CERTAINTY REGARDING HUMANITY'S SIN 1 John 1:8-2:2

INTRODUCTION

- We are living in a morally insane culture, given over to irrationality and sexual perversion, like John's day when he was writing 1 John.
- How can we understand and discern what is happening and live with certainty in these confusing times?
- What not long ago was regarded as sexual perversion is now regarded as a civil rights issue, according to Voddie Bauchman.
- Those of us who are older have the contrast of a more rightly ordered society, where
 the younger generation has no comparison. Today's moral order could seem to be a
 legitimate contender for how a society should be morally ordered.

Proverbs 17:15 "He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the LORD"

What is needed to discern and untangle our current confusion with biblical certainty?

MESSAGE THEME: Living with discernment and certainty regarding humanity's sin and God's provided redemption.

REVIEW

- Context of persecution and pre-gnostic confusion.
- After John describes his experience with Jesus Christ of Nazareth, he explains the foundation of <u>fellowship</u> with God and begins correcting some false teachings that had been propagated.
- The false assertions are:
 - Claim to walk in the light yet while living in darkness (1:6), also claim to be without sin (1:8), and claim to have not sinned (1:10).

YOU HAVE NO SIN? vs. 8-9

1 John 1:8 (ESV) If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

The False Claim vs. 8

- The second false claim dealt with those who claimed that they were without sin.
- The N.T. language in verse 8 literally says, "We do not have sin."
- Sin is in the singular, which refers to the inherent nature, or principle, of sin from which all acts of sin spring forth.⁹
 - The error John addresses in verse 8 is one step worse than the first, to be without sin.
- The <u>first step recognized the existence of sin</u>, but that fellowship with God was not strained.
- <u>This step is saying</u> that no matter what their conduct might be, <u>sin is not inherent</u> in them
- The phrase "we have no sin," marks the presence of something that is not

isolated, but a continuous source of influence. 11

 Today, some refuse any responsibility for sin, for sinful conduct is a physiological, psychological, or sociological issue.

The Reality vs. 8

1 John 1:8 (ESV) If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

1. The Deception

• John says that if we say we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves.

Romans 7:20 (ESV) Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

2. The Absence of Truth in Lives.

- John states that those who make such a claim, "The truth is not in them."
 - If TRUTH indwells us, we will inevitably be aware of our sinfulness.
- This truth is not merely abstract, objective information.
 - Truth describes God Himself and the "eternal life," which is God.
 - It is personal and dynamic.
- John often references the *Truth* that is in God's people.

2 John 2 (ESV) because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever:

• Due to fellowship, our being integrated into *truth*, which is a person and is found in God's life, that truth would expose error to us.

C. Truth Statement vs. 9

1 John 1:9 (ESV) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- John's corrective statement is to confess our sin, not deny it.
- Confess: "homologomen" to acknowledge a fact publicly, often about previous bad behavior - 'to admit, to confess.'12

1. Confession's Blessings.

The two following consequences are sin forgiven (debt satisfaction) and cleansed (stain removal).

2. God's Character Regarding Confessed Sin

- God is faithful.
- He is faithful to His nature and His covenants.
 - He will punish sin, for He is righteous and promises to forgive sin when confessed.

Psalm 32:5 (ESV) I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said,

"I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah

 Central to the Old Covenant was the means of atoning for sin in the sacrifices. Central to the New Covenant is the means of sin forgiven.

Matthew 26:27-28 And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; 28 for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.

- God is just (or unrighteousness is judged and paid for).
- How can God, being righteous, freely forgive sins?
 - John explains in a couple of verses, 2:1-2.
- God does not compromise Himself regarding His righteousness.
- He maintains the integrity of His faithfulness and righteousness when He forgives and cleanses, confessing mankind through Jesus' death.
- John's message: Don't deny that you are a sinner. Confess it to God and experience freedom and a cleansing that can only come from God.

YOU HAVE NOT SINNED?

The False Claim vs. 10

1 John 1:10 (ESV) If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

- John now addresses the third false assertion, "We have not sinned."
- Some say they do not have sin (vs. 8) and some also say they <u>have not</u> sinned (vs. 10).
- It is possible that the false religionists maintained that their superior enlightenment rendered them incapable of sinning.
- Here, they are denying the practice of sin in their lives.

The Reality vs. 10

<mark>1 John 1:10</mark> (ESV) If we say we have not sinned, <mark>we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.</mark>

1. We Call God a Liar

- John says that to say that we have not sinned is not just telling a deliberate lie or being merely deceived; it is saying that God is a liar.
- John says that to say this is evidence that God's word has no place in that person. For His word clearly states that sin is comprehensively universal.

Ecclesiastes 7:20 Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins.

2. His Word Not in Us

- To say His word is not in us parallels verse 8 when John said the truth is not in us.
- Remember that Jesus is identified as the Word, John 1:1.

The Truth Concerning Error vs. 2:1-2

1. God's Heart

vs. 2:1a

1 John 2:1 (ESV) My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.

- John now expresses a personal plea from his heart to his readers.
- John wants to ensure that his readers do not misconstrue what he previously said as condoning sin.
 - This may be like Paul's concern in Rom. 5:20-6:2.
- If you accurately and effectively explain God's grace, mercy, and forgiveness, some might understand such truth as providing a license to sin.

