

Title: **SIX INSTRUCTIVE “IFS”**
Text: 1 John 1:1-2:2
Subject: *Identifying True Faith*

Introduction:

(1 John 1:1-5) “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, of the Word of life; (2) (For the life was manifested, and we have seen *it*, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) (3) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. (4) And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. (5) This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”

In the opening verses of his Epistle, John speaks of himself as **an eye witness of the Lord Jesus Christ**, who is “**the Word of life**,” who is himself “*eternal life*.” — “*In him was life; and the life was the light of men*” (John 1:4). He declares the eternal deity of Christ and the blessed unity of the triune Godhead.

“**That which was from the beginning**.” — Specifically, John is talking about our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior, whose “*goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting*” (Micah 5:2).

(Micah 5:2) “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting.”

There was a beginning before the beginning. Our blessed Savior went forth from the beginning as our covenant Surety to save us from our sins

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 Katy Baptist Church, Fairmont, WV— April 7, 2007
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(Proverbs 8:23; Isaiah 46:10; John 1:1; 6:64; Acts 15:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 John 2:14).

(Proverbs 8:23) “I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.”

(Isaiah 46:10) “Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”

(John 1:1) “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

(John 6:64) “There are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.”

(Acts 15:18) “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.”

(2 Thessalonians 2:13) “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.”

(1 John 2:14) “I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.”

SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE

John assures us that his message is no more and no less than that which he had personally seen and heard. It was not second-hand information, but that which he knew by personal experience. He says, I’m telling you about that “*which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon diligently and with delight, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life.*” — **Christ, who is life essential**, swallowed up death in victory, and “*brought life and immortality to light by the gospel*” (2 Timothy 1:10).

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(2 Timothy 1:9-11) “Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, (10) But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: (11) Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.”

“*That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.*” John is not merely glorying in the fact that he had physically seen, and handled, and known the Lord Jesus Christ after the flesh. Many did that, and still do, without benefit to their souls. **John is talking about a true, spiritual, saving knowledge of Christ** (2 Corinthians 5:16).

(2 Corinthians 5:16) “Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we *him* no more.”

Then, he asserts the believer’s fellowship with God in Christ, his desire for every believer’s fullness of joy in Christ. — “*Truly fellowship with the Father and with his Son.*” Union being the ground of communion, all that is theirs is ours. This made Moses cry out, “*Happy art thou, O Israel!*” (Deuteronomy 33:29).

(Deuteronomy 33:29) “Happy *art* thou, O Israel: who *is* like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and who *is* the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.”

This is the message God sent him to declare. — “*God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.*” In this context, John is not simply telling us of God’s transcendent excellence and purity. He is telling us what the message is that we are sent to proclaim. **He is talking about the revelation of God, whom no man has seen or can see, apart from Christ who is both God himself and the Light of life in and by whom God is revealed.** God the Holy Spirit has given us “*the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*” by the gospel (2 Corinthians 4:6).

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Then, in the following seven verses the apostle raises six issues that demand serious, sober consideration.

1. **“If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth”** (v. 6).

Anyone who professes that he has faith in Christ and fellowship with God, who is light, and yet walks in darkness is a liar. His very profession of faith is a lie. Those who remain in darkness, being **ignorant of the plague of their own hearts**, ignorant of **the character of God**, ignorant of **the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ**, and ignorant of **that salvation that is wrought by God the Holy Spirit** walks in darkness. Those who are born of God do not walk in the darkness. **They know the truth and walk in it** (1 John 2:20, 27).

(1 John 2:20) “But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.”

(1 John 2:27) “But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”

God’s saints do, sometimes, walk in darkness; but it is not this darkness. The darkness we experience is the darkness of one who sees no light in himself (Isaiah 50:10).

(Isaiah 50:10) “Who *is* among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh *in* darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God.”

The wicked walk in sparkles of light, sparkles with which they dazzle themselves; but they are sparkles of light struck from their own hearts of flint that soon go out, requiring them to strike the flint again and dazzle themselves with new sparkles of light (Isaiah 50:11).

(Isaiah 50:11) “Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass

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yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks *that* ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.”

2. **“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin”** (v. 7).

All who walk in the light Christ gives by his Spirit in the revelation of the gospel, living by faith in Christ, are united in fellowship with one another. We are brethren! — *“And the blood of Christ”* perpetually *“cleanseth us from all sin.”* I fully agree with Robert Hawker, who said, “Every word here is bigger and more important than all the world.”

- Nothing but the precious blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, can put away sin.
- Nothing but the blood of One who is himself God is of infinite value to put away our sins.
- The precious blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanses us from all sin. — Past sin. — Present sin. — Future sin. — Original sin. — Sin nature. — Deeds of Iniquity. — Acts of transgression. — Even the iniquity of our holy things
- And the precious blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin perpetually — *“cleanseth!”*

“God beholding us in the face of his Son, seeth nothing amiss in us.”
(John Trapp)

3. **“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us”** (v. 8).

Anyone who denies that he is a sinner (present tense) is a liar. Christ is not in him. All believers know and acknowledge that they are sinners and that sin is mixed with all we do. — *“Behold, I am vile!”* — *“I know that in me, that is, in my flesh dwelleth no good thing!”*

4. **“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”** (v. 9).

All who acknowledge and confess their sins are redeemed, saved, pardoned, and justified in Christ. — *“If we confess our sins...”* — Laying our hands

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upon the head of the Sacrifice, we confess our sins. — “*If we confess our sins...*”

- “*He is faithful*”
- “*and just*”
- “*to forgive us our sins,*” removing its guilt.
- “*and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,*” declaring us the righteousness of God in Christ.

5. “***If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his Word is not in us***” (v. 10).

Anyone who foolishly imagines that he has not sinned, even when performing his most righteous deeds, calls God a liar; and the Word of God has no place in him.

6. “***And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the father, Jesus christ, the righteous***” (2:1).

(1 John 2:1-2) “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: (2) And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.”

Child of God, do not sin. Make that your goal. Do not ever be content with sin. But do not ever imagine that you have attained it in this world. “*And if any man sin*” — You can write the word “when” in the place of this “*if*.” When you sin, do not despair, as though you have lost your Savior. Christ is your Advocate still. His blood is effectual still. You are forgiven still. The Lord God will not impute your sin to you! “*Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin*” (Romans 4:8). Our blessed Advocate...

- Is with the Father.
- He is Jesus.
- He is the Christ.
- He is the Righteous!
- He is the Propitiation for our sins.
- And he pleads our cause effectually!

(Romans 8:33-34) “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? *It is* God that justifieth. (34) Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is*

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Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

My sin, O the bliss of this glorious thought: —
My sin, not in part, but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul!
It is well, it is well with my soul!

Amen.