

Series: 1 John

Title: Walking in Light or Darkness

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1 John 1: 5: This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6: If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 7: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 8: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10: If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

John declares that the character of God is Light. Therefore, the character of those who have fellowship with God is light. Christ's blood cleanseth the believer of all sin so that we have fellowship with God who is Light. Through the blood of Christ, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. He continues to cleanse our feet, when we sin and walk in way contrary to the Light, so that persevere in faith walking in Light. Therefore, those God has made holy have fellowship with God our Father and his Son Christ Jesus in Light.

But John also gives a warning against a false profession. John declares, "*If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:*" John declares, "*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*" Also, John declared, "*If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*"

Subject: Walking in Light or Darkness

Proposition: All men are either walking in light by the grace of God or are walking in darkness. What is the difference?

THE CHARACTER OF GOD

1 John 1: 5: This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

True preaching is to get a message from the Master and declare that message to his people. John declares, "*This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you...*" John got his message from Christ our God. He declares what he heard from Christ himself. This is the message, "*that God is Light and in him is no darkness at all.*"

John began his gospel declaring what he began declaring in this epistle that Christ is the eternal, living Word. Then here in his epistle the next thing he declared is that *God is Light and in him is no darkness at all*. That was the next thing he declared in his gospel speaking of the Son of God, Christ Jesus. John began the gospel of John with these same two words of good news.

John 1:4: In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5: And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

Speaking of John the Baptist, he said,

John 1: 7: The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe. 8: He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

Speaking of Christ, that Light, John declares,

John 1: 9: *That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. 10: He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11: He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12: But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John heard Christ declare, "*I am the Light of the world.*" So John declares to us what he heard Christ declare. It is the message that God revealed by sending his Son as the Light of the world. The good news is, "*God is Light and in him is no darkness at all.*" It is in Christ that we see God is Light and in him is no darkness at all. Scripture says of God,

1 Timothy 6: 16: Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom *be* honour and power everlasting. Amen.

Light means God is holy and righteous. God is holy in power, holy in wisdom, holy in justice, holy in mercy, holy in love, holy in sovereignty, holy in every work whereby he saves his sinful people and makes us holy and righteous.

Light means God is truth. By the Spirit of God revealing God our Father in Christ Jesus, putting a new spirit within us, God makes his saints to worship him in spirit and in truth. True worship is of God. True worship is in spirit--in the new

spirit God has put in us in regeneration. True worship is in Truth--through faith in Christ the Truth, believing the truth God declares of himself and how he saves sinners.

In God is no darkness. In God is no lie, no unrighteousness, no ungodliness, nothing unholy. And God can have no fellowship with darkness. God can only have communion with those God has made light in the Lord Jesus.

But those God chose to save are only darkness by nature! In us is no light at all by nature. How then can we approach unto God and see God and have fellowship with God? It is only in Christ the Light that God is revealed. In Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. God's elect are sinners. But we are made children of light only by the blood of Christ. It is only by the Spirit of God creating in us a new man in the righteousness and holiness of Christ. This is how we worship God in spirit. It is in this new spirit--this new man--that the Spirit of God creates in us that is holy. It is in this new man that we are light. It is only when God has made us children of light that God will receive us. It is only in Christ the Light that we see light and are made to dwell in light and shall never again dwell in darkness.

FALSE AND TRUE

1 John 1: 6: If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

John is declaring what he heard Christ declare. This what John himself had experienced by God making John a new creation by the Spirit of God in the new birth. John knew this by the Light of Christ. He heard Christ declare, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (Jn 8: 12).

The difference is in the walk. The difference is by the grace of God alone. That means we did not make the difference. That means we do not make the difference. The difference is by God's power and grace forming Christ within making us light in the Lord.

All men either walk in darkness or walk in light. So what is it to walk in darkness? Let's answer that by seeing what is it to walk in light? I like to look at how John uses the same words elsewhere in his writing to see what he means here. We will take these in the order they come in this epistle.

