

# True Fellowship

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Date: 27 July 2025

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] In God's Word with you. We gather this evening in the name of our Lord to worship him with gladness and reverence.! To draw near not only to him, but to one another in true Christian fellowship.
- Hear the word of the Lord as we are called to worship. And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works, not forsaking the assembly of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the day approaching.
- Let's now worship God together as we sing Psalm 100 to his praise. O people that don't ever to dwell, sing to the Lord with cheerful voice, Lifted with mercy, praise for them.
- Come ye before him and rejoice. Know that the Lord is God indeed.
- We are His hope, He does not see.
- [ 1 : 5 2 ] I'm for His feet beyond the day. O enter Him His face with grace, A prox with joy His voice unto you.
- Praise God and bless His name always. For this word of grace, For this word of grace, For this word of grace, For this word of grace, For this word of grace, Why the Lord our God is true, His mercy is forever true.
- If you do not know that you are true, I shall call it to return to.
- Let's come before our Lord in prayer. Let's pray. Father God, we come before you this evening with hearts that are thankful, yet hearts that are also needy.
- Thankful for your goodness and grace, but needy for your mercy and help. We pray to you as the God who is from everlasting to everlasting.
- [ 3 : 5 1 ] The one who rules over all with righteousness and wisdom. And yet who stood down in love to hear the prayers of his people. We praise you that you have made yourself known to us.
- Not in shadow or silence, but through the word of truth. Through your mighty works throughout history. And most fully in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- We thank you that by grace through faith we have peace with you and access into your presence. We thank you for the fellowship of the church.
- We thank you for the joy of being part of the body of Christ. And for the deep bond we share with all who love and follow you. We thank you for this Lord's day and for the opportunity to worship together in this place.
- We ask that as we gather around your word and as we sing your praise, we would know your nearness, your peace and the help of your Holy Spirit.
- [ 5 : 0 1 ] We thank you for the love and love and love.
- Store to us the joy of our salvation. And lead us again in the paths of righteousness for your name's sake. Father, we bring before you the needs of this congregation in Calamish.

We thank you for their long-standing witness. For the generations who have worshipped here. And for all whom you have brought to faith through the gospel preached in this place.

We pray for your guidance and provision. That in your perfect timing, you would raise up and send a faithful shepherd to lead the people here.

And to love your flock. We pray for the elders at this time. We pray that you would give them wisdom, patience and encouragement.

[ 6 : 19 ] May they walk closely with you and be upheld by your grace. Help them to shepherd the flock with gentleness and conviction. And may they know the prayers and support of the people.

Father, we pray too for other congregations that are also vacant. Some across this island, across the west side. And we see a great need for gospel labourers.

We ask you, Lord of the harvest, to send out workers into this field. To stir up a new generation of preachers and pastors. Men that are grounded in the word.

Who love your church and long to see Christ exalted. Father, provide for your people. Sustain those congregations who feel weary or scattered.

Encourage them in the promises of your word. Father, we remember those among us who are struggling. Those who are unwell in body or mind.

[ 7 : 23 ] Those carrying burdens that are known only to you. Draw near to the lonely. Draw near to the grieving. The anxious. And those that are feeling discouraged.

May they find strength and hope in your presence. And comfort in the fellowship of the saints. We pray for families. We pray for marriages.

For children and for the young people. That in every stage of life. You would be their foundation and guide. And Lord, we do not just pray for ourselves.

But we pray for your church throughout Scotland. In a day of spiritual confusion and moral drifting. Keep your people faithful. Strengthen gospel ministers and congregations.

Who hold fast to your truth. Give courage and compassion to those who stand for Christ. In their communities. In their workplaces. And in their families.

[ 8 : 24 ] May the church not retreat. But shine as a light in the darkness. We remember our nation's leaders. And all in authority over us.

Grant them wisdom from above. Restrain what is evil. And promote what is good. Father, we see so much evil laws being passed recently.

We ask that you would be with our parliaments. That you would guide them. That you would bring these people to you. And correct them. And above all, we pray that many in this land would be awakened by the power of your spirit.

