

Walking in the Light (1 John 1:5–2:2)

I. INTRO

- A. About a year ago...
- B. In this section of 1 John, the author makes the claim that **GOD IS LIGHT**
 - 1. God doesn't just have light. He doesn't just shine light. God IS holy light.
 - 2. Because God is light, real fellowship with Him requires walking in the light
 - a) Walking in His truth... letting his light shine
 - b) That means not pretending we are innocent, without sin, or have finally arrived or know all the answers
 - c) It means bringing our sin (actions, lies, thoughts) into the open where Christ has already paid for it so he can cleanse it for good!
 - 3. Of course, we don't like this process
 - a) So we hide... we run... we perform... we redefine... we pretend... anything to not deal with the cobwebs and skeletons in the closet
 - b) But God wants to shine his light in and let Jesus cleanse
- C. God wants a pure and spotless bride. He wants more of me... more of you...

II. *[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.*

- A. God is Light → what does that mean? Isaiah 6
- B. *1 Tim 6:16, He alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light*
- C. God is Light means God is HOLY HOLY HOLY
 - 1. His light is unapproachable by sinful man b/c his light reveals all
- D. *Hebrews 4:12–13, [12] For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. [13] And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account. (ESV)*
- E. **"God is Light" isn't just a description of God → it's an exposure of us.**
 - 1. If God is Light, then any darkness on me is on full display in his presence
 - 2. That's why humans avoid TRUTH. It's why we "sin in the dark" and why people want Vegas to stay in Vegas
- F. We don't pursue that exposure in our natural state - we flee from it
- G. God is HOLY (Light), and a HOLY GOD cannot have fellowship with a SINFUL people → this creates a problem which only Jesus' death can fix
- H. But rather than running to Jesus, people try to justify their darkness...

III. *[6] If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. [7] But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.*

- A. Three ways we hide from the light...
- B. The first thing people try and do is walk in both worlds ("I can manage my sin"). This is your first temptation in the fight against sin.

1. The light exposes our sin, our waywardness, our need for him... but I love it. I love my sin. I wouldn't do it if I didn't. Even the things I think I hate, I also love.
 - a) So our default is to hide from exposure, like Adam
 - b) Or we manage it. Put it away in the closet when guests come over
 - (1) Clear internet histories, delete chats, or don't yell in public
 - c) We present the version of ourselves we want others—and even God—to see. As if that somehow actually fixes us.
 - d) John says, "We lie!"
2. To put it another way, when you try to live in both worlds of light and darkness you either PRETEND or PERFORM
 - a) Pretending means you put lipstick on the pig, plastic smile, fake brady bunch family, just act like you have it all figured out
 - (1) No confession, no conviction → just PR campaign
 - b) Performing is similar, it means you feel the need to prove to God you can do it. So you try harder, do more, work with more urgency, say yes to more things, etc
3. Walking in the light doesn't mean there's no darkness in you → it means you stop hiding it. You let the light shine on it so Jesus can deal with it!
 - a) When we do that, we can be confident with joy b/c the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin! Amen!
 - b) Managing sin isn't the same as dealing with sin.
4. Guys, don't be afraid of the Holy Spirit's conviction. Don't be embarrassed to have the Lord point something out in your life
 - a) When he does, own it, confess it, don't pretend like you don't struggle → we are all sinners in need of grace since birth!

IV. *[8] If we say 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.*

- A. The second thing people do is like one step deeper → we deny that what we are doing is sin or that we are capable of sin (That doesn't apply to me)
 1. If the first group hides, the second group redefines what sin is so it doesn't apply to them
 - a) Ex: "It's not like I killed someone..."
 2. These are people who think that all that Jesus stuff is a crutch for other people (murderers, drunks, lowlifes, adulterers, etc)
 3. They think: "I am a good person"
 4. **Well I have bad news, you only think you're a good person if you don't allow the light of the Word of God to shine in your life!**
 5. But when you stand naked and exposed before the Lord of Glory → you still think Jesus is just for the homeless guy in Kensington?
 6. Ex: Those huge mirrors at hotels for shaving or make-up
 - a) You think you look decent until you accidentally look at one of those and you see every pore, every wrinkle, every nose hair

