



### Week 3 Study Guide

#### Review:

- Who is John writing to and why is he writing? *Keys to understanding the context include:*
  - *The recipients of the letter (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Christians who look to John as a spiritual father but who have been influenced by false teachers. There is growing doubt among these believers regarding the message of Christianity, who Jesus is and what it means to be a Christian)*
  - *The false teachers (the letter was largely prompted by false teachers who taught a different message about Jesus than John and the apostles. Their teaching had led to division as some had left the church to start a new group and their teaching had led to doubt. They taught, among other things, that Jesus only appeared to be a man. They also taught that the immaterial, the soul, was all that mattered. Therefore, how you behaved in the body was of little consequence. This has implications for why John says about sin in this section).*
  - *The purpose statements in the first 4 verses and in chapter 5 verse 13.*
- Summarize the first 4 verses of the letter.

#### Read the text: 1 John 1:5-2:2

*5 This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 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 cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. 2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. 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 (1 John 1:5-2:2)*

**Study the text:**

- What are the repeated words and phrases in this passage? How do these words and phrases help us understand what John is doing in these verses?
- John says that God is light. How is light used in the Bible? Consider a few passages: Genesis 1:1-3, John 1:1-10, John 8:12, Psalm 119:105, Matthew 5:14-16. In this context of 1 John what does it mean that God is light? *Consider how the surrounding context helps you understand it...So John says that “there is no darkness in Him.” Then John shows us in the rest of the passage what darkness looks like: it looks like lies, unrighteousness and sin. If walking in darkness means lies, unrighteousness and sin then light is the opposite of those things. Light points to what is true and right/good.*
- Why is it good that God is light and why is it threatening to us?
- The passage is moved along by these “if we say” phrases. They present us with different ways that we can respond to sin. Describe each way.
- How does this passage help us understand what sin is? *Sin is rebellion against God (walking in darkness is to stand in opposition to the light), sin is described as deceit, sin is described as unrighteousness*
- What does it mean to confess our sins? Why is confession so important?
- How does confession of sin reveal that we know God and have fellowship with Him?
- What are the gifts of confession? In other words, what happens when we agree with God about our sin and turn from it? Look especially at verse 1:7, 1:9, and 2:1.
- What does Jesus’ death and resurrection mean for our sin? Consider the phrases that “the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin” and that Jesus is the “propitiation for our sins.”
- Discuss the following statement: *this passage doesn’t teach that a Christian never sins but also teaches that a Christian is someone who does not make a practice of sinning without turning from it.* How is this both encouraging and challenging?
- How does a lack of confession hurt our fellowship with God?
- Is confession a regular part of your life? How can you grow in this area (spending more time in confession, confessing specific sins, confessing sins to others, etc)?

**Prayer Time:** In light of this text...

- What is there to praise God for?
- What sins do you need to confess?
- What is there to ask God for?

**Mission:** Sin is the grandest of problems that we face as humans. But we live in a culture that dismisses the notion of sin. How can we talk to people about sin?