

## ~1 John~

## Lesson 6- The Assurance of our Fellowship

Let's begin by reading our text today- **1 John 1:5-7**

John's focus in this letter is to strengthen faithful Christians and assure them of eternal life in Jesus. John is focused on the assurance of our fullness of joy and our everlasting life in Him. John wants his flock to have the fullness of everything God has to offer his children. And why would you want anything less? When you know and fully understand what Jesus did for you, that He rescued us out of darkness and translated us into His marvelous Light, into the kingdom of His Son, how could you not want to be as close to Him as you possibly can?

This is John's heart as he is writing this letter. This is a letter of assurance to those who believe. 1 John 5:13 says he is writing this letter to those who believe so that you might know that you have eternal life and might continue to believe in His name.

As I shared last week, this is a letter of assurance against the false heresies of the Gnostics who claimed they had fellowship with God, but instead walked in darkness and their behavior did not match what they confessed. John gives us the assurance that we might know the spirit of Truth verses the spirit of error and be fully assured in our eternal life in Him. This is the heart of the letter and in verse 7 today we see these proofs of assurance that by this we know we are in fellowship with the Light.

In 1 John 1:6-7, John is making these statements with no compromise, just black and white. Those who are in fellowship with God will not walk in darkness, but will be committed to the Truth, and he gives us three proofs of being in fellowship with the Light: 1) we will walk in the Light as He is in the Light, 2) we will be in fellowship with the brethren and love them, and 3) the blood of Jesus is continually cleansing us from all sin.

Last week we looked at the first proof, walking in the Light as He is in the Light, and today we will be looking at these next two proofs, fellowship with the brethren and the cleansing, sanctifying work of the blood of Jesus.

Remember, all this stems from the message that John heard from Jesus, that God is Light and in Him is no darkness at all. So if we diagram the structure of this entire statement, it would flow something like this:

(View on screen)

John is constantly using the statement, "by this we know...", **1 John 2:5-6**. We could imply this to verse 7, "by this we know that we have fellowship with Him...because we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. Let's focus on the first proof: fellowship with the brethren. Remember what Jesus said in **John 17:20-21**.

In **1 John 2:9-11**, John equates having fellowship with the brethren to loving the brethren, and uses this as a proof of walking in the Light or walking in darkness, **1 John 3:10, 14-15**. Why is one who hates his brother a murderer? These Gnostics were killing the brethren spiritually because they were swaying them from the Truth and bringing them down the path of destruction, 1 Tim 6:20-21; 2 Tim 2:14-17.

Having fellowship with the brethren, loving the brethren, being one with the brethren are proofs of being in fellowship with the Father because this was the purpose of the cross. To bring reconciliation with God and man as well as to break down the wall of separation that we might be one body in Him, Eph 2:14-18; 4:11-13.

Lets move on to the next proof of our fellowship in Him and that is that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

This starts a discussion of sin that will take us through 1 John 2:2. So the next five verses will take us into the origins of sin, the need of a Savior, the payment of sin, our forgiveness... But today I want to focus on why the blood of Jesus is a proof of our fellowship with God.

If you look closely at this word "cleanses", it is the word, katharizei, καθαρίζει. This is a present active indicative from the root word, katharizo, καθαρίζω, meaning to continually cleanse. The blood of Jesus is continually and actively cleansing our sin. You might say, I thought His sacrifice paid the price for sin in full once and for all.

And you are correct. His blood cleansed us once and for all when He presented His blood in the holy of holies to the Father, and Jesus administered this gift of grace on us when we received the Light through faith in His sacrifice, Heb 8:26-27; 9:11-15, 24-26. The blood of Jesus paid the price for every sin that you will ever commit, past, present and future. From this point on, if you are in Christ, there is no penalty for sin according to the Law. Our sins were paid for, Jesus bore the penalty of sin on Himself when He was crucified on the cross, and we will never be condemned, *katakrima*, *κατάκριμα*, for sin, Rom 8:1. This is justification, 1 Pet 1:18-19; Eph 1:7; Rev 5:9 are just a few examples.

But here in 1 John, Scripture says that His blood continually cleanses us from all sin. So what is the difference between being cleansed once and being continually cleansed? The difference is the cleansing of the spirit and the cleansing of the soul. It is the difference between justification and sanctification.

Our initial cleansing, which isn't actually a cleansing, but being completely born again and made new. Our spirit was not cleansed but re-born from above. This is our justification. When we are made child of God, born from above. We are reconciled to God because the debt and penalty of sin was paid for by the blood of Jesus, **Ezek 36:26-27**.

Ezekiel goes on to speak of our sanctification out from our re-brith, **Ezek 36:33**. This is what John speaks of in 1 John 1:7. This is our continual cleansing, *katharizo*, *καθαρίζω*, through His blood, which is our sanctification. Notice that our cleansing, *katharizo*, *καθαρίζω*, is what enables us to dwell in Him and have fellowship with Him continually. It is the cleansing of our soul that enables us to stand before God, who is holy and Righteous, being unashamed and perfect before Him, having been cleansed by the blood of Jesus.

