

## Finding *Renewal* in the Love of God

### Unit 4: Discovering Renewal by Committing to Obedience

#### Study Questions

**Some background:** In the Greek language, as in ours, the word “fellowship” means simply “things in common.”

**A thought to start:** As declared in its opening paragraphs, 1 John invites its readers into the fellowship of a shared life. Though the recipients are children of God who possess the very nature of God by His Spirit, the letter encourages them to live up to their calling—to *celebrate* the fellowship and to fully utilize the gift they have received. The life they possess is no less than the life of God Himself, the one He shares with the Son. By nature, this fellowship—sharing the very life of the Father and the Son—demands a response. If we truly share the life, if we claim its benefits and its associations, it stands to reason that we must also share in its lifestyle. God is light; in Him there is *no darkness at all*. We have an advocate with this God—Jesus Christ, *the righteous*.

*Using the New American Standard text, respond to the following questions:*

1. Read 1.6-10. What are three different false claims that those who say that they possess fellowship with God and Christ might make regarding sin?
2. In this same text, what are two testimonies someone might make that would result in that person remaining in fellowship with God? What does God do in response to these testimonies that makes this fellowship possible (see also 2.1-2)?
3. In verse 10, why do you think that the claim that I have never sinned would make me guilty of calling God a liar?
4. What is the proof a believer presents as evidence that she shares the life of God? (see 2.3-6). What is the opposite testimony one might make?

5. John writes, “Whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected.” What does *love* for one’s brothers and sisters in Christ have to do with keeping God’s commandments?
  
6. What is Jesus’ commandment to which John often refers? Go back to John 14-16 to locate and read this command in its original context.
  
7. Read 2.12-14. In this brief poem, John directs encouragement to the various groups of believers. Take note of the tenses he uses in this piece. He says he *is writing...because....* What tense does he use for the reasons he is writing to these groups? Write the reasons with the tenses below. For example, “I *am writing* to you, children, because your sins *have been forgiven.*”

What do you note about the time element in the reasons for John’s writing? What encouragement is there in these words, written to these groups?

8. What other *love* might one choose than the one John exhorts his readers to choose (2.15-17)? What are the results one might expect from choosing either of the two different lifestyles?

9. Read 3.1-2. Paraphrase this text.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. When is it that we will be *like Him*?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. Read 3.3-10. From this text, identify as many motivations as you can for a Christian to choose a lifestyle that resembles the life of the Son. Put a star by the one which motivates you the most.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
12. Using the same text, make a list of goals for yourself to spur you on toward growing in your own pursuit of living like a child of God.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
13. What is the message/command which John calls the one you have heard from the beginning (see 4.11-24)? Though we will discuss this in detail for lesson 5, write what you think might be the relationship between this commandment and all the rest?