

Fellowship With Christ

by Kenneth Wuest

To have intimate fellowship with the Lord Jesus, we must live in the book, walk in the light, maintain a contrite heart, and depend on the advocacy of the Lord Jesus.

Duration: 54:00

Scripture: John 10:10-11, John 10:15, John 10:17-18, John 10:28, 1 John 1:1-2, 1 John 1:5 - 2:2

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Victory Over Sin"

Description

The video is a promotional announcement for a series of sermon tapes available for purchase. The tapes feature Dr. Kenneth S. Week, a Teacher Emeritus of New Testament Greek at Moody Bible Institute. The tapes cover various topics related to the teachings of the Bible, including the anointing of the Holy Spirit, victory over sin, the rapture of the Church, and the meaning of Jesus' cry on the cross. Dr. Week's expertise in Greek translation and his extensive knowledge of the Bible make these tapes valuable resources for those seeking a deeper understanding of Christian teachings.

Transcript

Our subject is the Saints' Fellowship with the Lord Jesus. And we turn to John's first epistle, and our study will be the entire first chapter and the first two verses of chapter two. And in these verses we find four conditions which must be met by the saint if he is to enjoy intimate fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The first one is in verses one to four, live in the book. The second one is in verses five to seven, walk in the light. The third one is in verses eight, to maintain a contrite.

And the fourth one is in chapter two, verses one and two, depend upon the advocacy of the Lord Jesus. We take these four up now one at a time. First of all, if we expect to have intimate, intelligent, close fellowship with the Lord Jesus, we must live in the book, the Bible.

John says, 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 the world of life, that which was from the beginning. John talks about that in his gospel, chapter one, verses one to ten, where he speaks of those things true of the Lord Jesus since the beginning of the universe. But when he says, which we have heard, he starts in verse eleven and with the incarnation.

The word we, of course, is the editorial we of John. He's talking about the things true of the Lord Jesus Christ, and he speaks of the things that were true of him, which, he says, we have heard. The verb is in the perfect tense in Greek here.

The perfect tense in Greek speaks of an action going on in past time, complete, having present results. And the full translation is, that which we have heard with the present result, that it is ringing in our ears. It's the present result of a past action.

John wrote the gospel attributed to him about sixty years after Jesus was on earth. And he records in that gospel things that he heard Jesus speak. And by the use of the perfect tense, he tells us that while he was writing the gospel, sixty years afterwards, the words of Jesus were still ringing in his ears.

And then another reason for using the perfect tense is found in the fact that he wants to assure his readers that after sixty years had elapsed, he still was a competent witness to record the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those things which he did not remember, he had the promise of the Holy Spirit, that the Holy Spirit would bring back to his remembrance things that he had forgotten. Then he says, the things which we have seen with our eyes.

And again he uses the perfect tense. The things which we have seen in time past, with the present result that they are vivid in our minds' eyes. John could close his eyes as he was writing the gospel, and see the Lord Jesus very vividly in his mind's eyes.

Now why did he say, we have seen with our eyes? We can't see anything except with our eyes. The answer is found in the fact that he's combating a false doctrine, which in the first century obtained, we call it docetism. And it taught that Jesus didn't have an actual human body, it was just a seeming human body.

But John says, with his optic nerve he saw the Lord Jesus. And the Greek word for see here means to see with discernment, to understand what you see. Then he says, which we have looked upon.

Another Greek word to see, it means to gaze with wonder. No wonder after having seen the Lord Jesus with the disciple's gaze with wonder. And then he says, and our hands have, the Greek word for handle means to handle with a view to, and here we have an incidental reference to John referring back to the upper room experience, see that a spirit, he says, that which we have heard, seen, and handled, the life.

And the Greek word for word there has the idea of the total of the life. Now what life? The life that God is in himself. For he says, for the life was manifested.

We could also translate it, for the life was made visible. Now we cannot see light. It's invisible.

But when we put light through it, that prism breaks it up into its component color. So we cannot see the life that God is. But when that life was brought through the prism of the human body and human limitation, beauty, and that's what John is speaking of here.

For the life that God is, and bear witness and show, that is in verses 1 and 2 in his gospel, he recorded, then in verse 3, he gives the purpose. He says, that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you that ye also. How are we to understand this? The English word fellowship means companionship.

