

That our joy may be complete – 1 John

1 John 1:5-2:2

“Walking in the Light” – February 23, 2020



Introduction

God is light. In Him there is no darkness at all. Because His actions are consistent with His character, we can live with the confidence and assurance that *everything* God does and says is good, right and just – even when we struggle to understand or believe that truth. That God is light also exposes the darkness. Look at the response of those who saw a glimpse of God's light: the prophet in [Isaiah 6:1-8](#), Adam and Eve in [Genesis 3:7-8](#), Moses in [Exodus 3:5-6](#), Peter before Jesus in [Luke 5:8](#). When sinful humanity (that's *all* of us) sees a glimpse of God's holiness, knees are left shaking, hearts are racing, fear sets in and we look for someplace to hide. How are we to respond to the God who is light knowing we have sin and darkness in our life?

Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

Sermon Outline

Wrong ways we may deal with sin knowing God is light (1:5), we...

- I. Downplay our sin (1:6-7)
- II. Deceive ourselves (1:8-9)
- III. Deny our sin (1:10-2:2)

Read & Discuss

1) Read [1 John 1:5-7](#)

Take a moment to read [John 3:19-21](#). Under the holy gaze of God, we long for refuge a place to hide. The false teachers that had crept into the church John writes to ([1 Jn. 2:26](#)) were offering unbiblical solutions. We can see what they were saying by noting the three “If we say” statements in our text (1 Jn. 1:6, 8, 10). When you see the various responses of people who see something of God's character (see introduction), can you relate? Why do you think we *don't* respond the way they do?

The false teachers, holding to an early form of what would be called ‘Gnosticism’ taught that the sinful actions we commit in our bodies are disconnected from our spirit life. As a result, they believed we can walk in the darkness yet maintain fellowship with God who is light. But according to texts like [2 Corinthians 6:14](#) or [1 Timothy 6:16](#) that's not how it works. The Christian response to sin comes from John in v7. How is fellowship with God made

possible according that verse? What is John saying about our fellowship with 'one another' as a result of our fellowship with God? How should that shape the way we relate to each other as Christians (in the church, marriage, friendships, etc.)?

Additional Reading: James 4:1-5, Mark 2:17

2) Read [1 John 1:8-9](#)

Here John talks about how we can rationalize, reason around, or convince ourselves (given our *unique* circumstances) that what we did was not sin. Pulling no punches, John says to do that is to deceive ourselves. Instead of trying to find a deceptive loophole, John says the Christian response is to confess our sin. To confess our sin is to agree with God about our guilt, the offense, and the evil of our sin. True confession (as is clear from 1 Jn. 1:6-7) is an outward expression of our trust in God and repentance (turning from that sin).

Why does John say God *forgives* and *cleanses*? Why do we need both?

Note that John says God is *faithful* and *just* to forgive. How can God be just to forgive sinners like us and declare us innocent when we just admitted our guilt in confession?

Additional Reading: Romans 3:23-25, Romans 8:13

3) Read [1 John 1:1-2:2](#)

Here, John says instead of denying that we have sinned, we should find refuge in Christ. Two wonderful truths about Jesus show up here for us: He is our *advocate* and He is our *propitiation*. What is John telling us about Jesus and what He does for us with each of these terms? How does knowing this about Him help us find rest, humility, and confidence?

Additional Reading: Psalm 32:1-2

Prayer of Response

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand*, *believe*, *desire*, or *do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

*Next week's sermon text: we turn to 1 John 2:3-11 "Walking His way"
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