

**1JN 2.1-2 (NKJV)** ~ *My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. <sup>2</sup> And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.*

We find comfort at the idea of **finding fellowship** with our God—who provides redemption as our **advocate** and **propitiation** (ie: the sacrificial satisfaction for our blood guilt). **But what does it mean to have Christ as our advocate?**

**1JN 2.3-6 (NKJV)** ~ *Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. <sup>4</sup> He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. <sup>5</sup> But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. <sup>6</sup> He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.*

In Christ, we have forgiveness. In Christ, we have satisfaction for our sin. But with that comes an expectation. If we want to **find true fellowship** with the Father and the Son—to say nothing of the Apostles and all other faithful Christians—we must start by keeping His commandments.

You can claim Christianity (the Gnostic teachers certainly did). But if your Christianity is not bound up in obedience to His commands and in following in His steps, we will never **find fellowship** with Him.

**1JN 2.7-11 (NKJV)** ~ *Brethren, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning. <sup>8</sup> Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining. <sup>9</sup> He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. <sup>10</sup> He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. <sup>11</sup> But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.*

**EX:** What’s an example of what it means to walk in the light? What’s an example of what it means to keep His commandments? It starts by showing true love for your brethren—fixing your eyesight to match that of Christ.

**1JN 3.16-18 (NKJV)** ~ *By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. <sup>17</sup> But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? <sup>18</sup> My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.*

## INVITATION

#655 [Exp-NTGE]  
08/16/2025

Finding Fellowship  
PC \_\_\_ Pchd \_\_\_\_\_

1JN 1.5-2.11

**QUESTION:** How can we find fellowship with God and one another?

## TRN TO 1JN 1

### INTRODUCTION

**ILL—Earliest Attendance at Crystal Lake** (being invited to “fellowship meals”; 100+ members in a small building; being invited over to hang out with friends, and eat food) As a result, to me, the word, “Fellowship” is still intrinsically linked to having a meal.

But of course, fellowship isn’t a thing on the calendar: it’s a thing we have. And as I came to understand that as a youth, I appreciated it all the more. For I’d always been an awkward person with few friends. To find a group of people who were happy to have me and see me was a blessing: especially in high school, when I was feeling lonely and without real connections.

### BACKGROUND

John wrote to a people who were struggling with false teachings and with divisions. They were dealing with a pervasive doctrine that taught the “unreality of Christ”—the separation of divinity and humanity, which was the exact opposite of Christ’s incarnation: God in the flesh.

This resulted in division, frustration, and pain among the membership. And to help them to fight it, John took the time to teach that, contrary to the false teachers’ doctrines, **Jesus is real**. This Jesus whom He described was not the Jesus these false teachers taught. And naturally, he knew that they would want to come to know this Jesus better. And that comes to the point of the book: *that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup> And these things we write to you that your joy may be full. (1JN 1.3-4 (NKJV))*

John introduces a concept: **finding fellowship** with God and with one another. And he’s not talking about a meal, but rather, something far deeper. But for them to be able to do that, they would need to **know God** and to **know themselves**.

### BD1: Know God: His Holiness (1JN 1.5)

#### **LIGHT/Luxor Sky Beam/Brightest Light in the World**

If you’ve never been to Las Vegas, let me just tell you: it’s an impressive sight! It’s amazing to see that light cut through the darkness of the Sin City’s skies. It’s, needless to say, a bit of a contrast! Well, John seeks to draw the attention of the audience to something even brighter—a contrast even greater—and that’s God!

**1JN 1.5 (NKJV)** ~ *This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.*

**BKGRND:** The implication is that Jesus had declared this truth to His apostles during His ministry—that He is **“light”**.

**LIGHT/God is/Contrasted to Other Cultures**

**EX:** The Gnostics would claim that **“enlightenment”** came through their secret knowledge. But John argued that real **“enlightenment”** came from knowing the light—that despite being real and incarnate, no darkness was in Him, at all.

