

I. Introduction and review.

- A. John writes that you may enjoy fellowship with God. 1:3,5
- B. John refutes three big lies of those who reject the Apostolic witness. 1:6-2:2
 - 1. They lie by claiming fellowship with God, while walking in the darkness. 1:6-7
 - 2. They deceive themselves by claiming to have no sin (nature). 1:8-9
 - 3. They call God a liar by claiming not to have sinned. 1:10-2:2
- C. The doctrine of sin is still under attack.

II. Don't deny your sin! 1:8,10

- A. What is sin?
 - 1. God made mankind perfect, but we rebelled. Gen. 3 Rom. 5:12 Ecc. 7:29
 - 2. Sin is a violation of God's law. 3:4 Ex. 20:1f Mt. 22:36-40
 - 3. Sin is rejecting God's way and going your own way. Isa. 53:6
 - 4. You can be guilty of sin by commission or omission. 3:17 Js. 4:17 2:15f 1:27
 - 5. It is possible to sin without fully realizing it. Ps. 90:8
- B. What is the difference between the false boasts in verses 8 and 10?
 - 1. In verse 8 there is a denial of a sin nature.
 - 2. In verse 10 they deny that they have committed acts of sin.
- C. Who could possibly say he has no sin?
 - 1. The gnostics of John's day believed that their spiritual enlightenment exempted them from sin.
 - 2. Some professing Christians claim to have reached a state of spiritual perfection. I Kings 8:46 Phil. 3:12-14 Rom. 7:25 Pr. 20:9
 - 3. Most people presume they are basically good .
 - 4. Many think their good deeds offset their bad deeds. Luke 18:11-12 Isa. 64:6
 - 5. We blame our bad acts on others. Rom. 2:15
 - 6. Do some blame God for their sin? Js. 1:13 I Co. 10:13
 - 7. Most people minimize their sins.
 - 8. Some will admit they are sinful, but will not confess to particular sins. 1:10
 - 9. Some reject the very concept of sin. Isa. 5:20
- D. When you deny your sinfulness: v. 8b
 - 1. You delude yourself. Dt. 13:6
 - 2. You prove that you do not possess the truth. 2:4 John 8:44
- E. When you boast that you have not sinned: v. 10b
 - 1. You call God a liar. 5:10 Ro. 3:4,10f,23 Isa. 53:6 Pr. 20:9 I Kings 8:46 Ps. 14:3
 - 2. His Word has no place in your life. John 17:17,20 4:50 8:51-52
- F. How should you approach a person who denies his sinfulness?
 - 1. Deep down you know about God and His righteous law. Rom. 1:18-20,32
 - 2. You need to understand the heart meaning of God's law. Mt. 5:21f 22:36f Ex. 20

III. Confess your sins and God will forgive you. 1:9

- A. What kind of confession does God seek? 2:23
1. Agree with God that you are a sinner. Ps. 32:3-5 Pr. 28:13
 2. Accept full responsibility for your sins.
 3. Come with a heart of repentance.
 4. Confess your particular sins to Him.
 5. Is John speaking of the initial confession of sin at conversion, or the ongoing confession in the life of a believer? 2:1,12 Ps. 32:5 51:1f 139:23-24 Mt. 6:11
 6. Is John speaking of confession to men or to God? Ps. 51:4 I Tim. 2:5
- B. Hope in the character of God! Ex. 34:6-7 Micah 7:18-20
1. He is faithful to His Word. 1:9 Deut. 32:4 Jer. 31:34 Isa. 1:18 Ps. 103:8-14 89:1-4 I Cor. 1:9 II Ti. 2:13 He. 10:23
 2. He is just. 1:7 2:2,29 Rom. 3:23-26 Isa. 51:5 53:4-6,11
- C. His promises are great.
1. He will forgive you. Lu. 15:20-24 Ps. 103:12
 2. He will cleanse you. 1:7 Ti. 2:14 Heb. 9:23 Isa. 1:18 Ps. 51:1-2 Eph. 5:27 Co. 1:22
 3. What a blessing it is to finally stop hiding and to be right with God! Ps. 32:1
 4. Without confession there is no forgiveness or cleansing.
- D. Apply these principles in relation to one another. Eph. 4:32 Mt. 18:21f 5:23-24
1. If you have wronged your brother, seek his forgiveness. Mt. 5:23-24
 2. Forgive as you have been forgiven. Eph. 4:32 Mt. 18:21f

IV. Concluding applications.

- A. Confess your sins.
- B. Look to Jesus Whose blood cleanses repentant sinners. 1:7

Discussion questions.

1. What is sin?
2. Why don't people want to admit they are sinners?
3. What kinds of excuses do people use to avoid being charged with sin?
4. What are the consequences of denying one's sin(s)?
5. How does one's denial of sin make God a liar?
6. How would you try to prove to someone that he/she is a sinner?
7. What kind of confession does God seek?
8. How would you answer someone who says you only have to ask God for forgiveness once, at conversion, and that Christians need make no more confession?
9. How does God's character (faithfulness and justice) give comfort to sinners?
10. How can God justly forgive sin?