And drawn to you as their saviour. Lord bless the rest of this service. May the psalms we sing be a fitting praise to you. May your word come to us with clarity and power.

And may Jesus Christ be glorified in all that we do. For we ask all this, giving thanks in his precious name. Amen. Our next psalm is Psalm 35.

[ 9 : 34 ] And we'll be singing from verses 1 to 5. O blessed is the man to whom is freely pardoned. All the transgressions he hath done. Whose sin is covered.

Singing down to verse 5. Where we sing. Where I thereupon have unto thee my sin acknowledged. And likewise my iniquity I have not covered.

I will confess unto the Lord my trespasses said I. And of my sin, though freely didst, forgive the iniquity. Psalm 32.

Psalm 32. O blessed is the man to whom is freely pardoned.

[10:41] Blessed is the man to whom the Lord. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord.

[illegible]

I thereupon have unto thee, My sin I know is yet, And likewise my integrity, I can't roll down the head.

Let's now turn to read from God's word. Our reading this evening is from the first epistle of John. And in chapter 1.

For the life was manifested, And we have seen it, And bear witness, And show unto you that eternal life. Which was with the Father. And was manifested unto us.

[14:32] And these things write we unto you, That your joy may be full. This then is the message,  
Which we have heard of him, And declare unto you, That God is light, And in him is no  
darkness at all.

If we say that we have fellowship with him, And walk in darkness, We lie, And do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, As he is in the light, We have fellowship one with another, And the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, Cleanseth us from all sin.

If we say that 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 that we have not sinned, We make him a liar, And his word is not in us. May the Lord bless the reading of this word.

We're going to continue now in praise. Oh, no we're not. Sorry, excuse me. Let's pray again. Let's pray. Gracious and eternal God, We thank you for the gift of your word.

[16:02] That living and abiding word, Which reveals your glory, Convicts us of our sin, And shows us the way of salvation, Through your Son, Jesus Christ. We praise you that in your mercy, You have spoken to us, Not in judgment alone, But in grace and in truth.

As we come to hear from you, We ask that you would prepare our hearts and minds, To receive what you would say to us. Help us to lay aside every distraction, Help us to quieten our thoughts, And to humble ourselves beneath your truth.

Give us ears to hear, And minds to understand, And give us hearts that are ready to respond, Hearts that will respond in faith, In reverence, And in obedience.

We pray that you would bless the preaching of your word this evening. May it be faithful to the scriptures, Clear in its message, And empowered by your Holy Spirit.

Use it to strengthen the weak, To challenge the complacent, To comfort the afflicted, And use it to build each one of us up, In our walk with the Lord.

[ 17 : 21 ] May we not only hear the word, But also be doers of it, Walking in the light, Growing in grace, And living in close fellowship with you, And with one another.

We pray for any who are visiting among us, Or who have not yet come to know the Lord Jesus. May the gospel be plain to them tonight. Open their hearts to see the beauty and sufficiency of the Saviour, And draw them to trust in him.

Lord, build up your church through your truth. Unite us in love. Lead us in holiness. And may all that is said and done, Bring glory to your great and holy name.

And we ask all this in the name of our risen and reigning Saviour, Amen. We'll now sing from Psalm 133.

Behold how good a thing it is, And how becoming well, Together such as brethren are, In unity to dwell. Like precious ointments on the head, That down the beard did flow, In Aaron's beard and to the skirts, Did all his garments go.

[ 18 : 34 ] As Herm and Jew, The Jew that doth, From Zion's hill descend, For there the blessings God commands, Life that shall never end. Psalm 130 feet, That's grace.

Behold how good a thing it is, And how becoming well, Together such as brethren are, In unity to dwell.

In unity to dwell. In unity to dwell. Like precious ointments on the head, That down the beard did flow, The male and all spirit, And to the skirt, In all this garments go.

In all this garments go. A ten months to the Jew that doth, On Zion's hills descend, For there the blessing God commands, Life that shall never end.

Life that shall never end. Let's turn back to the passage, That we read from earlier, 1 John 1.

