

Be Honest with God 1 John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.

8a If we say that we have no sin,

Now that John has reminded us of the complete moral purity of God, and of the necessity of walking in the light, John wants to warn us against deceiving ourselves.

Remember that John was fighting against this heresy of Gnosticism, this making up of another Jesus out of our own ideas about Him, instead of the Jesus revealed in the scriptures. This craving of secret, hidden knowledge so that only we and our group have the truth. These Gnostics were being deceived.

1 Timothy 4:1 **But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons.** They were being led away from Jesus by deceit as they wanted to follow the Jesus that they'd made up in their heads, instead of the One revealed in scripture. They preferred the made up Jesus, because it allowed them to live any old way that they wanted to, as long as they had a belief in Jesus. It was a rejection of God, and His plan for our lives—and that rebellion, and refusal to come to God in true repentance, is saying “no” to God, and therefore sin. They decide they want to stay on the throne of their lives, and reject Jesus' Lordship outright. There is another group that's a little more difficult to identify, but are likely more dangerous to us spiritually. Like the Gnostics, they make up a whole system whereby they can perceive themselves as righteous, who reject God's standards of righteousness, while elevating their own standards, these are the self-righteous.

8b we are deceiving ourselves

In Luke 14:9-14 Jesus speaks. **9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: 10 “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’ 13 “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ 14 “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”** The Pharisee is judging the tax collector, condemning him. But look at the result: The Pharisee does not go home justified before God, despite the fact that he went to the temple to pray and receive justification. This seeking after secret knowledge, or the “inside track” with God is just not how God operates. He is Righteous, He is fair. So, the very act of the Gnostics saying that only they had secret, special knowledge to reach God, and condemning others, they were relying on our own self-righteousness. And this set up a barrier between them and God, and hindered the work that God wanted to do in their hearts. The self-exalting arrogance that is the motivation for wanting to condemn people in the first place is the antithesis of who we're supposed to be in Christ! It's always going to be a temptation to put faith in what we do. So how do we avoid this? We allow the Holy Spirit to guide us. But, since they were believing in a Jesus that wasn't the Jesus revealed in the pages of scripture, one that was just made up on the basis of what their philosophy thought Jesus should be like, then they didn't have the truth. And so John says that this kind of philosophy that ignores the deadliness of sin, the need for true repentance, and the need to come to God through the same Jesus whom God reveals in the scriptures leaves one bereft of truth saying:

8c and the truth is not in us.

Embracing these false doctrines that said “Well, God and I have an understanding—because of my special knowledge, I can just live any way that I want” caused many people to believe that they were saved, when they weren't. And still does. They believed that they were saved by their knowledge about God, when the only way to be saved is to have a relationship WITH God made possible by Jesus' finished work on the cross, and facilitated by the continued work of the Holy Spirit. So, those who try to make

up a Jesus, on their own terms, who will not make demands of them end up trapped in self-deception, because they refuse to come to the truth. And this makes sense, because, as unsaved persons, they do not have the Spirit of Truth, and are subject to this kind of deception. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth. **"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come."** - John 16:13 After reminding them of the need for obedience in John 14:15 saying 15 **"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.** Then Jesus makes a promise to them. He says in John 14:16-17 **16 I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, so that He may be with you forever; 17 the Helper is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him; but you know Him because He remains with you and will be in you.**

And so Jesus says that the Way is through Him, and that we show our love for Him by keeping His commandments, and we know the truth about Jesus, and reject falsehoods about Jesus because we have the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit. The world can't receive Him, because it can't see him or know him. But the Holy Spirit indwells believers, and so guides us into all truth about Jesus. The Holy Spirit testifies as a witness for Christ, the Greek is Paraclete (which is often translated "comforter", "counselor", or "advocate") and which often meant "defense attorney". As John 15:26-27 puts it 26 **"When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, namely, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, He will testify about Me, 27 and you are testifying as well, because you have been with Me from the beginning.** So we see that the Holy Spirit carries on Jesus' mission of revealing the Father. And because He indwells us, He mediates Jesus' continuing presence in us. Our witness of God should flow from a deep and intimate experience of Him working in our lives. It should flow from a knowledge of God based on His Word. And that's why we need the Holy Spirit so much to witness for God. No-one knows God like the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit is God! No-one knows the Word of God as well as the Holy Spirit, because He inspired it—He is the author! The Spirit not only empowers us to proclaim Jesus to the world but testifies to us about Jesus for our own relationship with him. We read in John 16:12-15 12 **"I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them at the present time. 13 But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take from Mine and will disclose it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine; this is why I said that He takes from Mine and will disclose it to you.;** So the Holy Spirit guides us into all truth, but especially the Holy Spirit reveals the nature of Jesus to us, and shows us His glory. People will be convinced by the Truth of God especially when they know that it comes from a deep understanding of God's Truth from His Word evidenced by our personal living out of this relationship that we have with Him.

We're not supposed to figure everything out on our own, we're supposed to allow the Holy Spirit to guide us in **wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him**. We need our Guide, our Helper, our Advocate, so that we truly understand and glorify the Jesus of the Bible, and so that we are not misled by those who would try to get us to follow any other Jesus that they have made up. Follow our True guide, the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit, and allow Him to show us how to apply God's Word to our hearts and our lives.