

1 John 1:5-10

5 This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to 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 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 Christ His Son cleanses 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.

To understand a book properly we need to understand **the person** that wrote the book and **the purpose** they had for writing it.

A little bit about the author of the book, John

- While John is not mentioned by name in the Fourth Gospel, he is likely to have been “the beloved disciple” who reclined next to Jesus at the Last Supper ([John 13:23](#));
- He stood at the foot of the cross when Jesus was crucified; Jesus entrusted his mother Mary to John’s care ([John 19:26–27](#)).
- Along with Peter he witnessed the empty tomb on the first Easter morning ([John 20:2–10](#)).
- He also saw, spoke with, and ate breakfast at a lakeside fire kindled by the resurrected Jesus ([John 21:7, 20](#)).
- He was therefore highly qualified to write of what he and others had heard, seen, gazed upon, and touched ([1 John 1:1](#)).
- As Jesus’ “beloved disciple,” he was also well suited to plumb the depths of the meaning of Jesus’ coming ([1:2; 4:9](#)), life ([2:6; 4:14](#)), death ([1:7](#)), resurrection ([5:11](#));

Some of the major themes and emphases of this book are:

- that Christ is simultaneously fully human and fully God,
- the close relationship between believing (faith, doctrine) and obeying God’s commandments (ethics),
- and the importance of love marking authentic knowledge of the true God through trust in his Son.

Finally, let’s reread John’s statements of purpose behind the letter. These point to ways that we can expect to see ourselves grow as we study 1 John:

- 1:3,4 **that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. 4 And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.**
- 2:1 **My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.**
- 2:26 **These things I have written to you concerning those who try to deceive you.**
- 1 John 5:13 **These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.**

5 This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

THIS is the message which we heard from HIM...

- What John is about to tell us is not something that he just made up... these are not simply his personal opinions or ideas about God.
- What he is about to tell us is God's message about Himself (**which we have heard from Him**),
- which John now reveals to us (**and declare to you**).
- John spent time with Jesus. He heard this message from the lips of Jesus himself.
- What John will tell us about God is what God has told us about Himself.
- We can't be confident in our own opinions or ideas about God unless they are genuinely founded on what God has said about Himself.

God is light and

- This is the message from God Himself.. He is light...
- **God is Light** is a statement of the absolute nature of God.
- He is not A light, or THE light, (with reference to created things)
- Simply and absolutely, God in his very nature is light.
- Just as it says in 1 John 4:8 "God is Love", God IS light.
- Why light?
- Light, in the Scriptures, is the emblem of purity, truth, knowledge, prosperity, and happiness. It is immaterial, pure, and glorious.
- Darkness is the opposite of all of these things.
- God is PERFECTLY pure! God has never sinned, will never sin, and cannot sin!

And in Him is no darkness at all

- John is making a very stark contrast here to make a very solid point.
- God is absolutely perfect; there is NOTHING in Him which is in any way imperfect; or which could dim or mar the pure splendor of His character.
- **The culture that we live is constantly trying to get us to devalue God, to doubt Him, His character, His promises, and His goodness.**
- **It is important that we, as Christians, have an accurate view of God. He is perfect. We cannot let the culture influence, or dictate how we view the Lord.**
- **John 1:4-5** In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.
- **James 1:17** Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.
- **Rev 21:23** The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light.

John is now going to build his argument using contrasts.

As Christians what we DO should match up with what we believe.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

If we say that we have fellowship with Him

- The word “Fellowship” in the Greek is “koinonia” means to have communion with God. It shows a It implies a partaking of the divine nature of God.
- John first deals with a *false claim* to fellowship. Based upon this, we understand that it is possible for some to *claim* a relationship with God that they do not have. We can also say that it is possible for someone to *think* they have a relationship with God that they do not have.
- Many Christians are not aware of their true condition. They know they are saved, and have experienced conversion and have repented at some time in their life. Yet they do not live in true fellowship with God.

and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

- John uses the term “walk in darkness” to show a consistent pattern of sinful living. This is not speaking about an occasional stumbling into sinful living, but of a lifestyle of darkness.
- *“It is known that to walk, in scripture account, is to order and frame the course and actions of the moral life, that is, of the life so far as it is capable of subjection to the divine law. To walk in darkness is to live and act according to such ignorance, error, and erroneous practice, as are contrary to the fundamental dictates of our holy religion.”* - Matthew Henry's Commentary

we lie and do not practice the truth.

