

# for the love

the first letter of John 

SCRIPTURE: 1 John 1:5-10: **God is LIGHT.**

The first Sunday we met, February 15, 2009, I preached a sermon from Acts 2. What if we could become like the first century church?

## **Acts 2:42**

<sup>42</sup>They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

The early church was devoted to fellowship. They were devoted to Christ and each other. They had everything in common and would give to others as they had need.

*(Last week in our study through 1 John)* The word fellowship in the greek is the word:

**koinōnía**, koy-nohn-ee'-ah; partnership, i.e. (literally) participation: *the share or participation which one has in anything*

There is a strong bond or partnership between believers...  
Not only between believers, but also with God.

Let's pick up the text in 1 John 5:5...

### **1 John 1:5**

<sup>5</sup>This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

The figure of light is often used in the Scriptures to describe that which is good, righteous, and true -

### **Ephesians 5:8-10**

<sup>8</sup>For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light <sup>9</sup>(for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) <sup>10</sup>and find out what pleases the Lord.

God is all *goodness, righteousness* and *truth*. That's what it means when we think of God being the light. And not only is God light, but He is absolute pure light.

God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

He is that light that causes us to squint.

So how do we ever get used to God's light? Stay in the light. In the same way your eyes have to adjust to the light, if you remain in the light you will become more and more adjusted to seeing fully who God is.

But what happens is we like to go back into darkness. When you walk into a dark room, initially you cannot see anything, but in a few seconds your eyes adjust and you can see the things that you couldn't before.

### **Ephesians 5:11-13**

<sup>11</sup>Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.

<sup>12</sup>It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. <sup>13</sup>But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light.

The figure of darkness represents the opposite of light: evil, unrighteousness, falsehood. Therefore we can never think of God as condoning sin or excusing it in any way.

Two options when you walk into a dark place...

you can wait until your eyes adjust to the darkness or you can turn on the light.

God wants us to turn on the light! He wants us to be the light and expose darkness. Not hang around until we get used to it... expose it.

Next John says something a little sobering....

### **1 John 1:6-7**

<sup>6</sup>If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. <sup>7</sup>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, purifies us from all sin.

Remember John is writing this letter to a group of Christians. In other words, we have to be careful, even as Christians, that we walk with God <IN THE LIGHT> not in darkness.

Verse 7 says if we stay in the light... then we can have fellowship (*koinōnía*) with God and each other.

Think about this... we cannot say we have fellowship with God and continue to walk in darkness! We cannot partner with God if we are walking in darkness. We cannot have *koinōnía* with God or others if we are spending our time in darkness.

Fellowship means to have something in common, so if we are walking in darkness we cannot have fellowship with God who (remember verse 5?)

### **1 John 1:5**

<sup>5</sup>This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

In Him there is no darkness at all. We cannot have fellowship with God if we are walking in darkness.

### **1 John 1:7**

<sup>7</sup>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, purifies us from all sin.

Our righteousness comes from Christ and him alone. He is the one who purifies us from all sin. And then we can have fellowship with God and one another.

Our job is to walk in the light... not as others are doing, but 'as God is in the light.'

Keep reading...

### **1 John 1:8**

<sup>8</sup>If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

When we become Christians, we do not lose the ability to sin. Remember John is writing this letter because there are some in the churches who are saying that only the spiritual is good. Those folks have convinced others that they are without sin, because they are spiritual.

It was like a license to sin.

I'll do whatever I want, because I'm now spiritual and cannot sin.

John says... "Nope!"

## 1 John 1:8

<sup>8</sup>If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

The consequences of such a claim...

- ▶ Self-deceit ("we deceive ourselves")
- ▶ Living in error ("the truth is not in us") Ex..walking in darkness, not walking in light!

Instead, we should freely confess our sins:

## 1 John 1:9

<sup>9</sup>If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Then God, who is "faithful" (trustworthy) and "just" (one who does what is right) will...

"forgive us our sins"

"cleanse us from all unrighteousness"

...through His mercy He makes it possible for to continue in fellowship with Him!

What a beautiful promise. Don't deceive yourself... you're going to make mistakes.

And when we do and admit it to God, He doesn't abandon us, he forgives us.

But there is another warning from John...

### **1 John 1:10**

<sup>10</sup>If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

Some might say they had never sinned or that they had grown to a point in their walk with Christ that they did not sin.

John says this is even worse... now we're making God out to be a liar.

### **Romans 3:23**

<sup>23</sup>for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

We all sin. We all make mistakes. We all fall short of God's glory and light. And when we do...



## **1 John 1:9**

<sup>9</sup>If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Why would John tell these Christians to confess their sins if they could not sin or had gotten to a place where they no longer sinned?

This really is a beautiful passage. We are all going to make mistakes. We are going to fail. But when we do, God's grace is there. His love for us is without fail.

Fellowship with God.

Walk in the Light.

## **1 John 1:5-7**

<sup>5</sup>This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. <sup>6</sup>If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. <sup>7</sup>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, purifies us from all sin.

When we are living in darkness it seems normal. But God wants us to live in his light.

### **John 1:4-5**

<sup>4</sup>In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Jesus came to be God's light in a dark world. But many have not understood it. Have not accepted the light.

If we are to have fellowship with God, we must walk in His light. The light of Jesus.

We cannot claim to have fellowship with God and continue to walk in darkness.

I think we have to become more and more aware of the road conditions. It's subtle. When we hit a pothole we are fully aware. It's not the pothole that is the problem. It's not the obvious that draws us away from God and his light.

It's the subtle. The road gets just a few bumps and we get used to them.

Like allowing our eyes to get used to the dark. Before you know it, the road is rough and we don't even notice. Stay in the light. Walk in Him.

Admit our faults.

### **1 John 1:8**

<sup>8</sup>If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

### **1 John 1:10**

<sup>10</sup>If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

We will always have to struggle against sin in our lives. No matter how long we have been in Christ, we have the propensity to sin.

We are good at it. We are easily entangled. Our eyes adjust easily to the darkness.

When we become Christians it does not make us immune to sin, nor does it make us too perfect to sin. We must always be on guard.

Genesis 4. Adam and Eve had two sons... Cain and Able. They both bring an offering to God... Able's is accepted, but Cain's is not. God sees the path before Cain and warns him...

### **Genesis 4:7**

<sup>7</sup>If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.

Sin is something that we must work to master. Cain failed to see the trap that sin was setting. He killed his brother Able and was cursed from that day forward.

God says, "if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you..."

There will always be an opportunity to sin. We have to walk in God's light and be on the lookout for sin.

And when we do sin we must...

Allow Christ to purify us.

### **1 John 1:9**

⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

God will be faithful. There is forgiveness in Christ for all who sin.

Admit. Acknowledge. Accept.

### **SGL Questions:**

1. Have you ever experienced a time when light or darkness caused something funny to happen to you?
2. Read 1 John 1:6-7 - What does a life in the light look like? What do we have when we walk in the light?
3. What are the dangers of being comfortable in the dark? What are practical ways of overcoming the dark?
4. Read 1 John 1:8 & 10 - What is the danger of not admitting sin in our life?

5. 1 John 1:9 gives us a beautiful promise of God. What does this tell us about who God is and His plan for your life?
6. How can we help others with recognizing, and fighting against sin their lives?
7. Read Ephesians 5:11-13: How are we to live in a world where sin is not viewed as sin rather than an accepted life choice?