

If We Say

Sunday, October, 1st, 1989

1 John 1:6-10

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 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. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

I'm going to be speaking today on this subject: "If We Say." In First John Chapter One, the apostle wrote these words; *"If we say that we have fellowship with God and walk in darkness, we lie."* We are not telling the truth. *"If we say that we have no sin, (no sinful nature; no depraved nature), we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we say that we have not sinned, (that we are not guilty sinners and we are not sinners by practice and by choice, conduct and walk), we make God a liar."* We lie, we deceive ourselves and *"We make God a liar and His Word is not in us."*

My friends, there is more hypocrisy, sham, counterfeiters and showmanship in religion today than in any other era. Did you know that? In religion, in more than any other era, there is more sham, hypocrisy, counterfeiters and showmanship. Why is this? Why is this true? It is amazing to me that in the area where there should be total honesty with God, there is no honesty.

God knows all things. God looks on the heart. *"Man looks on the outward countenance but God looks on the heart. All things are naked and open to Him with whom we have to do."* God is not deceived and God is not mocked. We can fool people and deceive people. We can even fool ourselves, but not God.

In the area of religion, we should have total honesty with God, total honesty with others and total honesty with ourselves, and be truthful and candid with others. In the area where there should be total honesty, there is more pretence, put-ons, lies, and superstitions than in any other area of the whole world. Did you know that? That's right!

I've been around long enough. I've been preaching 40 years. I've been pastoring a church for 39 years. I've done radio for 20 years and television for 15 years. I have traveled all over this world and have preached in many, many countries. I know this, that in religion today (especially the TV variety), preachers and religious leaders are dishonest.

This is what is taking this country by storm. They are totally dishonest with God and with people. They claim to be what they are not; they claim to feel what they do not feel; they claim to experience what they do not experience and they claim to see what they do not see. They even claim to hear what they do not hear. They claim to do what they cannot do and know what they do not know. That's right!

Now, I want you to buckle your seatbelt and stay with me today. I am going to tell you the truth. I hope I'm not your enemy for telling you the truth. Our Lord said, "*Beware of false prophets.*" Peter said, "*As there were false prophets among the people of Israel, there shall be false teachers in your midst.*" These promoters of religion, these con artists, claim to be able to heal sick people. They cannot and they do not. They claim to be able to put their hands on people and heal them. They cannot and they do not.

God heals sick people. God is the great physician. When it pleases Him; He will heal. All healing is of God. God said, "*I kill; I make alive.*" God heals people. God hears the prayers of His people, my prayers and your prayers. He heals the sickness if it pleases Him and will bring glory to His name. "*He relieves our distresses according to His will.*"

Everybody has got to die. It is not true when a preacher tells you that if you are sick it is because you don't have enough faith. They will tell you that if you are poor, you don't have enough faith. They will also say, "If you don't have a job, you don't have enough faith." If they had to get out of the ministry and not be supported by gifts from other people and had to work for a living, they probably would be without a job anyway.

James 5 tells us: "*Is there any among you sick?*" Don't send for a faith healer. "*Call the elders of the church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil.*" If he has sins, God will forgive him. The prayer of faith will save the sick. God is able to heal and God does heal. I pray for people that God might make them well. Sometimes He does and sometimes He doesn't. It is all of His will.

These men do not have any special powers to heal the lame, heal the blind, heal the deaf or heal the sick. They do not have it and they are not doing it. I will tell you this; if I would get on the television and sell a faith-cure for cancer, the U.S. Government would come after me. These men can get on television and they can sell their witchcraft and their false promises. They will even tell people to lay their hands on the television and they will be healed. They brag about how they have broken crutches and healed sick people. The hospitals are full of sick people. None of them are walking up and down the halls healing anybody.

I will tell you another thing; these men claim to speak in tongues. They do not and they cannot. The tongues in which the apostles spoke were other languages in which they preached the gospel. The scripture says, *“Every man heard the gospel in his own language, in his own tongue.”* This so-called gibberish and jabber is not a tongue at all. This is farce, it is fake and it is put on. Some of them even rehearse it. They do not speak in another language.