[ 21 : 09 ] And our key verse for this evening, Is verse 7, Where we read, But if we walk in the light, As he is in the light, We have fellowship one with another, And the blood of Jesus Christ his son, Cleanseth us from all sin.

What does it mean to truly know God? Not just to believe he exists, Not just to attend church, But to know him, To share life with him, To walk with him, And to live in relationship with his people.

The Bible's word for that reality, Is fellowship. But that word can feel very thin to us today. We often reduce fellowship, To simply tea and coffee after a service, Or to polite conversation, And casual connection.

But in scripture, Fellowship is far more than that. It is a deep spiritual communion, With the living God, Through his son, By the Holy Spirit.

It is being brought into a shared life, A life of truth, Love, Holiness, And joy. With God, And with his people.

[ 22 : 32 ] And yet, Fellowship can be lost, Or misunderstood. Even in the church. We live in a time, When many people claim to know God, But are walking in darkness.

Others even claim a connection with Christ, But deny who he truly is. And still others, Try to walk with God, While cutting themselves off, From his people.

So how do we know, If we have true fellowship? What does it look like? And how can we be sure? That's the burden, Of first John.

This letter was written, By the apostle John, Likely in his old age, To a group of believers, In or around Ephesus. The church he is writing to, Is unsettled.

It's been shaken, By false teaching, By division, And by doubt. Some have left the fellowship, Altogether. Others were teaching, Distorted views of Jesus, Denying either his humanity, Or his divinity.

[ 23 : 49 ] And the result, Was confusion. Not only about who Christ is, But also, About what it really means, To be a Christian.

So John writes, Like a spiritual father, With affection, Clarity, And authority. He's not offering speculation, He's calling the church back, To what is certain, To what is true, And to what has been revealed, From the beginning.

This letter, Is pastoral and practical, It's not arranged, Like a step by step argument, Like many of Paul's letters, For example.

But it's more of a series of texts, Or marks, Marks of what real Christianity, Should look like. Right belief, Genuine love, And holy living.

Tonight we're going to walk through, This first chapter, Of this short letter, Under one central theme, That is, True fellowship. And we'll look at this, In three parts.

[ 25 : 01 ] The certainty of true fellowship, That our shared life, With God, Is grounded, In the real, Historic coming, Of Jesus Christ. The character of true fellowship, That this fellowship, Is personal, That it is shared, And that it is transformational.

And the condition, Of true fellowship, How our fellowship, With God, Is maintained, Through humble confession, And his cleansing grace.

So as we begin, Ask yourself, Do I know this fellowship? Am I walking in the light? Is this shared life with God, And with his people, Shaping my own life?

So let's turn now, To our first heading, The certainty, Of true fellowship. Let's begin by looking again, At verses one and two.

That which was from the beginning, Which we have heard, Which we have seen with our eyes, Which we have looked upon, And our hands have handled, Of the word of life.

[ 26 : 13 ] For the life was manifested, And we have seen it, And bear witness, And show unto you, That eternal life, Which was with the Father, And was manifested unto us.

At the heart of true Christian fellowship, Is certainty. Certainty, About the one, In whom we believe.

And certainty, About the truth, That binds us together, That binds us together, As God's people. We live in an age, That celebrates doubt, And dismisses certainty.

Our culture tends to say, What's true for you, Isn't necessarily true for me. And even within the church, There can be a hesitancy, A hesitancy, To speak confidently, About the person of Jesus, And the foundation, Of our faith.

But John begins his letter, With a thunderclap of assurance. He's not offering a theory, Or an idea. He's not giving us, A mystical vision, Or some inner spiritual experience.

[ 27 : 23 ] No, He is testifying, To what he has heard, What he has seen, What he has looked upon, And what he has touched.

In other words, What he experienced, With his senses, In real history. So as we look at, The certainty of fellowship, We'll look at three aspects, From these opening verses, That demonstrate, This certainty.

Firstly, We see that Jesus Christ, Is eternal. That which was from the beginning, We read in the first verse. John echoes, The opening words of his gospel here, In the beginning was the word.

He wants us to know, That Jesus didn't just come into being, At Bethlehem. He is the eternal son of God, From the beginning, From before time.

