

Sunday School Lesson, January 4, 2026

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Lesson—The Wrong Path¹

Text: 1 John 1:5-10; 2:1-6

I. Aim for Change/Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, we will...

1. Summarize the gospel in terms of the dichotomies laid forth in 1 John 1:5-2:6.
2. Confess the lies we tell ourselves and accept God's truth instead.
3. Demonstrate gratitude for Christ's pardon from sin by living as Christ lived.

Why This Lesson Matters: People need an advocate to intercede for them when they do wrong, face trouble, or need help. John reiterated the promise of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the advocate, that grace and forgiveness are gifts from God.

Key Verse: *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:8-9, KJV)*

II. Topical Outline of the Lesson

1. Introduction
2. Inconsistent Walk (1 John 1:5-7)
3. Inconsistent Talk (vv. 8-10)
4. A Compatible Solution (1 John 2:1-6)

III. Historical/Biblical Background and Lesson Context

1 John is the first and longest of a series of three letters attributed to John. The gospels identified John as one of Jesus' original 12 disciples and one among his three most intimate associates. Biblical scholars agree that John composed this letter during the latter part of the 1st century from Ephesus to churches in Asia Minor, where he ministered and continued exercising Apostolic authority.

The main goal of 1 John was to help believers stay grounded in the core truths of the Christian faith and to reassure them that they truly belonged to God in this part of the letter, John focuses on three key signs of genuine faith: living in obedience to God, showing love for others, and holding on to the truth about who Jesus is (see 1 John 1:7-2:17).

¹ Outline Content courtesy of the Sunday School Publishing Board Teacher Manual, which should be purchased at www.sspbnbc.com

IV. Prominent Character(s) in the Lesson

Apostle John: Although the name John is not mentioned in 1 John, scholars credited him with authorship. He wrote as someone who knew Jesus and the recipients personally.

The Beloved: This is a reference to Ephesian believers, mainly Gentiles, who struggled to walk in the way John taught. John presented love as the expected standard in the community and denounced sin as something to be shunned and confessed.

V. Key Terms in the Lesson (KJV)

Cleanses

Darkness

Declare

Fellowship

Light

Truth

Food for thought/question for consideration: (What have we learned, Charlie Brown?) Play

1. God's word is clear—no one can clearly and honestly claim that they do not commit sin. As believers, we must acknowledge and confess our sins quickly to maintain our fellowship with the Lord. When we fall short of God's commands, we have an advocate, Jesus Christ, who intercedes for us, and we are promised forgiveness and cleansing from unrighteousness as we mature in Christ.

Closing Hymn: *Blessed be the tie that binds, our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.*

Sunday School Slogan: *To Sunday School to Sunday School, we all should go; we have classes for all ages, help us to grow.*