

Avoiding the Darkness

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Preacher: Pastor Dr. Doug Mann

[0 : 0 0] ■ 1 John 1.

You know something amazing? You ever seen cockroaches? Cockroaches love the dark. And so do some people.

At least that's what the scripture tells us. That people love darkness and hate the light. Do you love the dark? I don't.

It's not because I'm scared. It's because I don't know what I'm going to run into. You know? I mean, and them little toes against furniture.

There's just no match. So, it's bad to be in the dark.

[1 : 3 6] Physically. It's worse to be in the dark spiritually. And that's what this section here, what John is trying to tell us, is about the dark.

Notice verse 5 of 1 John chapter 1. This then is a message which you've heard of him. Light is so beneficial.

If suddenly there was no light, no sunlight, how many of the plants outside would survive? None of them. Light is essential to growth.

Even with human beings. Sometimes we have to supplement our vitamin D because we don't go out and get enough sunshine. But if you're outside enough, it helps you with vitamin D and so much.

Real sun, real light is essential to survival. And spiritual light, the light of God, is essential to our spiritual survival.

[2 : 5 2] We need his light. And Jesus Christ, when he came, shared with us that light since he is God.

John chapter 1 verse 4. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. We need to come to the light.

Of course, in John chapter 3, we all remember John 3.16. You ought to read a couple verses after that.

John 3.19 says, this is a condemnation. That light is coming to the world, and men love darkness rather than light. Now that I know the light, I can't understand how I ever loved darkness more.

Because their deeds were evil. Everyone that doeth evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifest, that they are wrought of God.

[4 : 0 5] We need to come to the light. And stay in that light. And the important thing is, it says, in God is no darkness at all.

As we go through the next few verses, darkness is basically described as sin. In Sunday school this morning, we were discussing whether Jesus Christ in his earthly body could have sinned.

Well, because he's God, and God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. The answer is, no. No. So it's important that we come to Christ.

We come to his light. Because otherwise, we will slowly die spiritually without it.

Now, you have to remember that John wrote this letter to believers. I know some of you follow different people.

[5 : 18] There are some people that teach that only certain books of the Bible are good for the church today. Other books are for Israel later on. But I look at it differently.

I look at it as it's either to believers or unbelievers. And if you look at it that way, it makes a whole lot more sense. And John is writing to believers. So when we read something, and if you get that understanding first, as we read things, you'll go, that's written to me?

I'm already a believer. I've already had my sins forgiven. And now he's talking about being in sin and being in darkness. It's possible. That's why so many believers who start to walk in the darkness, start to walk in the sins of the flesh, start to go back to where they came from, are so miserable because they're in the darkness.

Even Jesus described different avenues of darkness and what can happen when the darkness. In John 11, 9, Jesus said, Are there not 12 hours in the day?

If any man walks in the day, he stumbles not because he sees the light of the world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth because there's no light in him.

[6 : 40] If you're trying to walk in the darkness, you're going to stumble and trip over things. Things that you would never trip over as long as you're walking in the light of God.

Jesus said again in John 12, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you. For he that walks in darkness knoweth not whither he goes.

I told you this story when I was on the submarines. We suddenly lost all power and was in the shipyard so we didn't have the emergency lights hooked up.

I was in a closed room. I've never experienced darkness like that. Literally, you just stand there afraid to move because you don't know where to go.

And it's the same in spiritual darkness. When we get out of God's light, and into the darkness, problems will happen. But if you follow God, you won't have that problem.

[7 : 49] And God is the Holy Spirit will never lead you into darkness. You know, it says be not drunk with wine where there's excess, but be what? Filled with the Spirit.

If we always let the Holy Spirit guide us because he's God, he's light, he will never guide us into darkness. And yet sometimes we forget.

And what's going to happen? Verse 6. There's a couple if statements here. Arguments. Verse 6. If we say, and that term is used several times, if we say, the important thing in our Christian life is not just say it, but do it.