This matters greatly, For our fellowship with God. If Jesus is not eternal, Then he is not God. And if he is not God, He cannot bring us, Into fellowship with the father.

[ 28 : 35 ] Our fellowship with God, Depends not on a good example, Or a wise teacher, But on the work, Of the eternal son, Who has always existed, In perfect fellowship, With the father.

Secondly, We see that Jesus Christ, Is historical. We have heard him, We have seen, Our hands have handled. The eternal word, Did not remain distant.

He entered, Into our world. He was heard, He was seen, He was touched. John is stressing, The physical reality, Of the incarnation.

This is a direct rebuttal, To the false teachers, In John's day. Particularly, Those who would claim, That Christ was just, Some kind of spiritual application, That he was not, Truly or fully human.

They believed, That the spirit was good, And that matter was bad. And so, They could not accept, That God, Had taken on, A real, Fleshly body.

[ 29 : 50 ] But John says, We touched him, We sat with him, We saw him eat, We watched him weep, We saw him die.

And more, They saw him risen, From the dead, Bearing the scars, In his hands and sides. There was no doubt, In their mind, The eternal son, Had truly become that, And he had conquered death.

This is not religious myth, Or poetic metaphor. This is history. And our fellowship with God, Stands or falls, On the truth, Of the incarnation.

This is what sets, Christianity apart, From every man-made religion. We are not simply, Following ideas. We are not grasping, At abstract truths.

We are receiving, A testimony, A testimony, A message, That is grounded in reality, A message, That's been confirmed, By eyewitness, And centred, On a real person, The person, Of Jesus Christ, Fully God, And fully man.

[ 31 : 08 ] And we see, That Jesus Christ, Is life. John calls Jesus, The word of life, And then says, The life, Was made manifest.

Jesus doesn't just, Teach us about life, He is life. He is the source of it, He's the giver of it, And he is the substance of it.

In verse 2, John says, That this eternal life, Was with the Father, That is, He dwelt in perfect communion, With God, And was made manifest, To us.

In other words, Jesus came, Not just to display life, But to share it. This, Is the foundation, Of true fellowship. Because the eternal word, Became flesh, We can now be united, To him.

And in being united, To him, We are brought, Into fellowship, With the Father. It is not possible, To have fellowship of God, Apart from Christ.

[ 32 : 18 ] And it's not possible, To have fellowship of Christ, Unless we believe, What the apostles proclaimed, That he is eternal, That he came in the flesh, And that he, Is the source, Of eternal life.

This world offers, Many forms of false fellowship, Some seek, Spiritual experience, Apart from Christ, Some imagine, They can know God, Through their own reasoning, Or intuition.

Others are swept up, By false teachers, Who deny Christ's divinity, Or his resurrection, But John says, We proclaim to you, What we have seen, And heard, The real, Risen Jesus, So that you, May have fellowship.

This is why, Christian fellowship, Begins, Begins with right belief, About Christ, If your Jesus, Is a moral, Just a moral teacher, Or a mystical guide, Or a vague presence, Then you have no true fellowship, Of God, But if you trust, In the Christ of scripture, The eternal son, Made flesh, Crucified and risen, Then you have a solid ground beneath you, You can say with confidence, I know whom I have believed.

So let us rejoice in this. Our fellowship with God is not built on speculation, It's not built on emotion, And it's not built on tradition.

[ 33 : 56 ] It's built on a certain apostolic witness, Of those who walked with Christ, Those who saw him, Those who heard him, Those who touched him, And those who proclaimed him, As the eternal life, Who has been made manifest.

This is the certainty of true fellowship, Grounded in Christ, Revealed in history, And offered to us, Through the gospel. Let's now turn to our second heading, The character of true fellowship, As we continue in verses 3 to 7.

Verse 3 reads, That which we have seen and heard, Declare we unto you, That ye also may have fellowship with us, And truly our fellowship is with the Father, And with his Son, Jesus Christ.