Most of the readers of John's first epistle never saw John. The family letter center. How could John have? The answer is found in the basic meaning.

The basic meaning is to have joint participation. Let's translate it that way. That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have in his first hand knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And as a believer in the control of the Holy Spirit, he looks through John and he listens through John's ears and he touches Jesus with John's. And thus, John says, that will enable us to have fellowship with the Father. That is the portrait of the Lord Jesus painted by the Holy Spirit.

And in fact, in other places in the Bible, the portraits are a medium through which we are enabled. And we have believed Romans. How much I could write letters to a young.

We could know about each other, but here we have an invisible person, the Lord Jesus. To have fellowship with. And the Holy Spirit has painted a series of him in the book.

Suppose for a moment, I would say now, of this young man who you say, that's ridiculous. That's not a picture of that man. The artist knows.

It's just as ridiculous to take pictures purported to be of the Lord Jesus painted by artists who never saw him. It's just as ridiculous. They're not pictures of him.

They're pictures of the artist's imagination. And these pictures are spurious. And in the judgment of the Holy Spirit, they detract by the paint.

So the first condition of having fellowship is live in the book. The second condition is walk in the light. This, then, is the message which we have heard of him in declaring to you that God is light and in him is no darkness at all.

But I don't believe that. I do not believe that God is light. God is a person.

God, as to his nature, is light. And that's what the Greek says. That is, there is no sin in him.

He's righteous and pure and holy. And there is no darkness of sin in him, John says, not one bit. Then he says, if we up and say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth.

That is, if we say that we have things in common with God and thus fellowship and companionship with him, then our habitually ordering our behavior in the darkness of sin, we're lying. And we are not habitually obeying the truth. That person is an unsaved person.

But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another. Now, who's the we who have fellowship one with another? Is it we saints have fellowship with one another? Or is it we saints and the Lord Jesus have fellowship with one another? Well, the context is very clear where we have in verse 3, truly our fellowship is with the saints. And so we read, if we saints walk in the light as he is in the light, the Lord Jesus, we, the saints and the Lord Jesus, have fellowship one with another.

Now, that word fellowship in its basic meaning, we said, was to have things in common with one another, common likes and dislikes. Now, you couldn't imagine that a grave digger and an artist had, therefore, two artists had things in common with one another. We saints have things in common with the Lord Jesus.

We both have the divine nature. That is, of course, to be distinguished from our Lord's divine essence. We're not talking about that.

We have likes and dislikes, common likes and dislikes. We hate the things Jesus hates, namely sin. And we love the things Jesus loves, namely righteousness.

So, as we order our behavior within the spirit, we, the saints and the Lord Jesus, have things in common with one another, and thus fellowship. The words one with another are the translation of a Greek word which is a reciprocal pronoun. And this fellowship, therefore, is a reciprocity.

It isn't a one-sided affair. It isn't as if a young man is in love with a young woman. It's this.

The saint fellowships with the Lord Jesus, and the Lord Jesus reciprocates by having. And while we're having this fellowship, the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, keeps constant. Now, Jesus will not have fellowship with a saint, a sinning saint.

He will not have fellowship with a saint. These sins here are sins of omission, okay? There are some things you and I are doing. Therefore, we have the divine provision of the constant cleansing.

Now, this fellowship is a very, very, very beautiful thing. This word, Greek word fellowship, is found in early of a doctor who had lost his wife, and he had put an inscription on her tombstone. It seems, as we piece the story together, that they had been sweet, had then married, and now he was a lonely old man, and he put this inscription on her tombstone.

As with you alone, I shared my life. The word shared is the Greek word here. How beautiful it is when a saint can say to Jesus, how with you alone I shared my life.

Jesus only, not of self to mar his glory, not of sin to make it dim, just a glorious, glorious shining that the friends around see. Resurrection joys abounding. Every day his conscious presence.

All my life, when soon he'll come, then I shall see my Lord the crucified. What a glorious day is breaking, he and I, quite satisfied. So the first condition of fellowship with Jesus is that we might become better acquainted with him.

The second condition is walk in the light, that we might live right. The third condition is maintain a contrite heart. David said, the sacrifices of broken and a contrite heart.

