

Colleyville Presbyterian Church

1 John 1:1-10

April 16, 2023

Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and the comfort of your holy Word we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

-Thomas Cranmer, 1549

*1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— 2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— 3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. 4 And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.*

Note the similarities with John 1: *1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it....14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth... 18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.*

John here speaks of the pre-existence of the Son, and his own fellowship with the Risen Christ (John 20:19-31). Everything that he has to say flows out of this — his living communion with the Risen Christ, and the Risen Christ's communion with the Father.

John speaks to invite his readers into this rich, abiding communion — it is no metaphor for John, but the truest thing there is. He desires for others to enter into this communion, this *koinonia*, so that his (and their joy) may be completed and perfected).

Remember the words of Jesus:

John 10:10: *“I came that they may have life and have it abundantly”*; Jn 11:25: *“I am the resurrection and the life”*; Jn 14:23: *“If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him”*; Jn 15:9,11: *“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love...These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”*

The Christian life, according to 1 John, is a life of communion with God through communion with his Risen Son and all those who dwell in communion with him as well. *Koinonia* with Christ means *koinonia* with God, and *koinonia* with Christ's body — and this *koinonia* brings us life and joy.

1 John 1:5-10: 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.*

The fellowship that John speaks of requires walking in the light (for God himself is light).

There is a deep connection between walking in the light and truthfulness — particularly truthfulness about ourselves.

The blood (and death) of Jesus frees us to speak truthfully about our sins — so that we can be cleansed and have fellowship with one another. To confess our sin is to “practice” the truth.

There is a real danger of failing to be truthful about our status as a sinner, which leads to self-deception and walking outside the fellowship that the truth brings.

What is the answer? Confession! Confession cleanses us not only from our sins, but also from the self-deception that we are NOT sinners. In contrast, clinging to the commitment that we have not sinned makes God to be liar, and breaks his *koinonia* with us.

What are the implications of this for our worship? For our relationship with God? For our relationships with one another in the church? For our marriages/families/friendships, etc?

—Maundy Thursday time of confession/forgiveness.