

**F.B. Meyer:**

**If we say, . . . but if we walk - 1 John 1:6,7**

In three marked passages, the beloved apostle guards against what men are apt to say, and indicates to them what it would be better for them to substitute in thought and speech.

Men are apt to say that they have fellowship with Christ and yet continue to walk in darkness. - It arises sometimes from their desire to stand well with their fellows, or because they do not realize how much darkness is still in their lives. But whichever be the cause, they lie and do not the truth. It is better far to walk quietly in the light, so far as we have it; and thus we shall secure His blessed fellowship, and His blood will be continually cleansing us from sin, removing all hindrance on Christ's side to the free communication of His choicest gifts.

Again, men are apt to say that they have no sin (1Jo 1:8). - It is a profound mistake on their part, arising from defective ideas of what sin is, or from self-ignorance. If they realized what God's standard of holiness and sinlessness is; if they understood that sin consists in coming short of His glory as much as in distinct violation of His will; if they knew that there may be sin in motive as much as in act, and even in want of love-they would not speak thus. As it is, they deceive themselves, though no one else. It is better to confess our sins and seek cleansing, even for those of ignorance, in the precious blood of Jesus.

Again, men are apt to say that they have not sinned. - Though they have fallen below their own standard, they do not like to admit it, and cling tenaciously to their position of having got beyond the range of sinning. Much better to admit it, and obtain forgiveness through the one Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.

**The world passeth away, and the lust thereof - 1 John 2:17**

The world stands for the entire system of human interests by which we are surrounded. It does not refer to what God made by His creative fiat and moulding hands, but to the shows, fashions, and pursuits of men. It is used here in the sense in which the devil took Jesus into an exceeding high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and said, "It hath been delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it."

The word used of its evanescence is a remarkably interesting one. It is that employed of the rapid change in some scenic display or performance. A moment ago the stage was full of life and color; but it is suddenly deserted, and the actors and actresses have put off their splendid dresses, and are habited in mean and common attire. Or we might compare the passing away of the world to the dying color of the sunset. The tempter offers us some bait, some outward object which appeals to the eye of the body or the mind, and we reach out toward it; but as we grasp it is gone. We have caught at a soap bubble, have journeyed after a mirage, have hunted the will-o'-the-wisp. So unsubstantial and fleeting are the things with which the men of this world try to appease their immortal appetite.

But it is to be noticed that the desire for these things is even more evanescent than the things themselves. The apostle says that the lust thereof passeth away. The power of enjoyment dies away. The eye is sated with spectacles; the mind with constant change.

How great the contrast! - "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

**Beloved, now are we children of God - 1 John 3:2**

It is our privilege, not only to be children, but to know that we are such. "Such we are" (1Jo 3:1, R.V.). The world knows us not; but God knows us, and we know Him, and we know that we are His sons and daughters, through regeneration and faith. How do we know?

We believe His Word (Joh 1:12). - By faith we have received Him, we do trust in His name; then, by the authority of that text, if there were no other, we may claim to have been born into the Divine household.

We have the witness of the Spirit (Gal 4:6).-The fact that our hearts look to God as Father, and appeal to Him with the infant's cry, Abba, is a proof that we are born again. Do not look for an audible voice in your heart, but notice whether the thought of the fatherly love of God toward you is not becoming more familiar and precious. It is not the perception of your childship, but of His fatherhood, which will reassure you.

**We are led by the Spirit. - If we are led by the Spirit, we shall love the things we once hated, and hate those we once loved. Our choices, tastes, methods of life, habits, and companionships, will undergo a radical alteration.**

**We love the people of God (1Jo 4:7, (R. V.)). - The converse is also true, that he who is begotten of God loveth. We do not presumptuously and habitually yield to known sin (1Jo 3:9, (R. V.)). - The apostle is not speaking of some isolated act into which a man may fall under unexpected temptation, but of habitual courses of inconsistency and wrongdoing. Test yourselves, therefore, whether ye are indeed born again.**

**We have known and believed the love that God hath to us - 1 John 4:16**

**Life is one long education in various phases and aspects of love. First as a child, then as a friend, then as a lover, as wife or husband, as father or mother. We are perpetually being allowed to sit in some higher form for the progress of this Divine study. For to love is to live. To be loved is to drink of the sweetest cordial that can be prepared from the vintages of earth. And all is intended to help us to understand better the nature of God, who is love. As each new experience enters our life, we should consider a fresh facet or angle to break up and reveal to us the glory of God's love. We should say to ourselves, Now I understand and know more accurately than before how God feels, and what His love is.**

**The apostle says we have known the love of God. - Indeed, it is so. Through years of life, each of which has been filled with the most various experiences, but filled also to the brim with proofs of God's tender loving-kindness, we have had innumerable proofs of His love, for**

**"E'en the cloud that spreads above, and veileth Love, Itself is Love."**

**The apostle says we must believe God's love. Standing on the sure foundation of what we have proved God to be in the past, we may look on the present and future with perfect faith. We have known Him too well to doubt Him now. We have known, and now we believe. He has made no mistakes. He is making none. He has done the best, and is doing it. We do not understand His dealings, but we know Him who is behind the mystery of Providence, and can hear Him saying: "It is all right, only trust Me. Fear not! it is I."**

**We know that we have - 1 John 5:15**

**This Epistle is full of certainty. It rings with the words we know. And in these words we are taught that we may be certain in the region of prayer. Probably there is no region of the Christian life concerning which there is more uncertainty than this of prayer. Perhaps this is also the reason why there is so little prayer. Men doubt the use of spending time in shooting arrows, a very small percentage of which seem to strike the target.**

**The first condition in true prayer is to be sure that it is according to the will of God. - It is not difficult to do this when we base prayer on a promise. And this is what we should do to secure definiteness and assurance. There is nothing that pleases our Father more in His praying children than that they should bring His promises to Him for fulfillment, saying, "Do as Thou hast said." But in cases where there is no promise to guide us we shall discover His will as we pray.**

**The next condition is to believe that God is listening. - We need not pray long to know this. Only be quiet and silent before Him, and a blessed sense, induced by the Holy Spirit, will pervade your heart and mind, that you are literally speaking into the ear and heart of your Heavenly Father, who is listening as intently as if He had nothing else to attend to in all the universe.**

**The third condition is to be sure that the thing we asked is granted. - It may not have come to hand, and it may not come in the precise form in which we sought it, but it is ours. We must dare to believe that we have that petition, labelled with our name, consigned to us, perhaps started on its way to us, although it may take years to come.**