Oh, we come now to this contrite heart. In verse 8 we say that we have no sin. We deceive ourselves, and the word sin here is in the singular number, and it doesn't have an article before it.

The emphasis is upon nature, and the word sin here therefore does not refer to the sinful nature. And so we could translate and interpret as we deceive ourselves. The Greek order of words is ourselves we are deceiving.

The implication being clear that John means that the person who believes in the eradication of the sinful is only deceiving himself. He's not deceiving anybody else. Everybody else can see sin speaking out all over him.

And he says that person doesn't have the truth in him, namely the truth regarding the indwelling sinful nature which remains in the believer until his death. Now, what is the value of this teaching? Namely this, that the person who believes in the eradication of the sinful nature doesn't watch carefully the indwelling sin in his life, and he gets rather careless about his actions. Whereas the person who remembers and counts upon the fact that the indwelling sinful nature is still in him, though the power over him is broken,

carefully watches.

Let this sinful nature bring sin into his life. Then John says, in case sin does come into the life, and it does in our Christian lives at times, we don't want to sin, but it does, he says, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. What should we do if sin comes into our lives? Confess it, John says.

The author, the writer? No, the present speaker, when he was teaching Greek, had a student in his class who translated it this way, if we admit our sins. But I pointed out to the class that the Greek word meant more than to admit. The Greek word is made up of two words put together.

One word means to speak, and the other word means sin. And the compound word meaning to speak the same thing as another, that's to agree with someone on a certain thing. And Christian confession of sin in the life is the act of that saint agreeing with the Holy Spirit as to sin in the life.

The Holy Spirit says that's sin in your life. I say that is sin. The Holy Spirit says you ought to be ashamed of yourself and sorry for it.

The Holy Spirit says you ought to repent, and I say I do repent. The Holy Spirit says you ought to put that out of your life, and I say by thy grace and thy power, that's Christian confession, and nothing short of that is. And so if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, which means that the sin in our life, so far as defilement is concerned, is cleansed away.

Sin in a Christian's life, so far as the breaking of the law is concerned, was dealt with at the cross. But sin in a Christian's life has to do with defilement, and thus the blood of Jesus cleanses us away in fellowship with Jesus. John says if we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

And so the third condition of fellowship with Jesus is to maintain a contrite heart, a heart that is always willing, yes, eager, to have the Holy Spirit point out any sin in the life, and is always eager to put that sin out. Let me tell you of a saint who illustrates this truth very, very well. His name is Albert Sengel.

He was a great Greek scholar, a German theologian who was Orthodox. The old man who lived in the dormitories of men's students at the seminary where he taught. And one night he came in rather late and went to his room and left the door ajar.

The students wondered at his holy light, and they wanted to find out the secret of it. And some of them gathered outside his room to listen to the old man's devotions. The old man opened the Bible and spent a little time with it.

Then he closed it, bowed his head, and said, Lord Jesus, things are just the same between you and me as they've always been. Amen. What had he been doing? Allowing the word of God to search for sin.

That was one of the secrets of his holy life, and his biographer has this to say concerning him. So close was his communion with his Lord that labor did not interrupt it, and prayer was not necessary to renew it. He was a ceaseless, almost unconscious person.

Like the fragrance of a summer garden, or the presence of some dear one by our side, whose presence somehow we feel, even though hours pass by and not a word is exchanged. And so we have three conditions for intimate fellowship with the Lord Jesus. Live in the book.

Two, walk in the light. Three, maintain a contrite heart. And four, depend upon the advocacy of the Lord Jesus.

And we find that in chapter 2, verses 1. John says, My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not. An expanded translation would read, These things write I unto you that you do not commit an act of sin. Sin is forbidden in the Christian mind.

But John says, If any man sin, and he's very careful to use the tension mode in the Greek here, which tells us that a Christian does not sin habitually like he did before he was saved. John says in his Greek, And if any man commit an act of sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. The English word advocate is the English spelling of a German word Advo.

And that is the translation of the English word a lawyer. An attorney retained to defend someone. And this Greek word translated advocate was used in the Greek law courts of an attorney for the defense.

It means literally one called alongside of another to give him aid. It's one who pleads our cause. And Jesus our Lord is our advocate up there with the Father.

