

# 1 John 1:3 – 2:2

New International Version

1 <sup>3</sup>We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that  
2 you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship  
3 is with the Father and with his <sup>F</sup>Son, Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>We write  
4 this to make our joy complete. <sup>5</sup>This is the message we  
5 have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in  
6 him there is no darkness at all. <sup>6</sup>If we claim to have  
7 fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and  
8 do not live out the truth. <sup>7</sup>But if we walk in the light, as he  
9 is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the  
10 blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. <sup>8</sup>If we  
11 claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth  
12 is not in us. <sup>9</sup>If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just  
13 and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all  
14 unrighteousness. <sup>10</sup>If we claim we have not sinned, we  
15 make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us. <sup>2:1</sup> My  
16 dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But  
17 if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—  
18 Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. <sup>2</sup>He is the atoning  
19 sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the  
20 sins of the whole world.

Use the suggestions on the back page as a starting point for your own **Observation, Interpretation, and Application.**

**Observation (What does it say?):**

What words are repeated in this passage? Connect occurrences of the words.

Find the divine pronouns (he, his, etc. – not capitalized in NIV). Mark which Person the pronoun indicates, **F**ather or **S**on.

Underline the writer's goals for the recipients of this letter.

**Interpretation (What does it mean?):**

How are the different statements about fellowship related?

- With the Father (v. 3, l. 3a)
- With the Son (v. 3, l. 3b)
- With one another (v. 7, l. 9)

The emphasis of the first part of the passage is on fellowship (repeated 4x); the second part is about sin (10x). How does verse 7 connect the two main ideas? (If you don't think these are the main two ideas of the passage, SPEAK UP!!)

How does John's argument in this passage support the several goals he gives for proclaiming and writing?

**Application (What does it mean for me?):**

When you think of fellowship with God ("with the Father and with his Son") what comes to mind?

What does that look like in your life?

What would you like it to look like?

How does that fellowship relate to your fellowship with other believers? Can you give examples?

**Additional questions for thought and discussion:**

- What difference (if any) does it make that John worded verse 3 as “our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son” rather than simply “our fellowship is with the Father and his Son”?
- Verse 7 (line8) says one of the results of walking in the light is fellowship with one another. Would you expect the verse to say the result of walking in the light is fellowship with God? How is verse 7 related to verse 6? How do the conditional “if” statements affect your understanding of the verses?
- Is “walking in the light” about behavior, or is it another way of saying “fellowship with him” in verses 6-7? How is our behavior related to our communion or fellowship with God? Which one is dependent on the other?
- What does it mean to have distinct “fellowship with the Father and with his Son”? (see John Owen, Communion with God).

**Inductive Bible Study**

(A few general ideas)

**Observation**  
**(What does it say?)**

What facts do you **observe** about the passage that help bring out the writer’s thought process?

- Who are the people involved?
- What action takes place?
- What type of literature is it (poetry, history, didactic, etc.)?
- What details are included or left out?
- Are any unusual words used?
- Is there symbolic language?
- What is the grammar of the passage (pronouns, prepositions, verb tenses)?
- Are words or ideas repeated?
- Any comparisons or contrasts?
- Any cause and effect?
- Are there indications of purpose (“in order that...”)?
- Are there conclusions (“Therefore...”)?
- Are there explanations?
- Does the passage logically break into sections?
- How would you summarize the passage?
- What would be a good “headline” for the passage?

**Interpretation**  
**(What does it mean?)**

What questions come to mind about the facts that would help you **interpret** the meaning?

- How would the original readers have understood the passage?
- What is the main emphasis?
- Why does the writer use repetition, or contrast, or unusual words?
- What does the grammar or structure of the passage reveal about the writer’s thought pattern?
- Is there a logical sequence in the passage?
- How are different ideas in the passage connected?
- Are there any new ideas or concepts presented?
- Are there difficulties in the passage?

**Application**  
**(What does it mean for me?)**

What is the impact on your life? What **application** does the Holy Spirit want to show you?

- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a promise to be thankful for?
- Is there an attribute of God to worship?
- Is there an example to follow?

**Read nothing into the Scriptures, but draw everything from them, and suffer nothing to remain hidden that is really in them.  
J.A. Benjel (1687-1752)**