

Are You On The “Light” Path?

1 Jn 1:5-7

I used to be afraid of the dark. I will never forget a Sunday evening when I was 5 that either started that fear or solidified that fear. Dad preached very graphically on hell. A place of burning a complete darkness. After church, like all kids growing up in church, we played hide and seek while the adults talked forever. On the last round, I found a great hiding place behind the baptistry and fell asleep. Everyone finally got done talking and headed home. My dad was always the last one out of the building, checked to make sure the lights were off and headed to the car down the street assuming I was already there. About that time, I woke up...to the utter blackness of hell!!!! Dad said they heard me screaming from half way down the block! That stays with a person for a long time and even as adults they can be...concerned about the dark.

As we go into this lesson, remember that spiritual darkness is infinitely more terrifying than physical darkness. God is light. In him is no darkness.

PRAYER

I. God is Light

A. Prelude

1. To fully understand our text, let's look back at the first few verses of this chapter.
2. 1 John 1:1–4 (ESV) — 1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— 2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— 3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, (THE GOSPEL OF SALVATION) so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

(RIGHT LIVING, DOCTRINE) 4 And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

3. John then gives them a quick lesson in how the gospel lives in our lives as Christians in our text.

B. Most people like to think of God as “God is love”

1. They want to bask in his love.
2. They feel good about a God who loves them.
3. They know his is a perfect and complete love.

C. I love the fact that God is light

1. Light is the universal symbol of goodness and righteousness
2. If we have righteousness, we will have love, goodness, truth and everything else we need.

II. In Him There is no Darkness

A. Walking in darkness

1. Our culture has become a “don’t judge anyone” culture. That is a great concept in a non spiritual realm, but it doesn’t fit faith.
2. The world has always, and will always embrace darkness. That’s just simply how the sinful nature works.
3. 1 Pet 2:9 tells us we have been called out of darkness.
4. When new testament writers used the work darkness in a spiritual sense, they were talking about sin.
5. In God, there can be no sin, so there can be no darkness.
6. Without God, all there is, is sin, darkness.
7. Paul clearly lays out a world that has rejected God in 2 timothy 3:1-5: 2 Timothy 3:1–5 (ESV) — 1 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. 2 For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, 4 treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of

pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

8. We need to teach that God does have standards we need to live out.
9. We need to show, by our example, why the light is better than the darkness.

III. Talk the talk and walk the walk

A. ILLUSTRATIONS

1. I used to have a tee shirt that matched this text. It said, "If you talk the talk, you had better walk the walk."
2. That is the challenge of vs 6. 1 John 1:6 (ESV) — 6 If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.
3. Don't just talk it, live it.
4. One controversy in professional sports today is the matter of prayer on the field. Sometimes after a big play or a victory, a player will drop to his knees and thank God. Some people object to this practice. One newspaper writer suggested that the playing fields should be off-limits to such religious practices. He said that anything having to do with God should be confined

to church. To him, it's "absolutely ridiculous" for people to talk to God anywhere else.

5. As Christians, we would disagree with this kind of thinking, but we sometimes give the impression by our behavior that we believe it.
 6. We set Sundays aside to worship and serve God but act as if the rest of the week is ours to do with as we please.
 7. For the believer, living for God is a 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week proposition.
 8. Don't fool yourself into thinking that talking it is good enough.
 9. This has been one of the biggest complaints of the world against Christianity.
 10. Millennials often take a hit about leaving organized religion in droves, but they see a huge discrepancy in church people. We're great at talking the talk, but we aren't walking the walk very well.
 - a) Millennials are looking to make a difference, not just talk about it.
 - b) If they are going to follow God, they want to be doing something meaningful in the community around them, not just stay in the safety of the church building.
 - c) They want to make a difference. They want to see a difference.
 - d) If the organized church isn't going to do that, well, they will just do things on their own.
 - e) Would we keep our young people or attract young people if we did more than make us feel good about ourselves on Sundays?
- B. There is a difference between stumbling on the path and walking in the darkness.
1. First, we need to admit we're sinners and we need to deal with that reality honestly.
 2. Vs 8 tells us that "if we claim that we are without sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."
 3. John didn't mince any words here. You're a sinner. Deal with it.
 4. We can never be perfect, even though we need to always strive to be perfect.