The English word thee is the translation of the Greek word which means facing. And so we translate it, If any man commit an act of sin, we have one with the Father, facing the Father, pleading our cause. Jesus Christ is always facing the Father.

He's always in fellowship with the Father in order that if you and I get out of fellowship, he can pray us back into fellowship. For when we sin, Jesus takes up his work of advocacy and prays that the Holy Spirit might produce in our hearts that requisite repentance and contrition for sin and confession that will bring us back into fellowship with himself. And then John adds, and he is the propitiation for our sins, not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Now that word propitiation, the Greek word was used in the pagan religions, the act of a pagan worshiper bringing an offering or a gift to his pagan god for the purpose of buying the god's love and placating his anger. And that's exactly what the word propitiation means, namely the act of someone attempting to buy someone else's love and placate his anger. But our God is not a god.

His love wells from his heart spontaneously like an artisan well, and he is not like a previous Greek god that needs his anger to be placated. That means that here is one Greek word when brought over into the New Testament has had its meaning changed. And we have translated it this way, and he is the expiatory satisfaction for our sins.

That is our Lord's sacrifice on the cross for the satisfaction to the broken law. He satisfied the just demands of God's law which we broke, paid the penalty, and the word expiatory means that it was a sacrifice on his part. So he is the expiatory satisfaction for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Thus, in order to have intimate intelligent fellowship with the Lord Jesus, first we must do what? Live in the Bible. Read the Gospels. Don't read them chapter by chapter.

Sit down and read as much of one gospel as you can in one sitting. Then read another large section. And then in the Pauline Epistles in the Old Testament, see the portraits of the Lord Jesus painted by the Holy Spirit, and thus we can in our hearts see the Lord Jesus in his beauty, and thus be able to have a more

intelligent fellowship with him.

So the first condition is live in the book. The second condition is walk in the light. Order our behavior within the sphere of what God's word tells us to do.

And the third condition is maintain a contrite heart. Have a heart which always is eager to allow the Holy Spirit to search it for sin, and eager to put that sin out when it's discovered. Contrite heart, by confessing it, putting it away.

And finally, the last condition is depend upon the advocacy of Jesus, praying us back into fellowship when we stray away from our Lord. Thank you, Dr. Weeks. You have just heard Dr. Kenneth S. Weeks say for many years that this is one message of a series of 16, which have been placed on tape by Victory in Christ Literature Crusade, Box 61, Wheaton, Illinois.

These are available at a price of \$2 each tape for a five-inch size. Also, seven-inch tapes for \$3 at a speed of seven and one-half, which can be used for radio work. The title is Tape 1, The Precise Distinction Between The Annoying Width and the Fullness of the Holy Spirit, Victory over Indwell.

Tape 2, The Rapture of the Church, page 29. Tape 3, Four Greek Words for the Verbal Inspiration of the Bible. Tape 4, Tape 5, The Self-Emptying of the Son of God, known as Tape 6, A Post-Resurrection Crisis.

Tape 7, Tape 8. We also have tapes, Moody, Founders Week, Bible Teacher. We have tapes of, many of these tapes are available, three and three-quarters. I would like to call your attention particularly to consider chapter 10, verse 10, the last phrase, a statement of purpose.

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. Then the last phrase of verse 11, the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. And with that verse, notice the last phrase of verse 15, I lay down my life for the sheep.

And the last phrase of verse 17, I lay down my life that I might take it again. Then in verse 18, I lay it down of myself. Then the final verse, verse 28, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.

There is a sequence of thought, not only a sequence of thought, but an actual sequence in the redemptive process given to us here in these verses. A statement of purpose, a statement of method, and then a statement of fact concerning the life of Christ actually possessed by men. The Lord Jesus said, I am come that they, the sheep, may have life, and that they may have it abundantly, more abundantly.

Evidently they didn't have this life. They could not themselves procure this life. They needed this life.

And Jesus states he has come for the express purpose of giving them life. The life of the Lord Jesus stands absolutely unique. None had ever lived as he lived.

The only man in all history whose entire life was God-approved, this man in thought, word, and deed did always those things that pleased the Father. He was born under the law, and he fulfilled the law. The law to him was not a minister of condemnation.

It was a minister of approbation and approval. The law amended him for what he was. The law approved him in what he did.