Don't just say we're a Christian, but live a Christian life. Don't just say we love God and then go things that goes against what God wants us to do.

If we say we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie. If you say, and I've met people, and I get in trouble sometimes.

[8 : 59] This is like I was talking with Bill. Sometimes I'm like Peter. I stick my foot in my mouth just a little too often. But there are those that are walking in sin.

Living in sin. It could be any. It could be a sexual sin. Okay? And I'm not just talking about being gay or being transgender or any of that.

Those are all sins. I'm talking about any sexual immorality. And yet, they'll say, yeah, I have a good relationship with God.

No, you don't. Not if you're walking in that sin. If you're living in that sin, it's impossible. You cannot have fellowship with God. And if you think you do, what's God say? You lie.

There's one thing that really upsets me is when somebody calls me a liar. I don't know why. I try to be truthful.

[10 : 05] And if I say something wrong or, you know, they don't understand and they say, well, you're a liar. Man, that just, that hits me right here. But God says, if you say you have fellowship with Him, if you're walking close with Him, and you're walking in His light, and yet you're in the darkness, living sin, refusing to get out of it, you're a liar.

That should, that should wake us up. He says, you lie and do not the truth.

Now I'm going to hit on another hard spot. Maybe I ought to lean for this one. Halloween is coming.

And I'm not going to get in a big discussion. But if you look, most Halloween decorations are what? Witches.

Goblins. Dead people. Is that light or darkness? It's darkness. So why do we do it?

[11 : 22] I know, it's cute to dress up the kids as little princesses and princes and, and send them off. But, if you got to do it, don't dress them up as a goblin or a witch or something like that.

Because, then if you say, well, yeah, I have a good relationship with God. I have fellowship with Him. But you're walking in darkness. So I'm not going to tell you whether you should do Halloween or not.

I'm just telling you, think about what you're doing. And ask yourself, am I walking in darkness when I want to be in the light? Because if you're walking in darkness and think you're in the light, you're lying to yourself.

Verse 7, but if we walk in the light, as He's in the light, we have fellowship one with another. So if you're walking in the light, not only do you have fellowship with God, you have fellowship with other believers.

I always think it's great. If you've done any traveling, we have some visitors here, and you go into another church that's not your own, you can tell whether people love God or not.

[12 : 35] Years ago, we were visiting, we were, Debbie and I was vacationing somewhere, I'm not quite sure where, and we went into a church, big, pretty good size, over 100 people, maybe 200.

The only person in that church that said hello to us was the pastor, and that was as he was walking past us to go to the pulpit. And, the guest speaker spoke to us, but he was a man that we had served with in another church years before.

Nobody else in that church. And Debbie and I were saying, what if these people live in the area? Because there were other visitors there. And I just thought that was strange.

If you are in fellowship with God, you're walking in the light, you go and you visit with other people that are walking in the light, there's a bond. Amen? For all brothers and sisters in Christ.

And that's what it says. If you walk in the light, you have fellowship. But if you're walking in darkness, and in my past, I'll be honest, this has happened, I was walking in darkness, pretending I was walking in the light.

[13 : 53] But when I got around to other believers that were walking in the light, I felt a little uncomfortable. I felt like, what if they know? What if they start asking me questions?

But when I started walking in the light constantly more, I didn't feel that. We have fellowship, one with another. And a reminder, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.

Aren't you glad that when Jesus died and shed his blood, once again, we talked about this in Sunday school, he didn't say, okay, here's a list of sins that this blood covers. Here's a list of sins that don't.

And all of a sudden, you look at the list that don't and go, oh man. But no, he covers, he cleanses us from all sin.

That word cleanse, it's used again later on. That word cleanse means to be made able to approach God. Just like the Old Testament priests cleansed themselves before they performed their duties.

[15 : 09] Just before they cleansed everything else. Before, you know, they cleansed all the articles within the Holy of Holies and the Holy Place so that they could be in the presence of God.

