

24. September 2025
FIRST LETTER OF ST. JOHN
The Way of Truth

1 Jn 1:8–2:5

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and 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.

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. Now by this we may be sure that we know him, if we obey his commandments. Whoever says, ‘I have come to know him,’ but does not obey his commandments, is a liar, and in such a person the truth does not exist; but whoever obeys his word, truly in this person the love of God has reached perfection. By this we may be sure that we are in him.”

Sin means being separated from God.

It was the worst thing that could happen to us in Paradise—and unfortunately, it did. Even today, we can see the devastating consequences of sin, and sadly, we must admit that the world has not improved in this respect. In fact, it has worsened. In many nations of the earth that once received the proclamation of the Gospel, people passed from ignorance to the light of God, and yet we see how the treasure of divine grace is increasingly spoiled. People accumulate sin after sin, becoming incapable of working for true peace and contributing to the spread of darkness. Ignorance returns too, but not the ignorance that humanity lived with before Jesus came into the world and which God overlooked (cf. Acts 17:30); it is a much greater darkness because it is the rejection of the great light that was manifested on earth: the Son of God.

However, we are not at the mercy of sin, as if it could determine our lives without us being able to do anything to avoid it. The First Letter of John shows us a clear way out:

first of all, we must recognize that we are sinners, that we do not measure up to what the Lord wants of us, and that, at times, we even act contrary to His will.

We can see the truth of what St. Paul says: *“But I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members”* (Rom 7:23). Or the paradox described in the Book of Hosea becomes a reality: *“The more I called them, the more they went from me; they kept sacrificing to the Baals, and offering incense to idols”* (Hos 11:2). If we recognize that, despite our sincere efforts, this contradiction also happens in us, then we do not deceive ourselves, and the truth is in us.

When we sincerely confess our sins, our faithful and just Lord responds by forgiving our guilt and purifying us from all iniquity. Thanks to faith, we know that this becomes a reality through the death and resurrection of our Redeemer. St. John emphasizes: *“If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.”*

We must appeal to this so that the work of Redemption may take effect within us. Then, we will be lifted up and strengthened to continue our journey with renewed courage and confidence.

What does this path consist of?

The First Letter of John makes this clear to us, and his words are addressed not only to us personally. Just as Jesus gave His life for the salvation of all humankind, each person is obliged to keep God's commandments and follow His Son. The Apostle leaves no room for doubt in this regard: *“Whoever says, ‘I have come to know him,’ but does not obey his commandments, is a liar, and in such a person the truth does not exist.”*

Once again, we see that it is an intrinsic contradiction to confess the Lord as our Savior and bear His name while not doing our utmost to keep His commandments and live according to His Word. On this we cannot deceive ourselves or allow ourselves to be deceived by relativistic and erroneous tendencies, whether they come from the world or from the ecclesiastical sphere.

Today's passage concludes by showing us how to recognize whether we live in God: we do so when we obey His Word. If we do so, we will have true communion, and the Apostle even assures us that *“whoever obeys his word, truly in this person the love of God has reached perfection.”*

Meditation on today's Gospel: <https://en.elijamission.net/2021/09/22/>