Having established the certainty of the message, In verses 1 and 2, The certainty that we have, Because Christ is eternal, Incarnate, And the source of life, John now turns to the purpose, Of that proclamation, And that purpose is clear, Fellowship, He writes, So that we might enter into, And enjoy, True fellowship, A fellowship with God, And with one another, This passage gives us, A wonderfully full picture, Of what that fellowship looks like, Not just a theory, But a living, Active communion, With God, And his people, So what is the character, Of that fellowship?

What does this true fellowship, Look like? Well firstly, It is personal, And truly our fellowship, Is with the Father, And with his Son, Jesus Christ.

[ 35 : 56 ] Again we see, That at the heart of Christianity, Is not simply a system of beliefs, But a relationship, Not just of the, Not of the spirituality, But a communion, With persons, The fellowship with the Father, And with his Son, Through his Spirit.

Now of course, We don't mean this, In a casual, Or sentimental sense, We're not talking about, A vague spiritual notion, Of feeling close, To the universe, We mean a real relationship, With the living God, Through Jesus Christ, We can be brought, Into fellowship, With the Father.

This is an extraordinary statement, God, Who is holy, Who is eternal, Who is all powerful, Has brought us near. He has made himself known in his Son, And through his Son, We can now know him, As our Father.

The word fellowship here, Means more than friendship, Or association. It speaks of sharing, Of participation, In a common life. It's the same word, Used elsewhere, To describe, How the early believers, Shared all things in common.

So John is saying, We now share, In the very life of God, Through Jesus Christ. This is not earned, This is not achieved, But this is a gift, A gift freely given in Christ, A gift freely given in Christ, And entered into it, By faith.

[ 37 : 35 ] It's deeply personal, And it changes everything. But notice something else, This fellowship with God, Is not individualistic.

John doesn't just say, Fellowship with the Father, But he also says, Fellowship with us, True fellowship, Is shared, In verses 3 and 4, Let's pick out a couple of phrases there, That ye also may have fellowship with us, And these things write we unto you, That your joy may be full.

Fellowship with God, And this brings us into fellowship, With God's people. You can't have one without the other. To belong to Christ, Is to belong to the body of Christ.

This was especially important in John's day. The false teachers were promoting a kind of spiritual elitism, Secret knowledge that was only available to a select few.

But John rejects this entirely. There is nothing hidden, Nothing reserved, But as spiritually advanced as they might see themselves. The gospel is for all who believe.

[ 38 : 55 ] And those who believe, Are joined together in a shared life. And this fellowship brings joy, John says, I need things write unto you, That your joy may be full.

That's not just poetic language, It's a statement of fact. Our joy as Christians, Is not found in isolation, But it's found in shared fellowship, Fellowship of God, And fellowship with one another.

So here's a question for you. How do you view the church? Do you see fellowship with other believers, As essential to your life in Christ?

Or is it perhaps something optional to you? There's a danger in our individualistic age, To think that as long as I have my personal faith, The church is just a helpful addition.

Or maybe even for some, A hindrance. But scripture teaches the opposite. Our fellowship with one another, Is not a distraction from knowing God, It is the fruit of it.

[ 40 : 11 ] To walk with God, Is to walk alongside his people. True fellowship, Is personal, And it is shared. True fellowship, Is also transformational.

Look again at verses 5 to 7. This then, Is the message which we have heard of him, And declare unto you, That God is light, And in him, Is no darkness at all.

If we say that we have fellowship with him, And walk in darkness, We lie, And do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, As he is in the light, We have fellowship one with another, And the blood of Jesus Christ the Son, Cleanseth us from all sin.

Now John adds something essential. This fellowship we've been describing, It's not just a status, It is a way of life.

It should change how we live. And that life, John says, Is lived in the light. This is a profound and beautiful image.

[ 41 : 28 ] Light in scripture speaks of truth, Of holiness, Of revelation. God is light. He's perfectly pure. He's perfectly true.

And he is utterly without sin. So John says, If someone claims to have fellowship with God, But continues to walk in darkness, That is unrepentant sin, Falsehood, And self-deception, Then that claim, Is a lie.

This is relevant for us today. There are people who claim to be Christians, Who claim to know God, But their lives show no sign of repentance, No evidence, Of walking in that light.