First, according to John to walk in the light is to have the light of Christ shine in our hearts so that the darkness is past.

1 John 2:8: Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

This is true in Christ. It is true of Christ. When Christ the Light came into this world, the darkness is past and the true Light now shineth. And this is true in you who are born of the Spirit of Christ. The darkness of sin and ignorance which we were while unregenerate and unconverted is past. When God shines into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Christ Jesus the darkness is past and the true Light now shineth. The Light is Christ!

We still see through a glass darkly but the total darkness we were in is past when the true light of Christ now shines in our hearts. The true light of the gospel has shined in our hearts. When the Spirit of God is given to us, when a new spirit is created within us, then we worship God in spirit and in truth. The true light now shines when we see that we are sin. The true Light made us see that in our flesh dwells no good thing. The true Light now shines so that we know and believe Christ himself is our Peace, our Life, our Righteousness, our Redemption, our Completion.

So, first, to walk in light is to be regenerated, born-again, so that we are given the Light of Christ. We walk by faith in Christ. Therefore, to walk in darkness is to be in an unregenerate state. It is to yet be in the darkness of sin and ignorance and unbelief. It is to be without the Light and Life, Christ Jesus, dwelling within us.

Two, in 1 John 2: 9, we see that walking in darkness is to hate those born of God. Walk in light is to have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts so that we love those begotten of God.

1 John 2: 9: He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. 10: He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

1 John 5: 1: Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

Christ's commandment is that we love our brethren. Christ's love for his people is shed abroad in the heart by the Spirit in those in whom Christ dwells. He effectually works in his people to create love in us toward Christ and one another. A believer's love for his brethren is by no means perfect. We can never look to our love for acceptance with God. But where Christ abides, love for brethren abides.

Men may try to fake love of brethren but the love Christ creates in the heart "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." This love of God never fails because it is of God and kept in our hearts by God. (1 Cor 13: 4-8). When we no longer have hope and faith, charity never faileth. The love of God thinks the best of one another and overlooks our many falls and never forsakes one another. We will still love in heaven. But a hypocritical love can leave

brethren and will. You have seen this. Men who claim to believe the gospel end up siding with free-will works religionists rather than those who trust in God's free and sovereign grace. Why? It is because they have no love of brethren. It is only when Christ has revealed how he first loved us when we were the ungodly that we love one another and are willing to forgive one another's sin and restore one another for Christ's sake.

Included in the love of brethren is godliness and every good work that God foreordained and works in his people. By the sovereign grace of God, those in whom Christ abides are devoted to Christ so that we seek to honor Christ and adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. The grace of God changes his people by giving us a new heart. He sanctifies his people and teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world. We sin. We fail. That is right here in our text. Included in love is speaking to one another of what Christ has done for us. Trusting Christ to grant repentance so that we trust Christ to work through the gospel, we are merciful, we forgive and we restore one another even as Christ does for us over and over. I include this in love of brethren because being an encouragement to brethren in godliness is one of the greatest expressions of love for brethren there is.

Three, to walk in the light is to walk by faith. That is the first part of Christ's holy commandment. We saw the second part is to love one another. The first part, which indeed is paramount, is to believe on Christ. Without faith it is impossible to please God. We believe Christ alone is our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. This is the first part of Christ's effectual command to his people. Remember when we looked at 1 John 3? This two part command is what John declares it is *to do righteousness*; it is also to *walk in light*—

1 John 3:23 And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

John 12: 46: I am come a light into the world, that whosoever BELIEVETH on me should not abide in darkness.

John 3:19: And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20: For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. 21: But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

John 12:35: Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. [what did he mean by walk?] 36: While ye have light BELIEVE in the light, that ye may be the children of light...

We believe on Christ for all acceptance with God. He is All to the believer, apart from anything in us or done by us. Walking by faith is walking in the light of Christ.

Four, to walk in darkness to deny our sin before God: which includes putting some confidence in self, in personal goodness or works; but those who walk in light confess their sins to God and have no confidence in the flesh. This is part of our text back in 1 John 1: 8-10.

