

# God Is Light - A Meditation For Dark Times

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     Praise God. Sweet, sweet to be here with you all again. I was telling Seth, we get to see some of the guys' faces in the Workman's Trust every week, but others that we are so used to seeing we don't see anymore.

And we were having dinner last night with a couple that's been attending Bellicose. He's come out of a rough situation from a previous ministry, and I was explaining to them what it was like when we prayed for the team that was going out.

And how for a few decades plus I had prayed that we would be able to equip and send workers in such a way that in some measure resembled the departure of Paul from Miletus with the elders of Ephesus when they wept at his departure.

That's not the kind of thing that happens when you're just building a missions and church planting portfolio where you're trying to beef up the amount of production that you've had in ministry as a church or you're posting on the wall how many missionaries you give \$10 a month to so that you can have a larger number.

So this is what it's like when the Lord at work in his church sends part of his body from another local body, and we actually feel it almost like an arm was cut off.

[ 1 : 3 1 ]     Except it's not negative in that sense because it's not an arm being cut off. It's the body being sent by the Lord for the purpose of spreading what we heard about in this Proto-Evangelion, the good news.

And so it's a wonderful thing, and yet there are tears and there's a sense of loss. I was explaining that to this dear couple that has passed through so much trial, and they said, we have never seen anything like that.

We've only known what it meant to be instruments in the part of a machine. It was that kind of dynamic. So I'm grateful for that.

And when I think of some of you that I don't see as often, I think, oh man, I miss seeing them. But then I get to come here, and so I feel doubly rich in that sense.

Well, there's my introduction. It's good to be here with you all. I want to think this morning. I was praying for you and thinking about what would be most helpful to share.

[ 2 : 3 8 ]     Dear heavens, we don't have a clock. We're going to need that. Okay. I'll just click on this and see. How long do you all normally go on Sunday mornings?

Just till 2? Okay. Okay. Make it 8 hours. Good to know. Good to know. All right. Well, you guys are kind of modeling after the Indian church. Just these 12-hour gatherings.

No. I'm actually picking up from where I began. I think it was last week at Bellicose Church in 1 John 1. Some of you may have caught wind of that.

You may not have. But I only made it through about a third of my notes last week. And the more I prayed and thought about coming here to Christ Church, I couldn't extricate myself from 1 John 1.

And so here we are. And if you want to open there to 1 John 1. I want to begin briefly by laying a backdrop for this theme that God is light.

[ 3 : 45 ] In my notes I have this titled, God is light, subtitle, a meditation for dark times. So I begin just by reading Matthew 24, verses 4 to 6, and then a portion from Psalm 27, and then we'll get to 1 John 1.

I don't know if you've been looking around at the world. You don't need to look very far. But if you've been looking around at the world, you might have a sense, as I do in these days, that there seems to be an unparalleled concentration and volume of darkness at play.

It's not just in America. It's in the cities of the earth. I have never seen a more global spread of jihadist Islam, for instance, of overt anti-Semitism, of immorality in a thousand different forms.

One needs only to watch the intro to the Olympics, which I hope you didn't. I didn't, but I saw it after the fact, to see open blasphemy on display. The world has always been a dark place since the fall, but the darkness is getting more boastful and pronounced, it seems to me.

And between the weight that I feel from those things and the weight that I feel from struggles within the church, walking through marital strife and other kinds of trials that are profound morally, doctrinally, and across the board, I have found myself over the last several weeks feeling a little heavier than normal and finding it more difficult to walk out of my study in the morning, even after a rich time in the word with the kind of lightness that I had in times past.

[ 5 : 33 ] Well, I don't know if it's going to be this way until the Lord returns, and I'm not without hope, but I do feel the prevalence of the darkness, it seems to me, in a way in which I haven't always felt it.

Perhaps I'm just discerning better. Or maybe it is that, as Paul said, in the last days, there will be an increasing darkness. I believe we're seeing that personally.

And when Jesus in Matthew 24, 4 to 6, answered his disciples, when they asked, when will these things be? What will be the sign of the coming and of the close of the age?

He responded by saying, See to it that no one leads you astray, for many will come in my name, saying, I am the Christ, and they will lead many astray.