**PS 96.7-9 (NKJV)** ~ *Give to the Lord, O families of the peoples, Give to the Lord glory and strength. <sup>8</sup> Give to the Lord the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come into His courts. <sup>9</sup> Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him, all the earth.*

**AP:** God is light; God is holy. God is greater and mightier than all others. If we are to **find fellowship**, we need to **know God**—specifically, we need to know **His holiness**.

**BD2: Know Themselves: Their Hypocrisy (1JN 1.6)**

**ILL—Fine Print** (when younger, was able to see almost perfectly without glasses; the other day, I had to read the fine print on a piece of hardware for its serial number; try as I may, I couldn’t make it out) I just laughed, and handed it to a younger guy—his eyes weren’t as weak as mine were. I **knew myself**—I knew that my vision had gotten a bit darkened with age.

**BKGRND:** However, the people that John wrote to didn’t **know themselves**. Instead, they practiced **hypocrisy**—claiming to be righteous and holy and **“enlightened”**, when they are, in fact, in the dark.

**1JN 1.6 (NKJV)** ~ *If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.*

**1 JOHN/Gnostics/Carpocratian Gnostics**

They didn’t think of themselves as darkened by their lifestyles. They thought themselves to be holy and enlightened and Godly. But, in fact, they were anything but. They didn’t **know themselves**.

**EH 5.8-11 (NKJV)** ~ *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light <sup>9</sup> (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), <sup>10</sup> finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. <sup>11</sup> And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.*

**AP:** John looked with disappointment at the Gnostic leadership. They didn’t know how weak and failed they were. But if only they had, they’d have been able to correct themselves—they’d have been able to come to know just who they were and how desperately they needed Christ. *“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (RM 3.23 (NKJV))*

**BD3: Know Ourselves: Our Hope (1JN 1.7-10)**

**ILL—Swapping Between Glasses** (got a couple of pairs of glasses; one for screens, and one for regular life; couldn’t read something no matter how I tried; ended up swapping glasses and it snapped into place) That’s how it is when you get the right prescription—suddenly, you go from being practically blind to being able to see again!

**BKGRND:** To the Gnostic, the idea of **“separation”** between the flesh and the spirit gave them hope. It helped them to think that their sins and evil deeds would only stain their fleshly body—not their eternal soul. And since they thought that only the spirit would have home in heaven, the assumption was that their sins would be left behind in the grave. For John to tell them that the Gnostic teaching was false would have been frightening to them. For by coming to **know themselves**, they’d know their sin-stained self.

**1JN 1.7-10 (NKJV)** ~ *But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. <sup>8</sup> If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. <sup>10</sup> If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.*

In truth, we as Christians realize our sins. We realize our flaws and failures, and how deeply and desperately we need cleansing. That was what made the true Christian different from the Gnostic. The Gnostic thought themselves sinless—the Christian realized the opposite was true. But while the Gnostic was caught up in their own hypocrisy, the Christian, through **knowing themselves**, found **hope**.

God doesn’t accept us because we have no sin. God accepts us because He has forgiven and cleansed us from all our sin. He accepts us because His blood and His word cleanses us as long as we **know ourselves** and keep walking in the light—following after His example as He continues in the light.

**CONCLUSION – Know God: Our Advocate (1JN 2.1-6)**

**ILL—Needing Glasses** (approximately 2/3 of adults end up needing some form of corrective lenses) If you spend enough time on this earth, eventually your vision is going to get messed up, and you’re going to need help getting it corrected.

The same is true, spiritually. All of us, at some point, have need of help—help to correct our vision and get us focuses again on the light. We need help getting to **know God—His holiness** and pure light. But unfortunately, we can struggle truly **knowing ourselves**—we give in to our own **hypocrisy** and self-satisfaction rather than finding comfort and direction in **our hope** found only in Christ. And as John concludes the chapter, section, he appeals, again, to the people to **know God**—for by knowing Him, we can know **our advocate**!