He was totally accepted under the law by the law before God. He fulfilled it in thought, in feeling, in attitude, and action, and reaction, in his Godward relationship, in his selfward relationship, in his manward relationship toward friend and enemy, toward good and bad, toward religious and non-religious, toward learned and ignorant. His actions and reactions were proper.

They were righteous. They were true. They were good.

They were just. This man, of all men, alone stood approved under the law, and by the law, a perfect life. In this he was the recovery of the ideal of man, for this is what God intended man to be.

This is what God created man to be. This is the man that God wanted, a man who would be right with God and right with his fellows, right in feeling, thought, and action, always. But none had ever been so.

Adam had failed, and all the sons of Adam had failed, and the best of men in every generation had failed, the greatest of them, the most saintly of them. Oh, you say, hadn't they found acceptance with God? Yes, but not by keeping the law. Not one of them.

Their approval before God was on the basis of the work of another. They had to have representation before God. Their sin had to be acknowledged.

It had to be removed. They were judged as being not righteous men, not basically good men. They were justified, they were accepted by faith in God and acceptance of the promises of God.

But here was a man, here was a man who in every particular was certified by God to be well pleasing, accepted, approved in every possible way. And he talks about leading men. He challenges men to live like he lives.

He calls men to follow him. He promises to men great things, not only that involve this life, but the life to come. And the immediate problem rises.

Are there any men who can follow this man? Are there any who will have the disposition, who will have the nature, who will have the ability to follow this man, to be led by him into the kind of life he lives, and into the glory that he pictures, not only for this life, but for the life to come? He insists in this tenth chapter of John that he has sheep. He insists that they hear his voice, and they follow his call, and they will do his will, and he shall lead them into pastures, and they shall go in and out, and they shall know salvation, and they shall be with him forever. How? How can it be? There are two little prepositions here that are with great meaning.

There is the first preposition stated for us in verse 11. He giveth his life for the sheep. The second preposition is stated in verse 28.

I give to them eternal life. There's a big difference between life for the sheep and life to the sheep. And you come over into the epistles, and you find even a stronger and third preposition in this sequence, the life of Jesus in our mortal bodies.

Or, as Paul said in Galatians 220, Christ is living in me. Or in Colossians, the first chapter, Christ in you, the hope of glory. Now, there is an ordered sequence here.

His life for us, life to us, life in us, the same life. Here is a life that no man had ever lived, a life that Jesus now perfectly manifests. It is a life that is divine.

It is of God. It is not of human origin, not of human resolution, not of human progeny in any sense. It is not of the flesh, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of blood, human blood.

It is not of that at all. Here is a life that is of God. It is not of earth.

It is from heaven. It is not from beneath. It is from above.

It is a totally different kind of life. And this life now, in the form of a man, walks and talks and works, acts and interacts. And the difference between him and others becomes increasingly clear at every point in the road, every day.

Even the difference between him and the men whom he had chosen out of the world who were learning to follow him, the difference is immense. He would say something they would misunderstand. He would interpret they still would misunderstand.

And until after his death, burial, and resurrection, they really understood very little. But they did begin to believe him. And in believing, they did begin to know.

And he promised he could lead them all the way. He promised that he could lead them all the way into the full knowing of him, and into his knowing of God, and into his loving of God, and into his obedience to God, and into his enjoyment of God. Oh, what a staggering proposition to set before men.

He must lay down his life for the sheep. It is the only way of communication. It is the only way that the life that he is can become theirs.

He must lay down his life for the sheep. And he does not shrink from this. This is why he came into the world.

But I want you to see something. The ultimate purpose is that men may have life. The ultimate purpose is not the death of Christ.

The ultimate purpose is not the shedding of his blood. The ultimate purpose is not that great redemptive work, and we cannot in any way minimize the greatness of that work. It is the greatest work that has ever taken place on the face of the earth.

What Jesus did on the cross of Calvary, it is immense in its dimension. Its heights and depths and lengths and breadths far greater than any human mind has ever yet comprehended or ever will. But the cross is not the goal.

The death of Christ is not the grand design, the grand purpose of the design. The grand purpose is that men should have life. That men should have this kind of life so that they can walk knowing God.

That men could have this kind of life so that they can worship, so that they can enjoy God, so that they could be

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