And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet.

[ 6 : 34 ] For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.

The end is not yet. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars and all manner of tumult, as my disciples, in this fallen world. But don't be alarmed to the point of despair.

Don't be alarmed to the point of hopelessness. The end is not yet. That's a little anchor point for us to consider. And I would like to make note of the fact that our Lord himself says just there that things are going to get difficult in the world.

And particularly for believers in this world, he said, You will have tribulation, but take courage. I have overcome the world. So there's a lot of claiming of certain kinds of promises and misusing of them.

I heard another prosperity guy boasting just the other day that someone had gifted him with some kind of a really fancy clock that cost thousands of dollars, and that he already had 36 of them in his closet.

[ 7 : 45 ] And he said, Well, praise the Lord, brother, that's good. And then the guy said, But there's more to it. I'm giving you this particular kind of Bentley that has a clock, that clock mounted in it, which amounts to \$350,000 worth of vehicle and clock.

And he was boasting in that and treating it nonchalantly and saying, See, the Lord's blessings upon me. Ha ha ha. Well, there's going to be false teachers as well that are treasuring everything but Jesus Christ and him crucified.

And we can count on that, which is why we need to know that God is light and what that means. Before I get to that, I want to open with Psalm 27, and let's use it as our prayer this morning.

Psalm of David. The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid?

When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall. Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear.

[ 8 : 53 ] Though war arise against me, yet will I be confident. One thing have I asked of the Lord, and that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.

For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble. He will conceal me under the cover of his tent. He will lift me high upon a rock.

And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy. I will sing and make melody to the Lord.

Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud. Be gracious to me and answer me. You have said, seek my face. My heart says to you, your face, Lord, do I seek.

And in no better way, Lord, could we seek your face than by opening our hearts to you in prayer, than by opening your word to see the light that is in your word, than believing the gospel and looking upon your Son, who in these last days, after having spoken through the prophets and through the patriarchs, you have spoken to us supremely and chiefly and perfectly in your Son.

[ 10 : 25 ] And so we look to him this morning, and we pray that as we think about this theme from your word that you are light and that in you is no darkness, that you would establish us as your people and establish this church as a bulwark of light in Raytown, in Kansas City.

Lord, I ask your blessing. I pray that the light of God, I pray that the God who is light that we would be aware of you.

We ask for the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the ministry of the word to the praise of your Son's name. Amen. 1 John chapter 1.

A few notes to think about with 1 John as a letter and 1 John chapter 1. There are many debates as to who wrote this letter.

I hold to the traditional view that it was John the Apostle, but there are many debates among scholars. Don Carson and Douglas Moo say that throughout church history, apart from more modern scholarship, never have these books been attributed to anyone other than John the Apostle, the son of Zebedee.

[ 11 : 41 ] And so it's not until we get to more modern critical scholarship that new suggestions are made, and I don't have a whole lot of room in my study for those suggestions.

John most likely wrote from Ephesus, according to these two brothers, in the early 90s. And the point of the first letter of John in encouraging the churches to whom he's writing is to hold forth the supremacy of Jesus and what it means that Christ is light and life and our advocate and what it means to love him and to love the brethren.

Adolf Zephyr, who I'll refer to later, said the whole first epistle of John, listen to this, is an exposition of this, that love to God, that's the only way of saying love for God and love unto God, love to God and love to man go hand in hand together.

Love to God and love to man go hand in hand together. So let's just think about chapter one for a few moments. The apostle writes, verse one, 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.

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.

[ 13 : 24 ] That which we have seen and heard, we proclaim also to you so that you too may have fellowship with us. And indeed, our fellowship is with the father and with his son, Jesus Christ.

And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete. Well, just thinking about these first four verses for a few moments, it's important to note that John in his letter is not primarily polemical, meaning for many, this book has been known mainly as a book from which we argue Christology or argue the gospel.

That is, it's polemical. It's argumentative in the right sense that that is its main purpose. But I think it is right to, of course, acknowledge that you can't read apostolic teaching without there being a polemical intensity.

