

# Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



## “Walk as He Walked”

Rabbi Cosmo Panzetta

### Devotion and Discussion Questions

**Key Texts (TLV):** 1 John 2:1-6; 1 John 1:6-10; 3:23; 4:10; 5:13; John 13:31-35; 14:15-16;; Jeremiah 7:2-11; Micah 6:6-8; Exodus 34:7

There is a kind of faith that is content to speak the right words while keeping the heart at a distance. It knows how to say, “I believe.” It knows how to say, “I know Him.” It may even know how to speak the language of fellowship, forgiveness, and grace. But through John’s writing, the Holy Spirit will not let us reduce life with God to religious claims that never reshape the way we actually walk. He presses us with loving clarity: if we say we know Him, then our lives must begin to move in the direction of His heart.

And yet John does not write with cold severity. He writes like a spiritual father, with the tenderness of Yeshua Himself: *“My children, I am writing these things to you so that you will not sin”* (1 Jn. 2:1). His goal is not to crush struggling believers under shame, nor to give careless believers permission to keep walking in darkness. His goal is to call us into the light, to show us the beauty of our Advocate, to anchor us in the atonement of Messiah, and to remind us that the one who abides in Yeshua must walk as He walked.

#### 1. If We Sin, We Have an Advocate with the Father

John begins with both a warning and a comfort: *“My children, I am writing these things to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an Intercessor with the Father—the righteous Messiah Yeshua”* (1 Jn. 2:1). The call is clear: do not sin. John is not softening the seriousness of sin or pretending darkness can belong in the life of one who walks with the God who is light. Sin is destructive. Sin distorts fellowship. Sin pulls us out of alignment with the Father’s heart and ways.

But John also knows the reality of our weakness. He does not say, “If anyone sins, hide.” He does not say, “If anyone sins, deny it.” He does not say, “If anyone sins, try harder to make up for it with good works.” He says, “We have an Intercessor.” We have a Paraclete — One Calling out alongside us, One who speaks on our behalf, One who stands with us before the Father. And this Advocate is not our religious performance. He is not our list of good deeds. He is *“the righteous Messiah Yeshua”* (1 Jn. 2:1), the only One who can stand before the righteous Father on behalf of unrighteous sinners.

#### 2. YESHUA HIMSELF IS THE ATONEMENT FOR OUR SINS

John continues, *“He is the atonement for our sins, and not only for our sins but also for the whole world”* (1 Jn. 2:2). Notice the strength of that statement. Yeshua does not merely bring atonement as though He is carrying something separate from Himself. He is the atonement. He is the atoning sacrifice. He is the One whose blood cleanses us from all

sin. He is the One through whom the faithful and righteous God forgives us and purifies us from every “not-right thing.”

And John wants us to see this atonement through the lens of God’s love. Later he writes, *“This is love—not that we have loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atonement for our sins”* (1 Jn. 4:10). Yeshua’s sacrificial death demonstrates both the gravity of sin *and* the greatness of God’s love in the very same moment. And when John says this atonement is *“also for the whole world”* (1 Jn. 2:2), he is not teaching that everyone is saved apart from faith, as though walking in darkness no longer matters. He is declaring that the sacrifice of Yeshua has no geographic, ethnic, racial, national, or cultural boundary. No one is beyond the reach of His atoning work when they come to Him in faith.

### **3. IF WE KNOW HIM, WE MUST WALK AS HE WALKED**

John then gives us the evidence of true knowledge: *“Now we know that we have come to know Him by this—if we keep His commandments”* (1 Jn. 2:3). This is not legalism. John is not saying obedience earns our relationship with God. He is saying obedience flows from actually knowing Him. To know God is to know Him as Lord, Father, King, and Light. We cannot genuinely say, “I have come to know Him,” while continually disregarding what He says. John is direct: *“The one who says, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him”* (1 Jn. 2:4).

But the goal of obedience is not cold rule-keeping. John says, *“But whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God is truly made perfect”* (1 Jn. 2:5). In other words, as we live out His Word in action, His love in us accomplishes its purpose through us. The love of God reaches its goal in us as His Word reshapes our lives. And then John brings the whole issue into focus: *“Whoever claims to abide in Him must walk just as He walked”* (1 Jn. 2:6). What are His commandments? John will later say, *“Now this is His commandment—that we should believe in the name of His Son, Yeshua the Messiah, and love one another, just as He commanded us”* (1 Jn. 3:23). Faith in Yeshua and love for one another belong together. The one who abides in Him must walk in His footsteps.

### **CONCLUSION**

John’s words confront the ancient and ongoing temptation to trust in religious claims while ignoring the way we live. Jeremiah faced the same thing when people came into the Temple saying, *“The Temple of ADONAI, the Temple of ADONAI, the Temple of ADONAI!”* while continuing in injustice, oppression, idolatry, and sin (Jer. 7:4). They wanted the safety of God’s Name without surrender to God’s ways. But ADONAI said, *“Look, even I have seen it!”* (Jer. 7:11). He saw through the words. He saw the walk.

Today, the the Spirit is once again calling us to stop hiding behind claims and come into the light of Yeshua. Maybe you have said, “I know Him,” but the Spirit is showing you places where your walk has not matched that confession. Maybe you have treated forgiveness like permission to keep returning to the same darkness. Maybe you have

tried to stand before God with your good works as your advocate instead of trusting wholly in Messiah Yeshua, the Righteous One. Come honestly before the Father. Bring your sin into the light. Do not deny it. Do not rationalize it. Do not rename it. Confess it, and trust the One who stands with you before the Father. Yeshua is your Advocate. Yeshua is your atonement. And by His grace, rise from that place of mercy and walk in His steps. Believe in the name of the Son. Love one another. Practice justice. Love mercy. Walk humbly with your God. Walk as He walked.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. In 1 John 2:1, John says he writes so that believers will not sin, but also says that if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate. Why are both parts of that message important?
2. Why is it dangerous to treat our good works, ministry activity, or religious performance as though they can serve as our advocate before God?
3. John says Yeshua is the atonement not only for our sins, but also for the whole world. How does this challenge ethnic, cultural, national, or religious boundaries people sometimes place around the reach of the Gospel?
4. John says that the one who claims to know Him must keep His commandments. Where do you see the greatest gap today between what people claim spiritually and how they actually walk?
5. What is one specific way you can “walk as He walked” this week in your home, congregation, workplace, or relationships?

### **CLOSING PRAYER:**

Father, thank You for calling us into the light. Thank You that You do not invite us to pretend, hide, or perform, but to come honestly before You. Search our hearts and show us where our words and our walk have not been aligned with You.

Yeshua, thank You for being our righteous Advocate with the Father. Thank You that You are not only the One who speaks on our behalf, but the One who gave Yourself as the atonement for our sins. Teach us to trust in You fully, not in our own goodness, our own works, or our own religious efforts.

Holy Spirit, help us to know Him truly. Let the love of God reach its goal in us as we keep His Word. Teach us to believe in the name of Yeshua the Messiah and to love one another as He commanded us.

Lord, make us people who do not merely claim to abide in You, but who walk as Yeshua walked. Teach us to practice justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with You.

*B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.*