If-Then; 1 John 1;8-9

1. If
   1. If-then is a computer language statement that means if the computation meets a particular criterion, then do something specific.
      1. I graduated high school in May of 1982 and started college in June of 1982 (DeVry Institute of Technology).
      2. DeVry had a couple of programs at that time, Electrical Engineering and Systems Analyst.
      3. I chose the Systems Analyst track and started learning computer languages (I learned Basic in high school on an Apple 2g computer).
      4. In the Basic programming language, the ‘if-then’ statement is used all the time.
      5. Most of the program code is broken down into subroutines (things that occur repeatedly).
      6. There is an ‘if-then’ statement at the end of each subroutine.
   2. This section of 1 John is broken down into five ‘if-then’ statements.
      1. He begins in verse five with a thesis statement.
         1. 1 John 1:5 (ESV) 5 This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.
         2. Light is the element and sphere of the divine [[1]](#footnote-1) – God is light.
      2. He then gives us five if-then statements
         1. Verses 6 and 7 are opposites.
         2. **If** we say we have fellowship with God and walk in darkness, **then** we are liars. (1 John 1:6)
         3. **If** we walk in the light, **then** we have fellowship with each other and are continually cleansed from sin. (1 John 1:7)
2. Then
   1. 1 John 1:8 (ESV); 8 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
   2. Deception.
      1. **If** we say we have no sin, **then** we deceive ourselves (the next ‘if-then’ statement).
      2. From the very beginning, humanity had a sin problem.
         1. Adam and Eve.
         2. Cain and Abel.
         3. Noah’s generation, Genesis 6:5 (ESV) 5 The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.
      3. Humanity gravitates toward sin.
         1. One of the first words we ever say is ‘mine’ or ‘no.’
         2. We all have watched children gather up toys and put their arms around them to keep others from playing with them.
         3. How many times have we told our children (even some adults) “sharing is caring”?
         4. Our first thought is rarely for others. Even in a tragic event, we often say we are “glad it was not our child.”
      4. We are selfish creatures, which is why God’s commands are to love Him and others (as ourselves).
         1. Ephesians 5:28–29 (ESV) 28 In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church,
         2. Look at the comparison; we love our bodies as Christ loved the church.
         3. If Christ loved His flesh, then we would not have salvation.
         4. Ephesians 5:25–27 (ESV) 25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.
      5. We have all sinned, everyone – there are none righteous, no, not one (Romans 3:10)
   3. Confession.
      1. 1 John 1:9 (ESV) 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
      2. This if-then statement is opposite verse 8.
      3. Confession means ‘of one mind.’ It also means promise, and to share a common view or be of common mind about a matter, *agree.* [[2]](#footnote-2)
      4. It is also a legal term used in courtroom proceedings to concede that something is factual or true, *grant, admit, confess.* [[3]](#footnote-3)
      5. Paul writes to the Roman church in chapter 10, “If you confess **with your mouth**.” (Romans 10:9-10)
      6. Confession means we are of one mind with God about our sins.
      7. God uses the personal pronoun “our” in 1 John 1:9. If we confess **our sins**.
      8. This whole section is very personal. I often state, “If we agree with God about sin,” but I should say, “If we agree with God about **our** sin.”
      9. We don’t need forgiveness for other people’s sins, only ours.
   4. Cleanse.
      1. To heal a person of a disease that makes one ceremonially unclean, *make clean, heal.* [[4]](#footnote-4)
      2. We have a disease (of choice); it is called sin.
      3. Mark 7:20–23 (ESV) 20 And he said, “What comes out of a person is what defiles him. 21 For from within, **out of the heart of man**, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, 22 coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. 23 All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”
      4. Jesus rebukes the Scribes and Pharisees for their sinful attitudes their selfishness.
      5. Matthew 23:25–26 (ESV) 25 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you **clean** the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. 26 You blind Pharisee! First **clean** the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.
      6. Sin is why we need cleansing.
         1. It is not just a bath, and we get dirty again.
         2. It was 112 degrees at camp. I showered at least two times every day.
         3. Jesus’ cleansing is forever!
         4. Hebrews 9:11–12 (ESV) 11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) 12 he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.
         5. Again, verse 9 is personal, “to cleanse **us** from all unrighteousness.”
         6. We have been washed, and continue to be washed, by the blood of Jesus.
   5. We cannot forget where we came from, “if we say we have not sinned” verse 10)
      1. Verse ten is the last if-then statement.
      2. 1 John 1:10 (ESV) 10 If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.
   6. We also cannot forget who we are now (redeemed, living in the very presence of God).
   7. We cannot forget our cleansing, “how can we who died to sin still live in it” (Romans 6:2)
   8. We must agree with God (confess) when it comes to our sins – we don’t get to make up our own or change what God has already proclaimed.
3. God is Light.
   1. We once walked in darkness.
   2. We are now walking in the light, which is the settled, practiced lifestyle of living in the presence of God and sharing our lives with others who are living in the presence of God.
   3. Do you agree with God about your sin?
   4. Have you been cleansed?

1. William Arndt et al., [*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*](https://ref.ly/logosres/bdag?ref=Page.p+803&off=4304&ctx=e+light+J+12:35a.%0a%E2%91%A1+~to+conduct+one%E2%80%99s+lif) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1072. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid, 708. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid, 708. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid, 488. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)