They are passionate about the glory of Jesus. They're passionate about what God has revealed in Christ. They are passionate about the churches. They want the church rightly to understand who Christ is, what the gospel is, and they're going to argue about that if you're pressing for some kind of erroneous view.

So we find that, of course, John is dealing with what might be called proto-Gnostics. The Gnostic movement had not fully taken up steam by now, but the seeds of what became the Gnostic movement evidently were creeping into the churches that John is writing to.

[ 15 : 02 ] So he wants to confront that dualistic heresy that twists the nature of Christ. So there is obviously something polemical about this letter, but I would argue that it's not primarily polemical or argumentative.

It's primarily pastoral. What he is most concerned about is the joy of God's people in Christ. And from that fatherly heart, he calls himself a father to the church and his other epistles.

From that heart, he writes, John desires the deepening of the holiness of God's people, the deepening of their joy, the deepening of their assurance and peace in Christ.

And so he writes, 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.

Think just for a moment about the eyewitness dynamic and nature of who is writing to us. Here we have John, who it seems regarded himself especially as the disciple whom Jesus loved, who is writing about our Lord not only as a cosmic figure that reigns over the nations, but as one with whom he walked, one upon whose shoulder he laid his head, one whose voice he heard, one whose grief he witnessed, one whose joy and celebration of the children in Jerusalem he was rebuked by.

[ 16 : 50 ] This is the one that he is saying is light. So this eyewitness dynamic is very precious for us to consider. The life was made manifest.

That would be a way of saying the glory of God in Christ has shown. The light is the glory. And the glory is not some cloud that comes through the air duct system.

The glory is the showing forth of the holiness and person of God himself. That's what glory means in the Bible. It means the holy God is being revealed or shown or magnified.

That's what God's glory is. And never had his glory been revealed though it had been revealed but never had it been revealed in the same way as it was revealed in his son which is what John is describing here.

the life was made manifest and we have seen it and testified to it and proclaimed to you the eternal life.

[ 18 : 00 ] So it means we touched him we heard him we laughed with him we wept with him we were baffled at what he was teaching we understood what he was teaching Peter went on so far as to rebuke him and then to get rebuked in return.

We saw all of this we saw his miracles we saw his care for sinners but it wasn't just that they beheld that he was truly man they did they beheld and came to believe and recognize also that he was truly God therefore he is the eternal life that has been granted to us and Jesus says in John 17 this is eternal life that they may know you the one true God and Jesus the Messiah whom you have sent.

So it's good for us to note the dynamic here that John was an eyewitness of the glory of God and he's writing for the sake of the churches along those lines. Verse 3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you so that you too may have fellowship with us.

We are focused on Christ himself with you and reminding you of his glory and of himself and of his cross because we want Christian fellowship.

It brings me such joy to visit a church plant some months into existence and to hear that the primary song the primary encouragement has to do with Jesus Christ and him crucified.

[ 19 : 45 ] We have seen the ramifications of megachurches and large ministries that have been brought to dust because they were built on something other than Jesus Christ and him crucified and therefore they may have had fellowship around missions or around theology or around prayer or some other thing but they did not have this fellowship for which the apostle is pleading and encouraging.

If we don't have fellowship in Christ in the gospel then we don't have Christian fellowship and we will use one another for our own purposes and hold envy and pride and suspicion toward one another because we don't have fellowship with each other as sinners who have been redeemed and are being sanctified.

Only that kind of fellowship which is only to be experienced for those who are looking unto Jesus is Christian fellowship. Every other kind of fellowship even if it's around Christian things will lead to destruction for the want of that foundation.

So the apostle again tells them I am heralding this one to you so that you too may have fellowship with us and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Isn't it a marvelous thing to think that throughout the world today and well there's a gap of hours with the time zones there are brothers and sisters gathering in large and small gatherings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 21 : 20 ] some of them reports I've just seen again that have been multiplying in Nigeria are experiencing profound persecution.

I saw a video the other day of a congregation who had a few of its members martyred and their church building burned down all that was left was the shell of the building and the next Sunday there is the rest of the congregation in the middle of the shell on an ash heap singing hymns unto God.

