

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

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"THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"

The apostle John in his letter speaks about the friendship and fellowship that Christians have with God. He wrote "our fellowship is with the Father and the Son". The reason he wrote his letter was that all his readers might have the same experience. It is a wonderful concept, friendship and fellowship with God. John and his friends were experiencing it, and he wrote his letter that his readers might experience this fellowship with God and with one another in God, in order, as he said, that their joy might be full. All friendship is a happy thing; but friendship with God - what happier thing could be imagined? John lays down three things through which this fellowship operates.

Firstly, it comes about through the knowledge of Jesus; Jesus is the eternal Son of God, who became man at Bethlehem and lived in Galilee, taking our nature while still remaining God. The apostle wrote "He who is from the beginning, who was made manifest" "Whom we have seen and handled, he is the one who is the source of life and He is the one of whom I am writing". So the first point is that if we want to be a friend of God we must come to God through Jesus Christ and we will have fellowship with our other Christians, since we are all friends of God together.

The second principle is that since God is light we must walk in the light, our lives must be,

honest and true. We must reflect the character of God and love and serve other people as Jesus did. John said that if anybody says he is the friend of God having fellowship with Him and yet walks in darkness he is just simply telling a lie.

The third principle is that when we fall short of what we ought to do, in other words, when we fall into sin and don't walk in the light, then if we ask for forgiveness our sins will be blotted out through Jesus Christ who died for us. "If we confess our sins", John wrote, "God is faithful and fair to forgive us our sins", because of Jesus, who is our advocate with the Father and who died for us. To enter into fellowship with God doesn't require an elaborate ritual or religious exercises; in fact these things get in the way of fellowship. But what is required is that we should come to Jesus who is the revelation of the true God and accept Jesus as our boss. That will bring us into friendship with God because God will accept us as his friend and we should then walk in the light and live a life like Jesus, talking with him as will any friend, by reading his word and praying to him and doing the things that please Him. But when we sin (and who doesn't?) then ask for forgiveness in Jesus name, so we will have fellowship with God and the joy of our friendship will be increasing from now throughout eternity.

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