

I JOHN: TRUE SPIRITUAL FELLOWSHIP
VIII. Fellowship And Lifelong Spiritual Productivity
(1 John 3:4-10)

I. Introduction

- A. When John wrote 1 John, he implied in 1 John 1:3 that a number of his readers did not enjoy spiritual fellowship with the Apostles, with God the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ!
- B. Such a lack of true fellowship occurs with many believers today, a state that Christ predicted would exist in our era in Revelation 3:14-22. We thus continue our study of 1 John in viewing 1 John 3:4-10 on the effects of fellowship with God or its lack on one's lifelong spiritual productivity (as follows):

II. Fellowship And Lifelong Spiritual Productivity, 1 John 3:4-10.

- A. John claimed that everyone who "produces, makes, performs, manufactures" (*poieo*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 817; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 687-689) sin also "produces, makes, performs, manufactures" (*poieo* again, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.) lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness, 1 Jn. 3:4. The verb *poieo* focuses on the product of one's action rather the action itself (Richard C. Trench, Synonyms of the N. T., 1973, p. 361-364), so John's focus here is on the long-term production of sin or righteousness in life.
- B. We believers know absolutely (*oida*, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 558-559) [that is, through Scripture and the Holy Spirit] that that One [Jesus Christ] was manifested in His incarnation that He might take away sins, and that in Him there is no sin, 1 John 3:5. Accordingly, everyone who is remaining (*meno*, Ibid., p. 818) or fellowshiping (cf. John 15:1-10) in Him in devotedly keeping His commandments is not sinning while everyone who sins has not come to behold (perfect form of *horao*, "see, notice, experience," Ibid.; Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 581-582) Him or come experientially to know (*ginosko*, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 159-161) Him in his Christian walk, 1 John 3:6.
- C. Accordingly, the Apostle John urged the entire body of Christ, the *tekna* [plural of *teknon*] (Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 815-816) not to let anyone deceive them, that he who produces (*poieo* again) righteousness as a way of life is righteous, just as that One, Christ, is righteous, but he who produces (*poieo* again) sin as a way of life is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning, 1 John 3:7-8a; Ibid. John here evidently countered the teaching of Gnostic heretics who claimed that since the human body was evil, one should indulge its lusts in all sorts of sins as a way of life! (Zon. Pict. Ency. Bib., vol. Two, p. 736; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 1770, "Introduction to the First Letter of John: Gnosticism")
- D. John explained that it was for this very purpose that the Son of God, Jesus Christ, was manifested in His incarnation, namely, that He might destroy the works of the devil, and in this context he meant that Christ came to destroy the production of sin as a way of life in people, 1 John 3:8b.
- E. Furthermore, everyone who has been permanently begotten (*gegennetai*, perfect passive of *gennaō*, "beget," The Analyt. Grk. Lex. (Zon.), 1972, p. 76; Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 154-155) of God in the new birth does not produce (*poieo* again) sin, because His [God's] seed remains in him, and he is not able to sin, because he has been permanently begotten (*gegennetai* again) of God, 1 John 3:9; Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T. Since 1 John 1:8, 10 state that all believers still have a sin nature and have committed acts of sin as believers, John must be referring here to the new nature that is born of God at salvation, claiming that that new nature in us is incapable of sin unlike our old sin nature, that if one is a true believer in Christ and thus spends significant time living in the new nature, he will not produce a life of sin. (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 895)
- F. John summed that the children (*tekna* again) of God and the children (*tekna* again) of the devil are manifested in this issue, that everyone who does **not** produce a life (*poieo* again) of righteousness and who does **not** love his brother [as a way of life implied by the context] is not of God (Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.) where everyone who produces righteousness and loves his brother as a way of life is born of God, 1 John 3:10.

Lesson: *Contrary to the wicked Gnostics who taught that the body was evil so that one should indulge in its sinful lusts, Christ came to destroy the works of the devil that produced such lives of sin in people. Thus, true fellowship with God leads to a life of righteousness, including a life of loving the brethren where the failure to fellowship by one who is not born of God leads to his living a life of sin that also involves not loving true believers.*

Application: *(1) May we realize that if we are saved, we cannot lose our salvation, for our salvation is permanent. (2) May we also realize that the saved will produce righteousness as a way of life where the lost will produce sin and hatred as a way of life, that we not let ourselves be influenced by others in even religious realms to live in sin.*