek to walk in personal holiness with God. Finally, we can have it if we will make a personal confession of our sin to God continually.