

# The University Heights Messenger

May 16, 2010

## Thoughts on 1 John

1:5-10

*“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. If we say we have fellowship with Him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 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. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”*

Though neither can be proven conclusively, evidence suggests that the apostle John wrote 1 John and did so partly to combat an early form of gnosticism, a heresy with numerous sects whose ideas remain popular among some today. If you are a fan of modern mystery and conspiracy novels, particularly those with a “religious” twist, then there is a very good chance you’ve heard of the *Illuminati*. They were/are Gnostics.

One common tenant of most Gnostic thought is that all material things are intrinsically evil, including human flesh. The vast majority of Gnostics made a total separation between the flesh and the spirit. The flesh could essentially be as evil and wicked as it cared to be for such activity had no bearing on the spirit. It seems very likely that a group of Gnostics became Christians or were converted to that heresy after becoming Christians for John deals with the Christians conduct as much if not more than any other New Testament writer in his relatively short letter.

While John consistently makes the point that Christians ought not to be sinning, he knows that it will happen from time to time. To claim that one’s *flesh* sinned while one’s *spirit* remained pure was nonsense and John was quick to point that out. In other words a person could not go and commit adultery, say that it was merely his body that committed that sin, and thus claim that his spirit remained spotless and sin free. In 1 John 1:8, John said, **“If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”** This verse would have been a difficult one for the Gnostic, who believed that he enjoyed a “higher” or “special” knowledge, to bear for John says that such a one is really self-deceived and void of the truth.

While I do not know any Christians today of the Gnostic persuasion, I do know that all of us need to take the teaching of 1 John 1:5-10 to heart. John consistently uses darkness in reference to sin and light in reference to holiness. As it pertains to God, *no* darkness stains His character in any way. Though Jesus Christ bore the sins of the whole world upon the cross (2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 53:5), He never committed a single *personal* sin. There’s our goal, brethren. John would go on to say in 1 John 2:6, **“Whoever says he abides in Him ought to walk in the same way in which He walked.”** Perfection. It is my goal, and should be the goal of all Christians, to walk precisely as the Lord walked in His life on this earth. I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again, the goal of every Christian must be *sinlessness*.

However, my own weaknesses ensure that I am not successful in this goal. I don’t sin often, but I *do* sin. We all do. How fortunate that our God is more concerned

with the effort than the results for our striving towards Christ-like perfection bears with it an absolutely inevitable result--failure. It is here that 1 John 1:9 comes to the rescue. **“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”** In our effort to remain sinless, we will occasionally sin. How blessed is the Christian to have **“an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous,”** who will plead our case before Him, who will take up our cause before the Father, and will cleanse us from all unrighteousness as we repent and confess.

As wonderful as this is, only those who make *real* effort at walking the path of light as our Lord walked it have any assurance of such blessings. 1 John 1:7 told us that only the Christian who walks (habitually, by reason of practice) in the light has Christ’s promise that His blood will continue to wash away sins. Let us all remember that genuine repentance is more than saying “I’m sorry.” It is a change of heart followed by a change of life. Confession is not a “get out of jail free” card. True repentance *must* accompany it, and true determination to walk in the light *must* accompany that, before a person’s sins will be forgiven. If all of this is present, the Christian can *know* that Jesus’ blood cleanses every sin as they confess it and repent of it. As John says in 1 John 3:1, **“See what kind of love the Father has given to us...”**

### IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

**Esmeralda Agustin** continues struggling spiritually.

**Glenn Kimberlin** is home, though she is housebound. She wants to thank everyone for the calls and the cards.

**Gail Stein and Shannon Gilbert** continue treatments for breast cancer.

**Pat Seabolt’s** procedure went well. However, he has been diagnosed with pulmonary hypertension. This is treatable with a medicine that Pat should be able to begin in the next couple of weeks.

**Robert Brundige**, Richard’s brother, is in Parkside Manor in Cynthiana dealing with some issues. **Sarah** Brundige, Richard’s mother, is in Cambridge Place Nursing Home and in need of our prayer.

**Reid Braswell’s** situation has become dire. He is now preparing a trip to Atlanta where he will try to get into Emory University which boasts a reputable teaching and research hospital. The prayer is that the doctors there will be able to find the underlying cause of the ataxia while there is still time.

Let’s also remember **David Day and his wife, Michelle Oxendine, Ron Catchen, Chuck McDavitt, and David Blakeman.**

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

The informational meeting will be next Sunday at 5:00 p.m.

### BIBLE READING SCHEDULE FOR 5/16-5/22:

**Sunday:** Josh 5-7, Ps 99, Acts 23

**Monday:** Josh 8-9, Ps 100, Acts 24-25

**Tuesday:** Josh 10-11, Ps 101, Acts 26

**Wednesday:** Josh 12-13, Ps 102, Acts 27

**Thursday:** Josh 14-15, Ps 103, Acts 28

**Friday:** Josh 16-18, Ps 104, Rom 1

**Saturday:** Josh 19-20, Ps 105:1-25, Rom 2

### SERMON TOPICS:

Sunday AM. Water And God’s Word

Sunday PM. “Does Job Fear God For No Reason?”

### CLASS INFORMATION:

Lesson 15, section III, letter A (1 Cor. 6:11)