The apostle says plainly, Such claims are false. But here we see the hope. If we walk in the light, As he is in the light, We have fellowship with one another, And the blood of Jesus cleanses us.

Notice the balance here. Walking in the light doesn't mean walking in perfection. It means walking openly, Humbly, And with repentance.

[ 42 : 48 ] It means not hiding your sin, Not living a double life, But coming into the light of God's presence, Day by day, Trusting in his cleansing grace.



And as we do that, We are not only cleansed, We are bound more deeply, Into fellowship with one another. So are you walking in the light?

Is your fellowship with God, Changing the way you live? Are you growing in love, For your brothers and sisters? Are you growing in love, For the church?

Are you pursuing joy and unity in Christ? Or are you keeping others, At arm's length? True fellowship with God, Draws us into his light, And that light exposes sin, Yes, But it also purifies, It heals, And it strengthens.

It brings us out of the darkness, And into a shared life, With the people of God. And it's all made possible, By one means, Verse 7, And the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, Cleanses us, From all sin.

[ 44 : 15 ] Now, Cleansing here, Is not just the past tense, It's ongoing, As we walk in the light, The blood of Jesus, Continually cleanses us, We are never outside, Of our need for grace, But neither, Are we out of reach, So this, Is the character of true fellowship, It's personal, It's with the Father, And with the Son, It's shared, It's with the people of God, And it's transformational, As we walk in the light, Of God's holiness, And truth, This is not something, We create for ourselves, It's not something, We can do, On our own strength, It's something given to us, In Christ, Through the gospel, By his spirit, The question for us, Is not simply, Do I attend church, Do I call myself a Christian,

The question is, Am I walking in true fellowship, With God, And with his people, Am I walking, In the light, Of his truth, Let's hold that question, In our hearts, As we move now, To our final point, The condition, Of true fellowship, Let's read again, Verses 8 to 10, If we say, That 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, For if we say, That we have not sinned, We make him a liar, And his word, Is not in us, Having shown us, The certainty and character, Of true fellowship, John now turns, To what we might call, Its ongoing condition, That is,

What keeps this fellowship alive, What keeps this fellowship, Healthy and real, Well, John begins, With a stark warning, If we say, We have no sin, We deceive ourselves, And he's not speaking, Here to the world, He's speaking, To fellow believers, And he's warning, Against the kind, Of spiritual denial, That was common, That day, And it remains, Common in ours, The false teachers, In the early church, Often claimed, To be sinless, Either because, They believed, Their physical actions, Didn't matter, Or because, They thought, They'd risen above, The ordinary struggles, Of humanity, But John says it clearly, If you claim, To be without sin, You are living a lie, And worse, You are self-deceived, You've bought, Into your own illusion, This is the temptation,

We can all face, Perhaps not explicitly, But in more subtle ways, We compare ourselves, With others, We excuse, Or downplay, Our faults, We become blind, To our own pride, Or bitterness, But John reminds us here, Sin is still present, Even in the life, Of the believer, Now this doesn't mean, That we're no different, From the world, It means, We are in a lifelong battle, With the flesh, And the condition, Of true fellowship, With God, Is not sinlessness, But in these verses, It is honesty, About our sin, John gives us, One of the most comforting, And powerful promises, In all of scripture, In verse 9, If we confess our sin, He is faithful, And just to forgive us, Our sins, And to cleanse us,

From all unrighteousness, This isn't just a ritual, Or formula, Confession here, Means to agree with God, To name our sin, As he sees it, Without excuse, And without minimizing it, And notice the two things, That God does in response, He forgives us, That is, He lifts the guilt, He removes the penalty, He no longer holds it against us, Not because we've made up for it, In some way, But because Christ, Paid for it, At the cross, And he cleanses us, This speaks of renewal, God not only forgives the wrong, He begins to purify the heart, This is the ongoing work, Of sanctification, The more we walk with him, The more we are cleansed,