7. You can only deny your own sin if you turn off the light
 8. When we flick the light on, we see our sin clearly and it's intense!
 9. But we have good news... that shouldn't intimidate us, it should free us
 10. If you confess... Jesus is faithful... and just... to forgive... and cleans
- V. *[10] If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*
- A. The third thing people do is the deepest level of blindness → deny God and his truth all together (People are inherently good)
 1. John is blunt here → this is like calling God a liar
 2. This is a level and depth of blindness that needs a complete shake-up
 3. The only way you can think people are inherently awesome is if you willingly walk in ignorance to reality (but some people do it)
 4. Our culture doesn't deny brokenness - it just redefines it
 - a) It's not sin to... it's just cultural evolution... it's freeing... it's liberation... it's advancement...
 5. If you remove truth, then you remove sin. But if you remove sin, you don't make people better—you just remove the need for a Savior.
 - a) Sounds like a good strategy for Satan
 - B. I'm a pastor. I am walking in the light, but sin is real in my life.
 1. Some days I am really upfront and honest about my sin and other days I try and hide it
 2. Sometimes I am quick to repent and other days I don't want to
 3. So what does this mean for people like me and you, people who want to walk in the light but we still struggle in the day-to-day?
- VI. *[1] 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. [2] He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*
- A. John's goal isn't to make people comfortable with sin. He's not lowering the standard.
 - B. He's saying: Sin matters. Holiness matters. Walking in the light matters.
 - C. But then he immediately adds, "But if anyone does sin..."
 1. Not if you fail once in a lifetime—but when sin happens, today, which it does. What then?
 - D. "We have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ the righteous."
 1. When you bring your sin into the light, Jesus doesn't stand before the Father and say, "They're not that bad."
 2. He says, "I already paid for that."
 - a) Your defense is not your effort.
 - b) Your defense is not your improvement.
 - c) Your defense is that justice has already been satisfied
 - d) Jesus reveals our sin so he can cleanse it
 - E. "He is the propitiation for our sins..."
 - (1) Ex: Like cleaning house with the lights off/on

1. That means the full weight of God's justice has already been poured out—and absorbed—by Christ.
 2. Jesus doesn't reveal your sin to punish you; he was punished
 3. He doesn't reveal your sin to pour out wrath; he received wrath
 4. God isn't showing you your weakness to make you feel bad but b/c he wants to clean out the rot and lead you into LIFE and JOY
 5. We need to stop running from conviction – it's good for us
- F. The very son of God, the righteous one who was without sin, the one who paid for my iniquities and for yours, the one who was slaughtered so that I could live, stands up on my behalf. God is FOR US
1. He stands before the father, praying and advocating
 2. He stands in the courtroom arguing on our behalf against the accuser
 3. He reminds the heavenly realms of the forgiveness that he purchased
 4. And he reminds us of the love we have received
- G. So the difference between a false believer and a true one isn't that one sins and the other doesn't.
- H. The difference isn't perfection but direction. One runs from the light. The other keeps coming back into it.

VII. Conclusion

- A. So what does this mean for us?
1. **The question isn't: "Do you sin?"**
 2. **The question is: "What do you do with it?"**
- B. Do you hide it? Rename it? Manage it? Or do you bring it into the light?
- C. Because walking in the light looks like this:
1. Honesty instead of self-preservation of image
 2. Confession instead of denial
 3. Dependence on grace for your struggles
- D. 1 John is written so you can know you're saved—but if there's no conviction, no repentance, no return to the light, there's a real question if the light of Christ is in you at all.
- E. But for the one who comes into the light, for the one who owns their sin...
1. There is cleansing. There is forgiveness. There is an Advocate.
- F. So **the question isn't: "Are you perfect?" The question is: "Are you hiding?"**
1. Because you cannot have fellowship with God in the dark.
- G. But hear this clearly: You don't clean yourself up to come into the light. You come into the light because it's already been paid for.
- H. So as you think of your sin...
1. Stop managing it. Stop renaming it. Stop hiding it. Stop justifying it. Step into the light and let Jesus deal with it.