There are men who can preach the gospel in other languages but they learn those languages. We have missionaries in Mexico who preach in Spanish. We have missionaries in Africa who preach in French. We have missionaries in Spain who preach in Spanish. We also have missionaries in other fields that have learned these languages and preach the gospel in these languages. This unknown tongue is phony. They are using it to con people.

They also tell people who are saved and believe Christ and love Christ. Because they can't speak in a tongue, they make them feel inferior. They make them feel like they are not spiritual because the Holy Ghost has not baptized them and given them some kind of emotional fit or experience. They make them feel inferior to these people.

These people like to appear that they are holier than thou. They want you to think that they are more spiritual than everybody else, more knowledgeable than someone else. They want to look down on the common every day folks who can't speak this gibberish. It is nothing in this world but being a faker and fraud. They are the ones who are not spiritual.

I will tell you this; you listen to me; these false preachers say, “that God speaks to them in a voice.” I heard a preacher on television this past Sunday talking about how God had personally spoken to him in an audible voice. He said that God had told him of all the plans he was suppose to do. He said that God had told him that he had six months to do certain things. He said that God was going to use him in a special way, with him and through him, and to him and by him. God was going to send revival and all of these things.

He got to the end of the speech and said, “God told me to tell you to send me several million dollars so that I can get this job done.” I knew that he would come around to that before it was over. This is a sham. God doesn't tell them that we must send them millions of dollars to promote them and their schemes.

God does not speak to anyone in an audible voice. *“No man has seen God at any time; the Son hath revealed Him. God who spake to our Fathers by the prophets, hath in these*

last days spoken to us by His Son.” God speaks through His Word. *“No man knows the Father save the Son and he to whom the Son will reveal Him.”*

I don't understand why we are so deceived by these people. They say that God talks to them. They say that they walk along the road and God speaks to them in an audible voice. That's not true; God speaks to us through His Word. That is how He speaks to men. He speaks through the Word and the Incarnate Word, the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing can be added to the Word of God.

They are not apostles. There were three requirements for an apostle:

1. He had to have seen the Lord in the flesh. Paul did, *“As one born out of due time.”*
2. He had to receive his gift, his message, his gospel directly from God.
3. He had to be sent from the Lord himself.

Now, that was an apostle. He had to be sent by the Lord Himself.

They had special gifts and credentials to prove that they were sent from God. They had the power to speak in other languages. They had the power to heal the sick, raise the dead, and make the lame to walk and the blind to see. Am I your enemy because I tell you the truth?

Fifthly: I see these preachers holding hands and closing their eyes and claiming a word of knowledge. They are trying to raise money now and they are praying for the sick. They say, “I see someone out there that has a bad back; I see someone out there who has a sore head; I see someone out there that has a stiff neck; I see someone out there who has a sprained ankle and I can see that God is healing them right now.” They do not see those things!

Only God is Omniscient and Omnipresent. The Lord Jesus said to Nathaniel, *“I saw you under the fig tree before Philip found you.”* What these men are doing is (and it seems to me that someone would understand this), out of the thousands of people listening to these far reaching programs, someone has to have a bad back. They are going to have to get somebody. Someone has to have a sore neck, a sprained ankle or somebody has an ingrown toenail. Someone out there has to have these things.

These fellows are doing nothing in the world but trying to attract attention to themselves. One TV preacher said he could tell you who your family doctor was. He would give a street address. Apostles did not deal in circus antics like that. They preached the gospel;

they preached Christ. You know what I am saying is so. Somebody needs to say something.

There are poor widows out there and people on Social Security. There are people who can ill-afford to do so. They are trying to keep up the lavish, luxurious, lifestyles of these leaches and parasites. That is what they are!

I will tell you this; most of their so-called worship services would rival Hollywood stage shows. That is exactly what they are! Most of these so-called worship services are put on television. They are all made up in their fancy hairdos and diamond rings, and expensive clothing.

They are using music for showmanship, emotionalism, entertainment and theatrics to excite people. They try to work people up emotionally to a fever pitch. It is nothing but psychology. It is music, music, and music. It is the beat of the music. It is a glad time, a happy time. It's a rejoicing time and a hallelujah time. It is like a salesman that is trying to get everyone to say, "Yes, yes, yes!" They don't ever want you to say no or they will drop back down again. They want to keep the beat going.