1 John 1: 8: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10: If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Verse 8 deals with a self-deceiver, *if we say we have no sin.* To say we have no sin is to deny we have a sin-nature, fleshly nature which is only sin. He deceives himself into thinking he is innocent of sin. He says that he is not been made sin by Adam's one transgression and conceived totally depraved. So long as a man thinks he has no sin he will hate Christ and his gospel. Only those who know that sin is all they are, believe on Christ because only they have a need.

Verse 10 deals with a blasphemer who denies he has ever broken God's law—*If we say that we have not sinned.* That speaks of sins committed in thought, word or deed. These include men who think they have become so progressively holy that they do not break the law. It includes those who think they actually keep God's law. If we say this "we make him a liar." It is blasphemy against God and his Christ. It is to deny Christ altogether because "if righteousness come by the law then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal 2: 21).

We see here why John says of the person who walks in darkness—*v8: the truth is not in us; v10: his word is not in us*

Let's see an illustration of this. When Christ came to the blind man, John and the apostles asked who sinned, this man or his parents that he was born blind. Christ said, he was born blind that the works of God might be manifest.

John 9: 4: I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

After his parents denied him and the Pharisee's kicked him out of the synagogue,

John 9: 35: Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? 36: He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? 37: And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. 38: And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him. 39: And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see;

and that they which see might be made blind. And *some* of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

They would not confess their sin--that their very nature was sin. They would not confess that they had sinned in thought, word and deed. They would not come to Christ confessing their sin to Christ. Christ said to them, "*Therefore your sin remaineth.*"

But we see what happened to that blind man that our Lord gave sight. He confessed his sin to Christ confessing he was ignorant, blind, in need of Christ alone. Christ forgave him and cleansed him. John said, "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*" This is one in whom the Truth abides, one in whom the Word abides. He confesses that sin is all he is in his flesh and that sin is all he does due to his sinful flesh.

THE BLESSING OF GOD

1 John 1: 7: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin...9: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

This is the blessing of God to those who God has made honest to confess our sins to God.

Those born of God *walk in the light as Christ is in the light*. Before we would not come into the light, now we walk into the Light by coming to Christ the Light that our deeds might be manifest that they are all wrought in Christ. True confession of sin is the confession that all our righteousness is Christ. He is our only righteousness.

We are born of his Light through the gospel Light. We believe on Christ the Light for all acceptance with God and love those begotten of Christ. Now our lives are constrained by the love of Christ to honor him in all we say and do; we hate our sin and love holiness.

"*We have fellowship one with another*"—that is, between us and God our Father in his Son, Jesus Christ. The individual sinner made light in the Lord has fellowship with God our Father and his Son Christ Jesus and he with the sinner made light. The righteousness of Christ is freely imputed to us through faith. Christ's holiness has been imparted to us in the new birth--Christ has been formed within us so that we are partakers of the divine nature. We have communion with God—the Father abides in Christ and Christ abides in us and us in him. And all things that are God's are Christ's and all things that are Christ's are ours. We are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

God is faithful and just to forgive us for the sake of Christ Jesus. "*The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin...*" Don't miss this believer! The "eth" means we never cease coming to Christ and confessing our sin and our sins--and Christ, by his blood, never ceases cleansing us from all sin. We confess sin we do not even see ourselves commit because we know sin is in all that we do. But when we sin and become defiled, Christ washes our feet through the gospel. He correct us by his sovereign hand. He keeps us walking by faith and love in Christ the Light.

We confess our sins to God. We have no confidence in our flesh; we are sin and all we do is sin in our sin-nature. And God is faithful as he promised. And by the blood of Christ God is just to forgive us all our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness

Sinner, come to God confessing your sin and your sins and cast all your care on Christ! If you can then it is because the truth, God's Word, Christ the Truth, abides in you. And you will find that God has freely given you all this by his grace!

Amen!