

**I JOHN: TRUE SPIRITUAL FELLOWSHIP**  
**II. The Fundamentals Of True Spiritual Fellowship**  
**(1 John 1:5-7)**

**I. Introduction**

- A. When the Apostle John wrote 1 John around A. D. 90 ("Introduction To The First Letter Of John," Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, p. 1770) he implied in 1 John 1:3 that a significant number of his readers were not enjoying spiritual fellowship with the Apostles, with God the Father and with God the Father's Son, Jesus Christ!
- B. That lack of fellowship with God in John's era certainly occurs in many believers today, for Christ predicted this would be the case in Revelation 3:14-22 in His message to the Laodicean Church. We thus continue our study of 1 John in 1 John 1:5-7 on understanding the fundamentals of true spiritual fellowship (as follows):

**II. The Fundamentals Of True Spiritual Fellowship, 1 John 1:5-7.**

- A. After clarifying in 1 John 1:1-4 the truthfulness of the witness he and the other apostles had of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ's earthly ministry, the Apostle John stated that he was about to announce the message he and the other apostles had "permanently heard" (perfect tense, old Attic verb *akekoamen*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 813; The Analyt. Grk. Lex., 1972, p. 12) from Jesus Christ, the Word of life, 1 John 1:5a, 2-3.
- B. That message was that God is light, and in Him (lit.) "is not" (*ouk estin*) darkness "at all" (*oudemia*, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 596), 1 John 1:5b. This statement is *emphatic*, so we must **clearly understand** what John **means** by "*light*" and "*darkness*" here (as follows):
  - 1. In John's Gospel, chapter one verses 4-5, writing about Christ (cf. John 1:14, 17-18), John claimed that in Him was life, and that life was the "light" of men that shone in the "darkness."
  - 2. John was from Galilee where that "light" had initially shone, so he referred to the Isaiah 9:1-2 prediction about Jesus being the Great Light that would come to illumine the people of the tribal territories of Zebulon and Naphtali in Galilee of the nations during His earthly ministry in that region.
  - 3. However, the same Isaiah 9:2 context **also** reveals that **not only** was Jesus Christ the "light," but that the **Old Testament Scriptures** were **also** the "light," a part of God's special revelation to Israel, Isaiah 8:20.
  - 4. Thus, by "light," John meant God's special revelation, be it in the form of written Old Testament Scripture or the Word of God Incarnate in the Person of Jesus Christ, God's Son.
  - 5. Also, "darkness," the **contrast** of "light," is the **contrast** or **violation** of the truth in Scripture and Christ!
- C. Utilizing these terms, John **contrasted** the **lack** of fellowship with God's **true** fellowship in 1 John 1:6-7:
  - 1. If a believer fails to live in perfect alignment with Scripture, he does not fellowship with God, 1 John 1:6:
    - a. If a believer claims to fellowship with God but he "walks in darkness," that is, he orders his life out of alignment with God's revelation in Scripture and in Jesus Christ, he lies, and does not "do, practice" (*poieo*, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 687-689) the truth, 1 John 1:6.
    - b. Since God exists in **complete** alignment with His Scripture truth, in **complete** harmony with the truth revealed in His Son, **not** having **any darkness** in Him **at all** (1 John 1:5b), any believer who **fails** to be **perfectly** aligned with Scripture does **NOT** fellowship with a **perfectly** Biblical, righteous, holy God!
  - 2. Conversely, if a believer walks in perfect alignment with Scripture, he fellowships with God and every other believer who fellowships with God, and Christ's atonement cleanses him from all sin, 1 John 1:7:
    - a. If a believer orders his life in perfect alignment with Scripture and/or with God's revelation in His Son Jesus Christ as God Himself is perfectly aligned with this revelation, that believer has fellowship with the Lord, 1 John 1:7a. Since John had written in 1 John 1:3-4 that he wrote his epistle that his readers might fellowship with God, with His Son Jesus Christ and with the apostles themselves who also fellowshipped with God, John would also claim that fellowship with God also necessarily includes fellowship with every other godly believer who also orders his life in complete alignment with God's Word!
    - b. Also, true fellowship includes the atonement of Christ continually (present tense, *katharizei*, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.) cleansing the believer of all sin, 1 John 1:7b. God in His grace purifies believers of their sins as they expose themselves to God's revealed truth and align themselves with it in the Spirit's power.

**Lesson:** *Real fellowship with a God Who is completely Biblical necessarily involves ordering one's life in complete alignment with Scripture. Any deviation from God's Word in one's walk produces a lack of spiritual intimacy in that believer's experience both with the Lord as well as with other godly believers.*

**Application:** *May we rely on the Holy Spirit perfectly to align with Scripture to enjoy God's fulfilling fellowship.*