Do they really call that the Spirit of God? It is a counterfeit spirit. It is another spirit. It is not the Spirit of God. People, who worship God, do so in humility. They bow before God and they worship God in sincerity. They worship and praise God from the heart. Like the Publican in the temple who would not so much as lift his eyes to heaven, let alone his arm. He smote upon his breast and said, "*God be merciful to me the sinner.*" Isaiah bowed before God and said, "*Woe is me; I'm undone.*" John fell at His feet as a dead man.

I'll tell you this; they are always coming up with some new method or means to raise money, to support their lifestyles and their programs. They offer cheap jewelry. They sell religious relics. One fellow was selling dirt out of the tomb of Jesus in Jerusalem. He had dirt in a little vial with a chain around it. He was telling people to send him \$15.00 or \$20.00. I don't know how much dirt he got over there. He said, "Send the money and it will bring you good luck." He also told them, "If your kids are making bad grades in school, let them wear this dirt out of Jesus' tomb, around his neck and it will make good grades for him."

Let me tell you something, how in this world could you ever buy that? These are idols. They sell books and Bibles for a donation. They don't dare sell them, because they would have to pay tax on them. They sell them for a donation, twice or three times the

value of the book or the Bible. They cheapen and prostitute the gospel of Jesus Christ to serve their own purposes.

That is the religion of my day. They use God Almighty to promote themselves. I will tell you this, if God is in a ministry, God will support it. If God is in a ministry, you won't have to beg, you won't have to sell anything, and you won't have to lie to people. Through His people who love Him and his Word and the preaching of the gospel, Almighty God will support that ministry. *"He will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory through Christ Jesus."*

Anytime that a preacher stands before you on the radio, television or pulpit and says, "This is a faith work and if you don't support it, it will go broke," I say, let it go broke. Let her go! It can't be faith when you are broadcasting it to the world. Faith looks to God alone. Just like Abraham, he said to the kings of Sodom, "I'm not going to take a dime from you; I have lifted my hand to God."

I'll tell you something else, these television stars of this religious world ridicule and make light of the local, small churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. Yes they do! These small, local churches, all over Kentucky, Ohio and West Virginia, in little towns and villages and cities minister to the gospel in their communities. The humble, simple preachers of the gospel, who have no bands, diamonds, big cars and fine homes, no entertainers, or no super-stars; they are just simple preachers of the gospel. They search the scriptures and teach their neighbors and teach their friends the truth of God. These men of today ridicule them. They make fun of them.

God's church is not an electronic box in the house. It consists of people who meet in His name to worship Him, praise Him and preach His gospel. They don't need bands, they don't need entertainment, they don't need promoters and they don't need salesman. They meet in a humble spirit before the Lord and call on His name and preach His gospel. They have been doing it ever since the cross of Christ. He has never left Himself without a witness. There is somebody in this perverse, superstitious, traditional-bound generation that is speaking for God Almighty. His sheep are going to hear it.

I'll give you several reasons for this charade, today's religious charade and spectacle in the name of God.

1). These people do not know God. They just do not know God. Paul says, *"They have a zeal of God but not according to knowledge. They are ignorant of God's Holiness."* Read Romans 10: 1 through 3. He said, *"I would like to see these people saved. They do not know God. They have a zeal for God but not according to knowledge. They are*

ignorant of God's Holiness and God's Righteousness. They are going about to establish their own righteousness." In Matthew they said, "Lord, have we not preached in your name and cast out devils and done many wonderful works?" He will say, "I never knew you; I don't know you." "Thou thoughtest I was all together such a one as thyself," God said. God is not who you think He is. God is who He is!

The Lord God is in His Holy Temple. "Let all the earth be silent before Him. Be not rash; be not hasty to utter anything before God. God is in the heavens and you are upon the earth. Holy and Reverend is His name." I don't need to sell God. I don't need to promote God. God doesn't need a cheerleader. Almighty God rules and reigns and what He wants He will get. He said, "Everything under the heaven is mine. The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and all they that dwell therein." I don't have to sell God. I don't have to promote God or lead cheers for Jesus. He is on the throne. "He is King of King and Lord of Lords."

I feel like the thief on the cross that said to the other thief, "Don't you fear God?" I want to say that to my whole generation of preachers, "Don't you fear God? There is no fear of God before their eyes."