- Who are we lying to when we do this? EVERYONE!!
- We lie to God – He knows not only what we do, but WHY we do what we do! We cannot pull a thing past Him!
- We lie to others – we often put on a show so that others will think that we are better Christians than we really are... our faith becomes a show to promote ourselves.
- We can even lie to ourselves – We think our sin is not that bad...
- We must not only have a true confession, but true practice.
- **Matt 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.**

I personally think that a key word here is “fellowship.”

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 Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

- **But if we walk in the light:** This means to walk in a generally obedient life, without harboring known sin or resisting the conviction of the Holy Spirit on a particular point.
- John's message here means that a **walk in the light** is *possible*. We know that on this side of eternity, *sinless perfection* is not possible. Yet we can still **walk in the light**, so John does mean perfect obedience.
- **Those that WALK IN THE LIGHT show that they know God and that they have truly received the Holy Spirit.**
- The Christian life is described as **walking**, which implies *activity*. Christian life feeds upon contemplation, but it displays itself in action. "Walking" implies action, continuity, and progress. Since God is active and walking, if you have fellowship with Him you will also be active and walking.

- **As He is in the light:** “In the same kind of light that he has. The measure of light which we may have is not the same in degree, but it is of the same kind. The true Christian in his character and feelings resembles God.” - Barnes' Notes,
- **We have fellowship with one another:** Fellowship with one another is a natural outcome of “walking in the light as He is in the light”
- We would have expected John to say, "We have fellowship with God." That is true, but already in the idea of walking together with God in the light. John wants to make it clear that fellow Christians who walk in the light enjoy fellowship with each other.
- This leads to an important idea: if we do *not* **have fellowship with one another**, then one party or both parties are not walking **in the light**. Two Christians who are in right relationship with God will also naturally be in right relationship with each other
- **Our lives should reflect what we believe!**
- **The beautiful thing is that all of this serves as an invitation into relationship with the living, perfect, holy, God!**
- **and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.**
- "Does my walking in the light take away my sins? Not at all. I am as much a sinner in the light as in the darkness, if it were possible for me to be in the light without being washed in the blood. Well, but we have fellowship with God, and does not having fellowship with God take away sin? Beloved, do not misunderstand me - no man can have fellowship with God unless sin be taken away; but his fellowship with God, and his walking in light, does not take away his sin - not at all. The whole process of the removal of sin is here, 'And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.' " (Spurgeon)

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.

- **If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.**
- We must beware of deceiving ourselves into denying or excusing our sin!
- Too many arguments between people go on far too long because Christians do not read or believe this verse!
- Fights go on and grudges are formed because all we see is the other person's sin and we are deceiving ourselves into thinking that we stand completely in the right!
- In Matthew 7:1-5 “**3 And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? 5 Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck out of your brother's eye?**
- For us to receive the gospel we need to stop lying to ourselves in thinking that 1) we don't have sin, or 2) that or sin is not that bad.
- Our sin sends us to hell, Jesus had to suffer and die because of our sin, AND our sin breaks our fellowship with the Lord.
- If we don't call our sin what it is, sin, we will never look for the remedy!
- By us denying or devaluing our sin we just prove where we stand with God.

There is good news though!!! (I probably teach on this verse 5 days a week!) (I'm banking my whole life on this verse!!)

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- To **confess** means, “to say the same as.” When we confess our sin, we are willing to say (and believe) the same thing about our sin that God says about it. Jesus’ story about the religious man and the sinner who prayed before God illustrated this; the Pharisee bragged about how righteous he was, while the sinner just said *God be merciful to me a sinner*. (Luke 18:10-14) The one who confessed his sin was the one who agreed with God about how bad he was.
- **He is faithful...** He has ALWAYS been faithful!! Look at every page of the Scriptures!
- **just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**
- By forgiving all that is past, treating us as if we were righteous, and ultimately by removing all the stains of guilt from the soul.
- **Rom 3:22-25** 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. 25 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished- NIV
- **Eph 2:1-9**

If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

- A person may have heard and agreed to the gospel message, but until it brings him to acknowledge his or her sin, it has not truly taken root and changed their life.
- LET THIS NOT BE SAID OF US!!