

DECEPTIVE & DANGEROUS VIEWS OF SIN

Sunday, May 9, 2021-- 1st JOHN series -- msg 4 -- Pastor Andrew Coleman

1st JOHN 1:5-10

English Standard Version (ESV)

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.*

REVIEW :

The Author: John was a disciple and apostle (an eyewitness)

- the youngest disciple who became the oldest
- his message is very pastoral (gentle) but polemical (firm).

The Genre: an open letter to all churches.

writing style is -- artistic, repeating, interwoven, layered, progressively revealing

The Setting: critical transition at end of eyewitnesses

Doctrinal Problems:

- as always, false teachers were rising up (early *Gnostics* -- *knowledge*)
- so new heresies were circulating around. flesh (evil) vs. spirit (good)
- Confusion over the nature of God.
- Denying Jesus was the Messiah/Christ.
- Denying Jesus was really the Son of God.
- Denying Jesus had come in the flesh.
- Denying Jesus's death was necessary for the forgiveness of sins.

Behavioral Problems:

Loving the world instead of loving God and others.

- **1st John is a LOADED LETTER!** It is full of correction and warning.
light/darkness truth/lies genuine/fake sinful/forgiven love/hate
- The "introduction" (1:1-4) skips any salutations or greetings by immediately declaring Christ's REALITY and CENTRALITY.
- Verse 5 is perhaps the **central premise** of the entire letter... ***"This is the message that we have heard from Him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him is no darkness at all."***

KEY CONCEPT in going forward:

- The central premise (above) is absolutely foundational to everything you could ever learn about God.
- Having a proper understanding of the **perfect nature of God** will greatly assist you in properly understanding Him, the world and yourself.
- Once you begin to know **who HE is** you are in much better position to understand **who you are**.
- **God's Word reveals** these realities whereas **the fallen world conceals** realities.

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1) After the great premise statement about God, there are 5 “IF-statements” about us.

- 3 if-statements are about SINFUL PEOPLE “If we say...” vs 6, 8, 10
- 2 if-statements are about FORGIVEN PEOPLE (if we walk, if we confess) vs 7, 9

2) John is aggressively combating wrong ideas about the sinfulness of humankind.

- Humans have always tried to deny the reality of sin, YET we are innately aware of it.

Romans 2:14-16

14 For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. **15** They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them **16** on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

- Humans have always tried to minimize sin. (secular humanism declares man is basically good)
- Humans have always tried to redefine sin. (‘mistakes’, ‘failures’, ‘disorders’, ‘addictions’, ‘illnesses’)
- Humans have always tried to victimize sin. (victimization removes responsibility)
- Humans have always tried to rationalize and justify sin.
- Then, like now, there were influences on God’s people to distort the truth about sin.

The growing influence of Gnosticism denied the reality of sin and evil.

Gnosticism basically taught the following:

- the spiritual is always good, the physical is always bad
- the spiritual is everything, the physical is nothing
- THEREFORE, whatever is done in the flesh is a non-issue. (No sin.)

We should recognize that in the last 2,000 years since this was written, nothing has changed. We have the essentially the same heresies pressing upon us, as God’s people, today.

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3) Notice the **THREE GROUPS** who reject the truth about sin.

vs 6 -- Those in Darkness: they talk the talk but do not walk the walk -- they are liars.
If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

*'walk' = your manner of life, the way you live, your conduct, your morals.
Matthew 7:21-23; James 1:27; Malachi 1:6-8*

vs 8 -- Those in Deception: they are self-deceived and arrogantly clueless
If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

James 1:22

But prove yourselves doers of the Word and not merely hearers who delude themselves.

The doctrine of human depravity is found throughout the Scripture.

Romans 3:10-12

"None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."

vs 10 -- Those who Defame God: most outrageous of all -- contradicting His Word.
If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

They deny His clear Word that all have sinned. (Isaiah 53:6; Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1-3; 5:9)
They deny their need for a Savior.

***** **All three groups are summarily rebuked by Romans 6:2** *****
"How shall we who have died to sin continue to walk in it?"

KEY QUESTIONS:

What most influences your understanding of your sin -- the world or God's Word?
Do you ignore, not see or deny your sin? Ask God to help you answer honestly.