

1 JOHN: DEFEATING MISLEADING SPIRITUAL ERROR TRULY TO COMMUNE WITH GOD

Part II: Discerning False From True Godly Spiritual Fellowship

(1 John 1:5-7 with Isaiah 8:19-9:2)

I. Introduction

- A. A call is heard that believers should put aside the "fine points" of doctrine and unite on "basic beliefs".
- B. To be honest, I have **never** felt comfortable doing that, for overlooking the "fine points" of God's truth leaves us playing a game of spiritual roulette: Jesus predicted in Matthew 13:36-39 that Satan would sow his people among believers, an act that is possible as weak believers neglect to heed parts of Scripture (cf. the parable of the Sower, Matt. 13:18-23); to illustrate this, the August 16, 2004 issue of USA Today claims that Al-Qaeda, the terrorist group responsible for the 911 atrocities, has agents that "Operate under deep cover, sometimes hiding their Muslim faith by posing as Christians", many of whom make it easier for such terrorist impostors to dwell among them as they abandon their dedication to doctrinal precision!
- C. 1 John 1:5-7 with Isaiah 8:19-9:2 speaks on these issues, and guides us accordingly (as follows):

II. Discerning False From True Godly Spiritual Fellowship, 1 John 1:5-7 with Isaiah 8:19-9:2.

- A. The Apostle John reported that he along with the other Apostles of Christ (1 John 1:1-2) had received a message from God's Son, Jesus Christ, the Word of Life Who appeared to them, 1 John 1:5a.
- B. That message was that God was totally Biblical, that nothing in Him that is unbiblical existed in any way:
 - 1. John claimed that Jesus Christ revealed God was light, and in Him was no darkness at all, 1 John 1:5b.
 - 2. Considering the writer's background in view of Old Testament Scripture, we discern that by "light" John meant God's revealed truth that exists in the Old Testament Scripture or in Jesus Christ Himself:
 - a. John along with the core of Christ's other twelve disciples had been called by Jesus to follow Him when He began His earthly ministry in the region of Galilee, cf. Matthew 4:18-22.
 - b. Christ's ministry in Galilee fulfilled the Isaiah 9:1-2 prediction that God's Great Light would come to minister to the people there who walked in spiritual darkness, Matthew 4:13-16 with Isaiah 9:1-2.
 - c. Well, the Great Light in Isaiah 9:2 was Jesus Who was sent by God the Father to offset the darkness of Israel's turning from the revealed Word of God in the Old Testament Scriptures: (a) In contrast to the "Great Light" of Isaiah 9:1-2, the prophet, Isaiah complained about the people of Israel who lived in deep spiritual and hence depressing darkness, Isaiah 8:21-22. (b) This darkness existed because the people had exchanged the revelation of God's truth in the written Old Testament Scriptures (cf. Isaiah 8:20) for insight from spiritists and mediums, Isaiah 8:19.
 - d. Hence, by "light" in 1 John 1:5, the Apostle John meant God's revealed truth in the written Word of God and in the words and works of God's Son, the Great Light, Jesus Christ, cf. John 1:18.
 - 3. 1 John 1:5b then reveals God is fully Biblical in every way, that nothing that is unbiblical is in Him!
- C. For this reason, John claimed that if a believer orders his life in violation of written Scripture or the words of Christ, he does not fellowship with God, no matter what he claims to the contrary, 1 John 1:6.
- D. Yet, going even further, the related passage of Isaiah 8:20 NIV reveals if one does not say, "To The Law and to the testimony," or, 'we need to look to Scripture,' he has no light of dawn in him, or he has no faint insight and certainly no hope of future, full true insight (the faint dawn light hints of the coming day)! That means that if one fails to make Scripture his *starting* point for **all** spiritual insight, he is in *darkness* !
- E. However, John explained that if one orders his life in **full** accord with **all** written Scripture and the words of Christ, he enjoys fellowship with God, and Christ's blood cleanses him from all sin, 1 John 1:7.
- F. Then, because fellowship between God and a believer opens up the door to fellowship with others who fellowship with God (1 John 1:3), John revealed that mutual observance of Scripture and Christ's words produces true, mutual, fulfilling fellowship between godly believers, 1 John 1:7 with 1 John 1:3-4.

Lesson: For true fellowship with God and other believers, one must commit to rely on and to heed God's Word to the FULL! Anything less leaves him in darkness and headed toward spiritual defeat!

Application: (1) We must not heed today's siren call to sacrifice a commitment to the Bible's "fine points", for that only leaves us in darkness and yields a FALSE and harmful unity! (2) Conversely, heeding Scripture FULLY not only fosters true unity, but protects that union from impostors!