And when it says that we are cleansed, it means that you were made able to approach the presence of God. The creator of the universe.

man, if I don't, at least silent, amen, that, that should bless you, amen? Hallelujah. Because you can walk in the light and be next to the light and you don't have to worry about that darkness, about all them sins of the past because they are in the past.

Why? Because the blood of Jesus Christ cleansed you from all your sins. But verse 8 says, if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth's not in us.

Here John was addressing some people who said, okay, and, and there are still groups today that believe this. That once you're saved, your spirit is renewed and made new, your flesh is, is just flesh, so, you don't really sin anymore because nothing can keep you from heaven.

[16 : 37] But that's not true. Sin is sin. And as soon as we're walking the light, when we do sin, we immediately get shoved into the darkness.

It says, if we say we have no sin. Verse 10 is similar if we say we have not sinned. Both could be true of some people. That they believe that because of what Christ did for them and they accepted the salvation, that no matter what they do, it's not sin anymore.

Turn over to Romans chapter, I've lost it, where was it? Romans 7.

Acts and Romans. Romans chapter 7. You know, there's this guy named Paul and we mentioned him, he wrote up most of the books of the New Testament.

Great teaching. But, look what Paul said about sin. In verse, starting in verse 18.

[18 : 03] For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. For to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not.

For the good that I would, I do not. But the evil which I would not, that I do. Now, if I do that, I would not. It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

So you can't say, I don't sin, or I can't sin. Because the scripture, other scripture says, that sin dwells in your flesh.

But not forever, amen? Amen. Boy, when that trumpet sounds and the Lord comes back for us instantly, our body is changed from these old sinful things and a new glorified body, and we're taken up to be in glory with Him forever.

Man, I can't wait. But until that time, we're still left here in this sinful world. We still have to fight our flesh. We still have to fight going off into darkness.

[19 : 13] Now, just an encouragement, your spirit, once it's born again, once you're made new, once your sins are forgiven, your spirit will never sin.

Skip over to 1 John chapter 3, verse 9. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remains in him, and he cannot sin because he's born of God.

Your spirit can't sin, but your flesh can, and thus the battle of the ages for Christians. As somebody put it once, it's sort of like being in a cart with two horses, a black horse on one side, a white one on the other side, the black one represents sin.

Let's say a scarlet one, for my sins were a scarlet horse, and a white horse represents purity. You're in the cart. You know which way your cart's gonna move? Whichever horse you feed.

You feed the sinful flesh, you're gonna go into the darkness. You feed the spiritual, and keep the flesh from being fed, keep those lusts from being satisfied, you're gonna go in the spiritual and go toward the light.

[20 : 38] I don't know about you, but I'd much rather be in the light than in the darkness. That way you can see, you can grow, you can be purified, you can be supplied by all that you need, by being in the light.

But you're saying, if my flesh sins, what am I gonna do about it? Because instantly, as soon as I sin, I'm in the darkness, how do I get back into the light?

Verse 9. John, John years ago, knew you'd ask that question, so he answers it. If we confess our sins to God, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us sins, and notice it doesn't say just sin, it says sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

So immediately, and this is why it's so important to really be close to the Holy Spirit, because if you do sin in the flesh, and you do step into darkness, the Holy Spirit starts tugging on you, going, you need to turn around.

Because if you, the farther you get into the darkness, the harder it is for you to listen to the Holy Spirit. Amen? But if you confess them, he, God, is faithful and just.

[22 : 11] That means he's trustworthy. He said, if you confess them, I'll forgive them. He doesn't say how many times you have to confess. It's sort of like the forgiveness, 70 times 7.

And I'm glad about that. God doesn't just give you a second chance, he gives you multiple ones. Because you're his child, because you've trusted him. Now hopefully, the more mature you get spiritually, the less you have to confess your sins.

because you're learning to walk in the light and you're finding out, hey, I like this better than being in the darkness. But if you confess your sins, he's faithful and just or righteous to do what?

