

## 1 John Series

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#### The Preamble Continued: Fellowship with the Father Distinguished from Fellowship with the Son

##### I. Review & Introduction:

1:1–4	Prologue—call to sharing eternal life with God through the apostles
1:5–2:11	Preamble—daily interacting with the Triune God
	1:5–2:2 fellowship with God the Father at His Holy Integrity
	2:3–8 fellowship with God the Son at His Commandments

##### I. Fellowship with the Father who is unseen and not incarnate

Since the Father is unseen, our point of contact with Him is His nature that shines through the Son just as the nature of a person we know becomes manifest as we perceive what kind of a person we are dealing with. We must come to terms with His holy nature via confession without vows, pledges, self-atonement.

*“If we confess our sins* (acknowledge them for what they are—not “mistakes,” “accidents”—but authentic choices we made knowing we were violating His righteousness in thought, word, and/or deed)

*He is faithful* (will do what this text says not tomorrow, not ten years from now, but today)

*and just* (will not compromise His holiness in doing this)

*to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness*” (as Jesus cleaned the disciples’ feet in the upper room **John 13:5–10**; here He cleans “unrighteousness”, which probably refers to attitudes, outlooks, human good, etc., that haven’t yet manifested as specific choices)

Must recognize the reality of a two-category existence (Creator/creature reality—Slide 2):

Example: **Psalms 51:4** “*against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight.*” This is the correct response of the three possible ones (Slide 3).

Self-inflicted misery when we don’t come to terms with our heavenly Father

**Psalms 32:2–4**

**Psalms 38:1–8**

**Prov. 14:30**

**Prov. 17:22**

Conclusion: need to spend some quiet time searching our hearts for lurking sins, esp., bitterness toward other people; just understand that temptation is not sin (**Heb. 4:15**)

**Psalms 139:23** “search”

**Prov. 6:16–19** Two times referring to thoughts, three times to words, and two times to deeds—we need to consider all three areas paying particular attention to our words

**Matt 6:14–15** we are to have an attitude of grace toward others who make offenses against us

## **II. Fellowship with the Son who is seen and heard (2:3–8)**

Since the Son is the only Person of the Trinity who is incarnate and the center of all verbal revelation from the Godhead, our point of contact with Him centers on what He has spoken. Note the centrality of Jesus' words in **John 14:9–10** and **17:8–21** (Slide 4).

**3 By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.** John treats Jesus' words as truth that must be adhered to throughout our lives. It is this insistence that leads John to keep using the grapevine metaphor to teach us in this epistle to “abide.”

**4 He who says, “I know Him” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.** To slack off and disregard the Word of God is to lose fellowship with God because such disregard fails to honor the Son, Who is the only visible Person of the Trinity. John seems to view broken fellowship as a state wherein the truth of the Word of God is no longer operational through such a person. We can observe this phenomenon in the behavior of theologians who respect the authority of the Word of God and view the New Testament words as truly representing Jesus as God Incarnate in contrast to liberal, unbelieving theologians who assert that the “real” historical Jesus is not what the New Testament says He is. (Slide 5).

**5a But whosoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him.** Note John's antithetical style in **2:3–5**. Now we observe John's first use of “love” and throughout the rest of this epistle it is a challenge to the reader to discern the two kinds of genitive case—the love a believer has for God and the love God has for us. Later in this epistle John clears matters by stating that the love of God that is “perfected” (Greek: *teleioo*) is from His Spirit given to us when we abide in Him (4:12). We love only because love has been initiated by God, and when that love is expressed so that others can observe it—when it is “operational”—it is perfected in the sense that it attains the purpose for which it was given.

**5b By this we know that we are in Him.** Again, John says that we can know that we are in fellowship with God when we honor His Son's revelation above all else.

**2:6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.** If it is the same Spirit motivating us and the same Word instructing us, then our walk when we are in fellowship ought to follow the model Jesus set in the New Testament gospel narratives.

**2:7 The old commandment is the Word that you heard have had from the beginning.** Here is John's oft-repeated refrain that the Word hasn't changed over the years since the apostles began teaching in Jerusalem.

**2:8 a new commandment . . . which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.** There is something new, however, in that the preaching of the gospel by the Christian community as it expanded outward from the nation Israel is the true “enlightenment” that has begun throughout the world. Note John's language in

**John 1:4–9; 3:19–21** that makes the stunning claim that beginning with the Incarnation the world has at last seen the maximum revelation in the Person and word of Jesus Christ.

### **III. Conclusion**

According to John fellowship with the Father—our point of contact with Him—dwells upon His uncompromisable integrity and necessity of confession as a *graciously given tool that transcends all psycho-social techniques*.

Fellowship with the Son dwells on upon the authority of His teachings (i.e., the New Testament) because the content of the Son's words is identical to the Father's thoughts. Thus, Jesus' words *transcend the words of all philosophers and religious leaders*.