2. God's Provision vs. 2:1b-2

1 John 2:1–2 (ESV) . . . But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

- If anyone sins, God has provided a solution. The solution has two aspects for those who have fellowship with God.
- First: Jesus serves as our "Advocate."
 - An advocate, parakletos, is a Greek term meaning 'called to the side of' and hence "advocate." 13
 - This one is called alongside as an aid or counselor, especially in a legal setting.
 - This one is not just any advocate, but Jesus Christ, the righteous one.
 - Note both His human name, Jesus, and His office name, *Christ* (the sent One from God).
 - The double name almost certainly describes Jesus in His relation both to man and God: as one with both, and therefore qualified to represent us before God.¹⁴
 - Note the description of Jesus as righteous. He shares mankind's nature and God's, which heightens the ability of Jesus Christ to act as the credible Advocate.¹⁵

Second: Jesus serves as the "Propitiation."

- The "Advocate" is also the means of forgiveness for our sins.
- "Propitiation" (NASB), "Expiation" (NIV): is the Greek Term *hilasmos*, which is how sins are forgiven - "the means of forgiveness, expiation." 16
- Hilasmos can be understood as a price paid to satisfy an angry one.

- Jesus Himself is how mankind's sins are pardoned.
- God, in His righteousness, cannot but punish sin and those who sin, But He provided a substitute, Jesus Christ, to pay for our sins.

Romans 3:24-26 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; 25 whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; 26 for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

- God is faithful to forgive and maintains the integrity of His righteousness through Jesus's atoning work. Therefore, He is just in forgiving.
- What cleanses us from all our sin and unrighteousness, and how are we forgiven of our sins (vs. 1:7, 9; 2:2)?
 - The blood of Jesus Christ, His sacrificial death, is the means to forgive our sins.
- Our advocate does not plead that we are innocent. He acknowledges our guilt and presents His *vicarious work* as the grounds for our acquittal.¹⁷
- The power of Jesus' advocacy is the fact that He is the *propitiation*.

False Claim	Reality
#1 - 1:6 If we claim to have fellowship	we lie and do not live by the truth.
with him yet walk in the darkness,	
#2 - 1:8 If we claim to be without sin,	we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.
#3 - 1:10 If we claim we have not sinned,	we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

Truth Statement	Reality
#1 - 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light,	we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.
#2 - 1:9 If we confess our sins,	he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.
#3 - 2:1 But if anybody does [incidentally] sin,	we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense–Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

APPLICATION

Understanding Humanity

- Every person is a sinner. Romans 3:23 is very clear in stating that all have sinned.
- It does not take much to recognize that something is wrong in this world.

 To begin to address societal issues, one's relationship with God must be addressed and that humanity, in essence, are sinners.

Understanding Sin

- We cannot rationalize sin as sociological, psychological, or physiological.
 - Because mankind's essential nature is sin, sinful actions will emerge.
- We cannot separate spiritual realities from our day-to-day events.
- Our spiritual and physical are integrated and inseparable.

Understanding Forgiveness

- Forgiveness is the answer, and that is for only those who confess their sins.
- It is possible only in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- Today, the work of Jesus Christ continues to be applied to those who recognize their sin, are confessing ones, and live in God's forgiveness.
- Do not be confused; the issues of our day are not sociological, psychological, or physiological. They are fundamentally spiritual.
- Our society is living with the idea that there is no God and there are no absolute moral rights and wrongs. This is a terminal error for any person or society!
- Living in Discernment and Certainty in an Uncertain World requires understanding humanity's sin and God's solution in Jesus Christ.

Endnotes

9. John R. W. Stott, TNTC, The Letters of John, p 82.

11. Brooke Foss Westcott, The Epistles of St. John, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Printing Company, 1966), p. 22.

12. Johannes P. Louw, and Eugene A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains*, (New York: United Bible Societies 1988, 1989), s.v. homologomen.

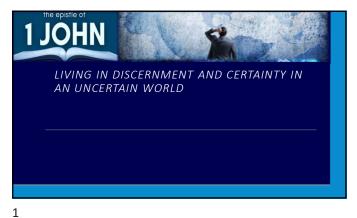
13. Paul J. Achtemier, Th.D., *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc. 1985), s.v. parakletos.

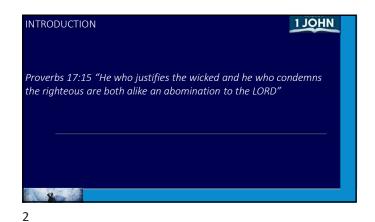
14. Stephen S. Smalley, WBC, 123 John, p 37.

15.lbid.

16. Johannes P. Louw, and Eugene A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains*, (New York: United Bible Societies, 1988, 1989), s.v. hilasmos.