Forgive. Oh, I like that. He forgives you your sins. And he cleanseth you from all unrighteousness.

Remember what I said cleanse means? It prepares you to be in the presence of God. So when you sin, you get out of, as we say, and I'm going to say it again, if you sin, you will not lose your relationship.

[23 : 29] You're still a child of God. but you will lose your fellowship. So as soon as you sin, you start stepping into darkness. You're unclean.

You can't get back to God until you confess your sins and he forgives them. Then he cleanses you. He makes you ready to get back into his light. What's he cleanse you of?

All unrighteousness. Because he's a righteous God. And we can't be in the presence of a righteous God if we have any unrighteousness within us. Amen? So that's what he does.

This is good news. This is what we should be remembering all the time because sometimes Satan will be knocking on your door, the one up here, and saying, God don't love you.

Look what you just did. Oh, God said don't do that. He's going to hate you now. Remember what you used to do? Sometimes this is how Satan gets you.

[24 : 29] Remember what you used to do? How you really loved doing that? And your spirit's saying, but that's a sin. And Satan's saying, yeah, but remember how much you really loved doing that?

You shouldn't anymore because you're a new creature. All things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new. new. So let's walk in the light, the light of God.

Yes, we're all going to fail. We'll never, you know, as we say over and over, you can never be sinless, but you can sin less.

The more you stay in the light, the more the darkness looks so terrifying. So let's just stay in the light.

If you sin, immediately confess it. Lord, I'm sorry. And that's both sins physically and from the mind. Because how can we be representatives of Jesus Christ if we're walking in the darkness?

[25 : 45] darkness. Because Jesus says, I'm the light of the world, but when I leave, you're going to be the lights of the world. You can't be a light of the world if you're walking in darkness.

Can you? But remember, we are the light the world needs to see.

We're not our own light. Just like John the Badrish described. He wasn't that light. But he represented that light. I like to think of it as the sun is the light of God.

We're like the moon. We don't make light ourselves. We reflect the sun's moon onto the earth. Do you know when the light of the moon goes away?

when the world gets between it and the sun. And it's the same with us. Our light will go away if we let the world get between us and the light of the world.

[26 : 56] Let's bow our heads. hopefully everybody here knows Jesus Christ as their savior.

They know their sins have been forgiven. They know that they've been placed into the light and the fellowship with God almighty and Jesus Christ his son. if you haven't done that you need to do that.

You need to believe that Jesus died on that cross for your sins was buried and rose the third day and your sins are forgiven and yet we still have to live this world.

We still have to battle with the flesh but you can win that battle too because you have the Holy Spirit dwelling within you. search your life, search your heart.

Ask yourself have I been walking in darkness? When the world sees me do they see more light or more darkness?

[28 : 12] When I talk to people do I share the light or do I share something that should be in darkness? do I have sins that I need to confess?

I know we're going to be doing the Lord's Supper in a moment. We always talk about confessing our sins before we're able to take that. Now would be a good time to do that. And every and every day of our life when we wake up in the morning our prayer should be Lord let me walk in your light today and avoid anything that puts me in darkness.

You know what's on your heart. You know what you need to pray to God. Perhaps it's just praising him for allowing you to walk in his light. let's go to the Lord in prayer. Heavenly Father Lord we thank you for your word and what it teaches us.

Lord that we can walk in your light. We can have fellowship with you. We can approach you and be in your presence at all times. And yet Lord it also teaches that sometimes sometimes we sin in the flesh.

but Lord you've given us the good news. You've forgiven us. Your blood cleanses us from all sins. Even the ones we haven't committed yet.

[29 : 44] So if we do we just confess and you'll forgive. Thank you Lord for that. Lord we can't thank you enough for the forgiveness of sins.

Encourage us Lord. Lift us closer to you. Let us look at the world through your eyes. Through your light. And we thank you for the salvation we have through Jesus Christ.

In Jesus name. Amen.