

**A FORMULA FOR FELLOWSHIP
(1 John 1:5-10)**

- I. John points out a fact (vs 5).**
- A. John reveals a message that the apostles heard from Jesus, namely that God is light and in Him is no darkness.
 - B. What does it mean that God is light?
 - 1. Woods said this sums up the divine character on the intellectual side as God is love sums up His moral nature.
 - 2. Light represents truth, holiness, goodness.
 - 3. This sums up the moral character of God.
 - 4. Everything that is good comes from God.
 - C. This is summed up by the last phrase - in Him is no darkness.
 - 1. Darkness, of course, is the opposite of light.
 - 2. Darkness represents all that is evil, ignorant and sinful.
 - 3. The Greek is emphatic in that it says none whatsoever.
 - 4. It signifies that there is not one particle of darkness.
 - D. This is in contrast to heathenism and all the sinful practices that were involved in it.
 - 1. It led people to sin.
 - 2. The very act of worship of heathen deities was steeped in sin.
 - E. This also is a shot at the Gnostics that taught you should indulge in the flesh.
 - F. How could you have fellowship with a Being that had no particle of darkness when you were a practitioner of such?
 - G. The fact is, the One with whom we have a desire for fellowship is totally devoid of sinfulness or darkness.
 - H. We must understand that as a beginning point for fellowship.
- II. John then shows us a falsehood (vs 6, 8, 10).**
- A. There were those that believed they could have fellowship with God but not do what He said.
 - 1. Incredibly, there are those who believe they have done nothing wrong.
 - 2. Prussian king Frederick the Great was once touring a Berlin prison. The prisoners fell on their knees before him to proclaim their innocence -- except for one man, who remained silent. Frederick called to him, "Why are you here?" "Armed robbery, Your Majesty," was the reply. "And are you guilty?" "Yes indeed, Your Majesty, I deserve my punishment." Frederick then summoned the jailer and ordered him, "Release this guilty wretch at once. I will not have him kept in this prison where he will corrupt all the fine innocent people who occupy it."
 - B. Some lied by saying they were in fellowship with God but would not do truth.
 - 1. Jesus revealed to John that truth is God's Word.
 - 2. This shows that there were those that would not follow God's Word who were saying they were in fellowship with God.
 - C. Instead, these people were walking in darkness.
 - 1. To walk refers to the whole of one's conduct.
 - 2. The psalmist said that the word of God was a lamp or a light (Ps 119:105).
 - 3. This person who walks in darkness is not walking in truth, or in God's Word.
 - D. This person is sinning by lying and by his actions, walking in darkness.
 - E. This person says they have no sin.
 - 1. There is no way to walk in darkness and not have sin.
 - 2. They have deceived themselves into believing they are right with God in their sinful walk
 - F. Sadly, there is no way for mere man to rise above sin.
 - 1. It is around us, we are tempted by it and we commit sin from time to time.
 - 2. There is no way that we can ever say we have no sin.
 - G. Some of these people were even saying they had not sinned.
 - H. They went from saying they were in fellowship with God while in sin, to saying they were not in a condition of sin, to now saying they had never sinned.
 - I. Jesus came to die for the sins of mankind.

1. If it were possible to for someone to have never sinned he would not need a savior.
 2. If there was no sin in man, God had His own Son murdered.
- J. For someone to make the claim that they were sinless was to slap God in the face and make a mockery of His Son's death.
- K. It is a falsehood to believe that we don't need a Savior and that we don't have sin.
- L. There is no way to have fellowship with God while believing these ideas.

III. John reveals the way to fellowship (vs 7, 9).

- A. The only way to have fellowship with God is to walk in the light.
1. Again, the Word of God is described as light.
 2. This is the truth that we are to do.
 3. Those that were in sin were not doing or living according to the Word.
- B. When we follow the Bible and fill ourselves with it, we are in the light and this brings fellowship.
- C. By being in fellowship with God and other Christians we have access to the blood of Christ.
1. This reference to blood is a shot at the Gnostics.
 2. They either did not believe in a real Jesus or a real Jesus dying on the cross.
 3. This verse shows that it is the shed blood of the Son of God that cleanses us from sin.
- D. We are told how to access that blood: by confessing our sins.
- E. It is interesting to note that the sinners were saying things: "if we say..."
1. We can say a lot of things and have no depth of regret.
 2. To confess sin indicates a realization of guilt and a desire for forgiveness.
 3. The word is derived from a word that means to say the same thing.
 4. When we confess sin, there has been a dialogue with God and you are saying what He has told you.
 5. This is done through His word, having the truth in us.
 6. God speaks through His word and convicts us of sin, whatever type of sin it may be.
 7. We then show our agreement with God that sin is in our lives by confessing that sin and seeking forgiveness.
 8. If the word is not in us, we can't speak the same thing as God because we don't know what He has said.
- F. The tense confess is written in indicates a continued state.
1. We keep on confessing sin.
 2. Whenever it is present we confess it and seek forgiveness for it.
- G. When confession is made God is faithful and just to forgive us.
1. We are cleansed by the blood of Christ.
 2. This cleansing removes all the sins that we confess to God.
 3. The tense of cleanseth is the same as confess - it keeps on cleansing as we keep on confessing.
- H. Only in Christ are fellowship and cleansing possible.