2). Another reason for this religious charade and sham and show is that men love the applause of men. They love the approval of men. That is what they seek. He said, "You love the praise of men rather than the praise of God." He said, "You seek the honor that comes from men," the applause and approval and praise that comes from men and not the honor that comes from God.

Our Lord said in Matthew 6, "Don't you be like the Pharisee and the hypocrite that loves to pray standing on the street corner. You do your praying in the closet." Men want to tell about their fasting. He wants the whole world to know that he is fasting. He looks so sad while he fasts. He wants everyone to know it. He says, "When you fast and pray, wash your face and comb your hair. Put on your good clothes that you'll appear not to men to fast. Don't tell them your communion with God and God will hear you."

When you give alms, "Don't do it to be seen of men." Don't sound the trumpet in front of you. "Let not your left hand know what your right hand is doing." Many go along with this religious farce, just because they don't want to buck the trend and buck the tide. Peter stood on Pentecost and he said, "You better deliver yourself from this perverse generation. You better come out from among this religious generation."

3). Another reason for this sad situation is nothing but greed and covetousness. Television has made religion a profitable business. Did you know that? There's a lot of

money to be made in religion today. There is preaching, singing, healing and entertaining. There is a lot of money to be made.

People are taking advantage of it too! There are people who have no call from God. It is evident that they don't know the gospel. There are people with no convictions. They will change their convictions. They will change anytime to have a more exciting show. One religious leader said, "When your competitor gets a bigger bloom, you just get a bigger one." I didn't know that we were in competition. Religion today is show business.

These people have no conscience. They have no understanding of the Word of God. They can appeal to the natural, religious instincts of an audience and live lavishly off of their free gifts. People just keep sending their money in.

"Greed, the love of money is the root of all evil." In Jeremiah and Ezekiel the Lord God spoke to Jeremiah and spoke to Ezekiel and said, *"All the prophets and even the priests are covetous men, greedy men."*

4). Another reason for this corruption in religion is that preachers don't know anything about the person and work of Jesus Christ and what salvation really is. Paul feared that when he was preaching a few years after Christ died on the cross and rose again. He said, *"I fear, I'm afraid less by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve, through his subtlety and craftiness, so your minds will be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."* The serpent tricked her, deceived her and led her astray.

Have our minds been corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ? Religion today is complicated and ceremonial. There is ritualism and you have to have special training. You have to have all these talents and big buildings. You have to have organizations. What happened to the simplicity of Jesus Christ?

Let me talk to you right where you are for a moment, just you and me. Are you a sinner? That's all I am asking, are you a sinner? *"All have come short of the glory of God."* Are you a sinner? You may say, "Yes preacher, I am." Well, can you save yourself? Do you know that God is Holy? God is perfectly Holy. Your sins have separated you from that Holy God. You may say, "I know God is Holy."

Did you know that God loves sinners? God was pleased to send His Son into this world in the flesh, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, to die on the cross and redeem us from our sins. Did you know that? Do you believe that? *"Who shall ascend into heaven but*

He that descended, He that hath clean hands and a pure heart and has never sworn deceitfully?"

Do you believe the Word of God? Do you believe God? Do you believe that you are a sinner? Do you believe that Christ died for sinners? Do you believe that He is the only Saviour? Do you? Then repent of your sins and turn from your sins. Confess your sins. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

You don't have to call me. You don't need to call a counselor. Jesus Christ is the Counselor. You don't need to write to me. You don't need to send me a check. I have nothing to do with your relationship with Almighty God. I am just a voice telling the truth about God and the truth about men and the truth about Christ.

I will tell you this, believe God, love God, walk with God, and trust God. Go about your business and your job. Live honestly and truthfully. Live holy, worship God, and serve God where you are with what you have. Be yourself and be honest before God. Be honest with yourself. Be honest before others. Like Enoch of old, walk with God.

You don't have to put on a show for anybody. You don't have to try to impress anybody. We couldn't impress anybody if we wanted to. God loves sinners and Christ died for sinners. Here is a sinner who loves God and trusts God. Men are men but still sinners, strong men and able men but still sinners and yet by His grace some love God and believe the gospel of Christ.

Well, I hope this has been a help to you!