17. John R. W. Stott, TNTC, The Letters of John, p 87.







1 JOHN **REVIEW** A prevalent false teaching viewed a person's physical body as a prison in which the rational or spiritual part of human beings needed to be delivered by enlightenment, a special or mystical knowledge, or light reserved for only a select few. (Gnosticism) On the extreme end of this system, people believed one could become so enlightened that evil, or the physical, could not affect them spiritually; the spiritual and the physical were so separated.

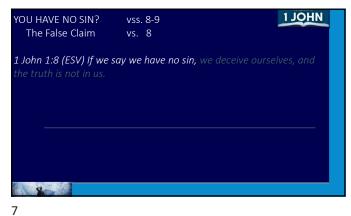
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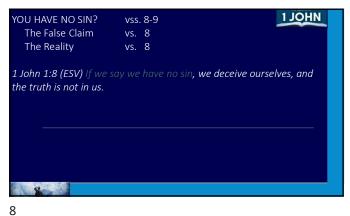
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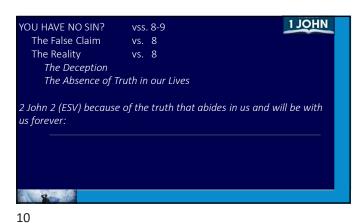
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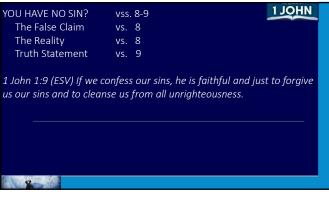


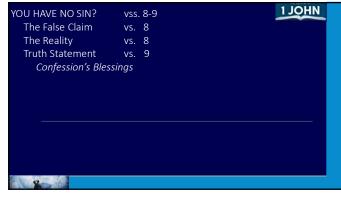


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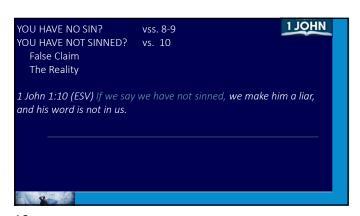


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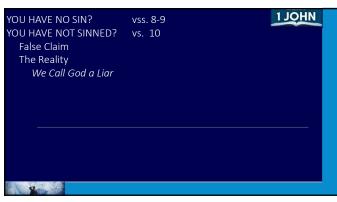
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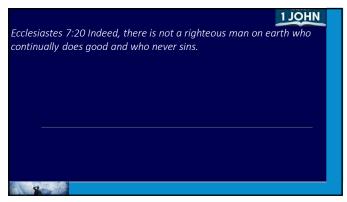
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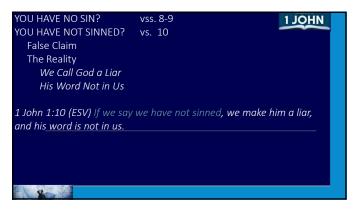


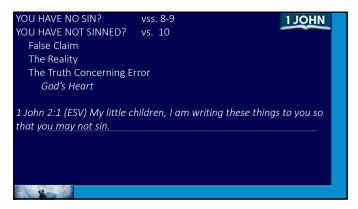
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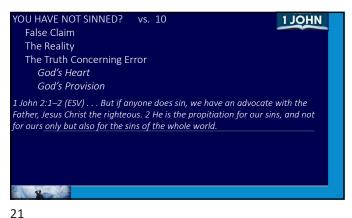


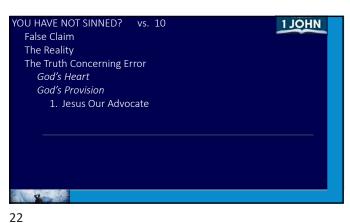


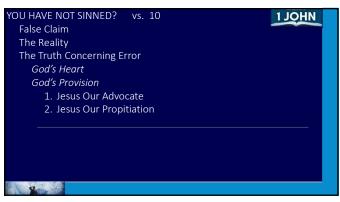
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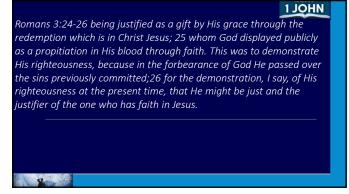












FALSE CLAIM	REALITY
#1 - 1:6; If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness,	we lie and do not live by the truth.
#2 - 1:8; If we claim to be without sin,	we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.
#3 - 1:10; If we claim we have not sinned,	we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

TRUTH STATEMENT

#1 - 1:7; But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light,

#2 - 1:9 If we confess our sins,

#3 - 2:1 But if anybody does [incidentally] sin,

#6 - 2:1 But if anybody does [incidentally] sin,

#7 - 2:1 But if anybody does [incidentally] sin,

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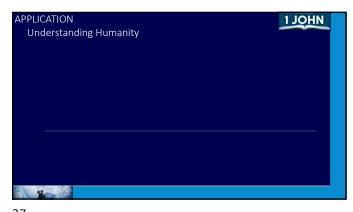
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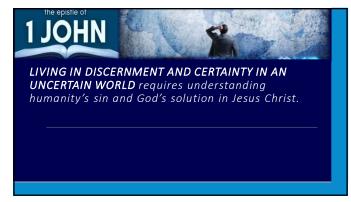
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