

That You May Know – 1 John 1:5-10

“We pursue being a disciple making family: *surrendered to Jesus, transformed by the gospel, and **saturated in His word.***”

John points out in this text that what we say should line up with what we do. The Gnostics were promoting the belief that all things material were evil therefore what one did in the flesh really didn't matter. John clearly corrects this thought process and clearly ties salvation in Christ to a life that is changed by the grace of Christ. It begins somewhat of a “lie detector” test for people by the phrase “if we say.” He deals directly with the issue of sin. Maybe a topic that we don't like to talk about or discuss and in recent years has been explained away or ignored all together. Let's look at a few questions from this text.

Discussion Questions* -- *do not feel the pressure to cover them all

1. In verse 5 John opens with the importance of proclaiming the good news message of Jesus' rescue to a broken world. We see that Jesus is the light and in him is no darkness at all. In the gospel of John 1:4 points out that in Christ was life and this life was the light of men. Jesus is the life. John shares that his reason for proclaiming this message is so that those in darkness may experience the joy he has with others who are in Christ. How would you describe your urgency and even desire to share this good news message with a broken world? I know we all say we believe this to be good news bringing eternal life and joy to those that are spiritually dead. What hinders us from making this proclamation a bedrock of our journey with Christ? After all it is a command that He gave us. What excuses, obstacles, or hinderances keep you from being obedient to this command?
2. John wanted to be crystal clear and let the people know that God is the one who determines what sin is. It is important that we allow God to define what sin is and not our opinion, feelings, culture, or desires. Wayne Grudem defines sin as: **Definition of Sin** – *Sin is any failure to conform to the moral law of God in act, attitude, or nature. This definition shows that sin consists not only of particular actions, such as stealing, lying or committing murder, but also of attitudes that are contrary to what God requires of us (Wayne Grudem).* How does seeing God's view of sin impact our lives as believers? We all have a point where we tolerate sin in our own lives and hold court on others. We become critical of others because of their sin but neglect our own. How can us recognizing our own ongoing sin lead us to worship, evangelism, forgiveness, discipleship, love for others, and prayer? What areas of disobedience in your life do you excuse and label something other than sin? Maybe “baptize it in Christian liberty?”

3. John points out in the famous verse, 1:9, that if we confess our sins God is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins. To “confess” means to agree with God about that sin. We know there are two aspects to forgiveness. One is justification and the other is sanctification. Justification is accomplished through the work of Christ on the cross. We don’t lose our salvation or need to pray for salvation over and over. Sanctification is progressive and we are continuing to be transformed from our old nature and way of life to look more like Christ. What are the downsides and results of willful disobedience to the work of God in our lives in this area? Describe why it is so easy to practice willful disobedience. What are ways that the “fellowship” of other believers can help us in this area?
4. John points out that if we say we have no sin then we lie to others, to ourselves, and ultimately lie to/about God. How are you seeing this play out in our culture today? How do you see this play out in the modern day church and among Christians? Why is it so important that Christians deal with their sin?
5. Who do you know today that needs to hear the proclamation of this good news of the rescue of Jesus? Would you take a moment and pray for them? Who do you know that is flirting with sin or maybe someone who is engulfed in disobedience? Would you pray for them?