[ 49 : 20 ] From unrighteousness, But why does God do this? Well, Because he is faithful, And because he is just, He is faithful to his promises, And he will never turn away, The repentant sinner, He is just, Not because he overlooks sin, Because justice, Has already been satisfied, In Christ, The cross of Christ, Ensures that every sin confessed, Can be fully, And finally dealt with, What an encouragement this is, For struggling Christians, God is not asking us, For perfection, But he is asking us, For truthfulness, The condition, Of true fellowship, Is not a spotless record, But it is a heart, That is humbled, And the heart, That is cleansed, By his grace,

John closes this chapter, With a repetition, And a somewhat sharper edge, If we say we have not sinned, We make him a liar, And his word, Is not in us, It is one thing, To deceive ourselves, But here John says, That denial of our sin, Is calling God, A liar, Why?

Because God has clearly declared, That all have sinned, And fall short of his glory, To deny that, Is to reject his word entirely, So here is the start choice, Either we confess our sin, And receive his mercy, Or we deny our sin, And reject his truth, But praise God, Because if we do confess, There is a full pardon, There is cleansing, And there is a restored fellowship, So let me ask you, Are you honest, Before God, About your sin?

Do you confess regularly to him? Not only generally, But specifically, Do you trust, That he is faithful, And just, To forgive you?

There are two errors, That we could slip into, When we think of this, We can minimize sin, Where we pretend, It's not there, Or that it's not that serious, Another danger, Is that we despair over sin, Thinking it's too great, Or that God's grace, Cannot reach us, The gospel, The gospel, Frees us, From both, It tells us the truth, That yes, We are sinners, But it tells us, The greater truth, That Christ has died, For sinners, And through him, We are brought, Into true fellowship, With the living God, So then, What is the condition, Of true fellowship?

[ 52 : 35 ] It is not sinlessness, Nor is it, Spiritual superiority, But it's a, It's a life, Of humble, Regular confession, Met by God's, Abundant mercy, This is the rhythm, Of the Christian life, We walk in the light, The light reveals our sin, We confess that sin, God forgives us, And cleanses us, And then we continue, In joyful, Holy fellowship, With him, And with his people, So as we come, Towards the end of our time, Let's summarise, What we've seen, From this passage, This evening, We have seen, The certainty, Of true fellowship, Our fellowship, With God, Is not based, On vague feelings, Or abstract ideas, But on the real, Historic person, Of Jesus Christ, The eternal son of God, Made flesh,

Who was seen, Heard, And touched, By the apostles, That is the solid ground, Of our faith, That this life, Was made manifest, And has been proclaimed to us, With clarity, And authority, If we are trusting, In this Christ, The Christ of scripture, Then we can be certain, That we belong to God, We have seen, The character, Of true fellowship, That fellowship is not private, Or passive, It's personal, As we are brought, Into relationship, With the father, And with the son, We are also united, With those, Who are in Christ, And it's transformational, As we walk, In that light, Not in perfection, But in honest humility, And growing holiness, True fellowship, Shapes how we live, How we love, And how we relate,

To God's people, And we've seen, The condition of true fellowship, Fellowship is not maintained, By our performance, But by confession, God isn't asking us, For perfection, But for truthfulness, And when we confess our sins, He is faithful and just, To forgive, And to cleanse, Again, This is the ongoing rhythm, Of the Christian life, Sin exposed, Grace received, And fellowship restored, So I ask you again, Do you know this fellowship?

Are you walking, In this light? Are you confessing your sin, And trusting in the blood of Jesus? Are you living, Not only in fellowship with God, But also, In love and unity, With his people?

[ 56 : 35 ] Face to face, We ask all this, In your precious name, Amen, Our closing psalm, Is Psalm 103, And we'll be singing, One to five, O thou my soul, Bless God the Lord, And all that in me is, Be stirred up his holy name, To magnify and bless, Bless O my soul, The Lord thy God, And not forgetful be, Of all his gracious benefits, He hath bestowed on thee, Verses one to five, O thou my soul, Bless God the Lord, And all that in me is, Be stirred up his holy name,

Who died in Jesus' own and death.

Who does this long or die. Who will be loving kindness God.

Does satisfy Thy love. So that He does the Eagles take.

Amen.