5. Vs 9 is important to understand in the Greek.
 - a) It's not a one time deal. I confess, God forgives. All done.
 - b) The grammer is a present, active, verb.
 - c) John is saying, "if we continually confess, he continually forgives and continually cleanses." It's an ongoing process.
6. A true Christian, when he sins, asks God for forgiveness and then works on his life to eliminate that temptation through the power of Christ.
7. It may take a short time or it may take all of our lives trying to overcome an area of sin.
8. That is where God's grace comes in.
9. Vs 7 basically says that as long as we are trying, his blood washes over our sins.

C. Walking in darkness is much more deliberate.

1. Watch your kids around a good mud puddle. They may be walking in a nice dry clean path and then all of a sudden they are jumping in that mud

puddle. An accident? No way, they deliberately decided to jump in the water.

2. A minister friend of mine has a favorite saying. "we rarely fall into sin, we usually jump into it with both feet."
3. God has given us a pure, lighted path to walk in our journey here on earth.
4. Yet, many people would rather get off that path and wallow in the mud and darkness of sin.
5. It's no accident; they choose to leave God.

IV. Walking in the Light

A. What a wonderful thought John expresses in Vs 7

1. My mom was night blind. After sunset, she couldn't see a thing. Growing up, Dad or I would walk with a flashlight, and she would grab our arm and walk right next to us so she could take full advantage of the light.
2. 1 John 1:7 (ESV) — 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.
3. When we are doing what is right, we have fellowship with God, with each other, and the blood of Christ purifies us.
4. We are talking full advantage of the light.
5. That is the reward of Christian living.
6. To know that we are in fellowship with God, other Christians and that Christ's blood will purify us so we can be with him in Heaven.

B. How does walking in light or darkness affect our fellowship with each other?

1. Leslie B. Flynn, in his little book *Worship: "Together We Celebrate,"* told about just such a person. When his minister called on him, he found him sitting by a fireplace. He asked about his absence from services, and the member replied, "I think I can worship as well alone as at church." After reflecting a moment, the minister took the fireplace tongs, lifted a live coal from the fire, and set it down at the side of the grate. As they watched, its

color turned to gray and the heat slowly died. The church member got the point. After a pause, he said, "I'll be in church Sunday."

2. We need each other.
3. As Christians, we need each other to live rightly too.
4. A close friend of mine has helped me understand this concept. I have known him all my life. A few years back, he turned away from God and began living a life that was unacceptable to God and to me. He was my friend, but the relationship changed because some of the most important things we had in common were no longer there. There was a sadness in me chasm in our relationship.
5. You can't have the same relationship with a brother or sister who has turned from God; Not unless your faith is weaker than it should be.
6. The world may embrace live however you want. But God doesn't, and we can't either.

C. Joy of Christianity

1. Vs 7 gives a picture of Christianity. It shows us why we can rejoice as Christians and live a contented life.
2. Jesus' blood PURIFIES us
3. The Greek word is that active verb I was talking about earlier; it keeps on purifying us.
 - a) In his book *The Great Boer War*, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle tells of a small detachment of British troops that was surprised by an overwhelming enemy force. The British retreated under heavy fire, and their wounded lay where they faced certain death. One of them, a corporal in the Ceylon Mounted Infantry, realized that they had to come immediately under the protection of a Red Cross flag if they were to survive. So, they used blood from their own wounds to make a large red cross on a piece of white cloth. The wounded made their way to that flag if they could. When the Boers saw that grim

flag, they held their fire, and the British were able to move their wounded to a safe place.

4. We have come under the cross of blood.
 - a) Protected by the blood from the wounds of Jesus.
 - b) But just as those wounded soldiers had to get to that cross for safety, we do we.
5. Will you come to the cross?