I want to read you some Scripture pertaining to this concept that we are enabled to dwell in Him through and because of sanctification.

Hebrews 9:14- how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse, *katharizo*, *καθαρίζω*, your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

This cleansing, *katharizo*, *καθαρίζω*, is a direct cleansing of the soul toward sanctification. This cleansing is how we can serve God. Those who have a cleansed conscience will come boldly to the throne of grace. They will not be ashamed of Him. A clean conscience will come to the Light because He knows he is forgiven. A doubting conscience will flee from God because he cannot stand before a Righteous and Holy God, **1 John 2:28**; Gospel of **John 3:20**.

Hebrews 10:22- let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure, *katharos*, *καθαρός*, water.

Hebrews 10:14- For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified, *hagiazō*, *ἀγιάζω*.

2 Corinthians 7:1- Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse, *katharizo*, *καθαρίζω*, ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Notice we have a part to play in this. Paul tells us to cleanse ourselves. How do we cleanse ourselves? Just a few verses earlier Paul tells us not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. It is ultimately God who cleanses us, but we must make the decision to avoid sin, resist sin in our lives, humble and submit ourself to His Word, and let the sanctifying work of the Word do its work.

James 4:7-10<sup>7</sup> Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup> Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse, *katharizo*, *καθαρίζω*, *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify, *hagnizo*, *ἀγνίζω*, *your* hearts, *you* double-minded.

Notice that cleansing and sanctification work hand in hand

2 Timothy 2:21-22 <sup>21</sup> Therefore if anyone cleanses, *ekkathairo*, *ἐκκαθαίρω*, himself from the latter (the vessels of dishonor), he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, *hagiazō*, *ἀγιάζω*, and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. <sup>22</sup> Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure, *katharos*, *καθαρός*, heart.

1 Peter 1:22- Since you have purified, hagnizo, ἁγνίζω, your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure, katharos, καθαρός, heart,

Revelation 19:7-8- <sup>7</sup> Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” <sup>8</sup> And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean, katharos, καθαρός, and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

James 1:27- Pure, katharos, καθαρός, and undefiled religion (piety or worship) before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, *and* to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

1 John 2:15- Do not love the world or the things in the world...

This goes hand in hand with our discussion last week. This is walking in the Light as He is in the Light. Humbling and submitting yourself to Him and His Word. This is the walk of sanctification.

It is walking in this newness of life and not letting sin reign in your mortal body, Romans 6:4, 12-13. It is being enlightened to walk in His Light. To put off the old man and put on the new man, Eph 4:22-24. It is walking as children of the Light, Eph 5:8

The walk of sanctification is committing to Jesus to allow His blood to continually cleanse your soul from all sin. We live in a fallen world, and sin is all around us, and the dead corpse of sin from our old man is still strapped to our backs, therefore, we must fight every day to put to death the deeds of the flesh and not let sin reign in our mortal bodies. How do we do this? Through His Word and the walk of sanctification. Remember in John 17:15-17, Jesus didn't pray that we would be raptured as soon as we became a Christian, but that we would be kept from the evil one while we are on the earth. And how did He say He would do this? By the sanctifying work of the Word of Truth.

Jesus demonstrated this with the washing of the disciples' feet at the last supper. The tradition was that before someone would come to a dinner like this, they would bathe themselves completely before they came to the meal and when they arrived, only their feet would need washing because of the dirt of the road. The same is with us. At the time of our justification, we have been completely washed by the blood of Jesus. All sin has been removed, now only the dust of the world needs to be cleansed from our feet, **John 13:5-11**. Our spirit is clean, untainted by sin because of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. But our feet, which is a type of our soul, gets dirty as we walk in this sinful world, and we need the blood of Jesus to continually cleanse us from the stain of sin.

Jesus gives us another analogy of the process of sanctification in **John 15:1-3**. The Vinedresser, who is the Father, cleanses and prunes the effects of sin from our soul as we walk through this world so that we can continue to bear fruit.

This is how you know you are in fellowship with the Light: 1) when you walk in the light as He is in the Light, 2) you have fellowship and a love of the brethren, and 3) the blood of Jesus is actively and continually cleansing you of all your sin. How do you know you are being cleansed of all sin? Because you are being cleansed and sanctified by the Word. When His Word speaks to you and you listen and you shape your life to walk in the Light. When you draw near to Him, and the desire of your heart is to serve Him and abide in Him. This is proof that you are in fellowship with Him and the blood of Jesus is continually cleansing you from all sin.

This doesn't mean you will never sin, in fact we will sin, and when we do, the blood of Jesus is continually cleansing us from all sin, so we can continually be drawn to Him and submit to Him.

This is the assurance that John wants for the children of God. This is why he said I am declaring this message to you so that you may have fellowship with Him and have the fullness of joy and pleasures forever in Him, 1 John 1:3-4.