

1 John 1 – Summary Thoughts

Table – 1 John 1:1-10

- 1 *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;*
- 2 *(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)*
- 3 *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.*
- 4 *And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.*
- 5 *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.*
- 6 *If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:*
- 7 *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.*
- 8 *If we say that 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 that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*

Notes on Table – 1 John 1:1-10

For detailed comments see Dr Ruckman's commentary *The Books of the General Epistles* Volume 2 pp vii-xii, 1-30 and the *Ruckman Reference Bible* p 1633.

1. 1 John 1:1-3. John has shown Who the Lord Jesus Christ is.

1.1. *“from the beginning”* 1 John 1:1:

“And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you” Exodus 3:14.

“Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am” John 8:58.

1.2. *“the Word of life”* 1 John 1:1:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...In him was life; and the life was the light of men” John 1:1, 4. It is true of the Lord Jesus Christ that *“He is beside himself”* Mark 3:21, note the 3 and the 3x7, because *“For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one”* 1 John 5:7. The expression can therefore now be used only of an insane person.

1.3. *“the life...manifested”* 1 John 1:2:

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” John 1:14.

1.4. *“that eternal life”* 1 John 1:2:

“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life” John 5:39-40.

“And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand” John 10:28.

1.5. *Fullness of joy with everlasting fellowship*, 1 John 1:3-4:

“In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also...These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full” John 14:2-3, 15:11.

“Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come” Hebrews 13:13-14.

2. 1 John 1:4. John has written of the Lord Jesus Christ to encourage faith and joy in Him.

“And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe...these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” John 19:35.

3. 1 John 1:5. John has summarised what the Lord Jesus Christ Himself declared about **“God is light”** to Paul and to the world.

“And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me” Acts 26:15-18.

4. 1 John 5:6-10. John’s three big **“if’s”** **“by reason of use...discern both good and evil”** Hebrews 5:14.

4.1. **“If we say”** 1 John 5:6, 8, 10

“that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie...” 1 John 5:6.

Profession without sanctification is abomination.

“They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate” Titus 1:14.

“that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves...” 1 John 1:8.

Self-righteousness is self-deception.

“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me” Psalm 51:5.

“that we have not sinned, we make him a liar...” 1 John 1:10.

Self-justification is God-condemnation.

“Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?” Job 40:8.

4.2. **“...if we walk”** 1 John 1:7

“in the light...we have fellowship one with another” 1 John 1:7

Fellowship flourishes in the light of **“that which is good and right in the sight of the LORD thy God”** Deuteronomy 12:28.

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you” Philippians 4:8-9.

“and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” 1 John 1:7.

Forgiveness of sin follows openness with God.

“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me; But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me” Psalm 66:18-20.

4.3. ***“If we confess”*** 1 John 1:9

“our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins” 1 John 1:9

Sins’ forgiveness depends upon God’s faithfulness and mercy.

“This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him” Lamentations 3:21-24.

“and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” 1 John 1:9.

Cleansing follows forgiveness but faithful service should follow cleansing.

“For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” Hebrews 9:13-14.

Conclusion

1 John 1 contrasts the light of God with the darkness of the individual’s sin and reveals to the reader the way of deliverance from darkness into the Lord’s marvellous light for everlasting oneness with Him and fellow believers as Peter has summarised.

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” 1 Peter 2:9.