Those are our brothers and sisters and this ought to be a great encouragement to us a reminder as well to put away our excess as American dreamers but also a profound encouragement that the name of Christ is being magnified in nations and in places where ancient demon spirits and ancient gods false gods have had the preeminence.

Weak brothers and sisters are singing songs to the Lamb and so are we. Paul says remember my chains as an apostle but he says remember those who are persecuted as well.

Well one of the things it does is it reminds you that you're not the center of the world and it reminds you that Christ is the one who keeps his people and perhaps we're not experiencing the same kind of persecution but we might be experiencing sufferings or discouragements and the remembrance of Christ and that he's the head of the church and he upholds the universe by the word of his power is what keeps us as God's people looking unto Jesus.

[ 23 : 02 ] It's to cling to his promise of faithfulness to us. Sometimes you need that when you're planting a church and you go through the encouragement of the newness of the season and then it's down to the nitty gritty as a people and what does it actually mean for us to walk in the light as his disciples not that you guys had a whole lot of bells and whistles or kind of worldly American ideas about church but the bottom line is when you get down to the real knit and grit of the life of discipleship and building up of the church there are times where it can be profoundly discouraging or you feel a loss of vision you feel a loss of clear conviction you ask questions that don't make any sense in other times like why are we doing this again or what exactly is it that we're doing right now or what was the point of that gathering you usually only think those things privately or maybe with your spouse but they happen and the only way for us to understand the magnitude preciousness sacredness and glory of what it is that we are about as the church is to be looking to the one who is its light so the apostle proclaimed that Christ that that same fellowship which was already theirs might be made more robust and we are writing these things so that our joy that's a manuscript question it could be our joy or your joy either way

I like to take it to say the joy of the apostles and of the churches why because what's the same joy that Jesus promised to all of his disciples that your joy may be complete okay well there's a few thoughts on one through four and we're about halfway done walking in the light verses five to ten 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 well let's dwell on verse five just for a few moments and then we will walk through six through ten God is light what does it mean that God is light it doesn't mean that light is God it's not an ontological statement in that sense that wherever you see light and not darkness that is the divine person no don't do that that'd be the same as as worshipping trees no he is the author of light but the metaphor of light is being used to point to something more eternal and greater and more glorious which is God himself he's the creator of physical light as we know it but he himself is greater than the greatest of the sun or the stars he is light he is God and in him is no darkness there's no darkness in many respects this is what the apostle is getting at here but I have three that I shared briefly and I might spend a little more time on here than I did at Bellicose Church that God is light means at least three things it means and this is an alliteration for you well three three Ps anyway makes it easy for you he is pure

God is pure number two God is precise and number three God is paternal he is pure of all of God's attributes the one that serves in the Bible speaking on human terms here as something more like the foundational attribute of God from which all of the others can be better perceived is that he is holy and when the angels cried out they didn't cry out righteous righteous righteous though he is powerful powerful powerful though he is merciful merciful though he is they cried out in that thrice remarkable declaration holy holy holy is the Lord back and forth one to another for thousands of years marveling at the brightness and purity of the holiness of God that God is light means that he is holy that he is pure that's number one

God is precise what do I mean by this I mean he is the one we see most clearly in Christ is full of grace and truth none of us take too well to the idea of being consistently misrepresented if I caught wind that people were starting to hang out with my wife and they came and met with me and said we have been spending time with Audrey and we feel like we know you now and I said really what have you all been talking about and she said and the person says well we just learned how much of an expert you are on country music I would step back and say are you sure you didn't misunderstand her and that your favorite dish that you always want on anniversaries is liver and onions and and that you've got a really long history of consistently working out at the gym

I would look at them and say which Audrey were you talking to because I would be in that moment misrepresented and how strange I would feel and even concern for my wife if I found out it really was the same Audrey and she was saying those things in the same way we see of the God of Israel his declaration that among the nations he is blasphemed because of them because of what they're saying about him and how they're living as those who bear his name God is holy and precise and doesn't take it lightly when his people misrepresent him that should give us a new sense of the fear of God a new sense of reverence for his word and a new desire that we should not misrepresent him now he's not insecure like we men are insecure so that when he's misrepresented he's full of fear and pride and anger and impatience and condescension that's not why he's concerned he's concerned for the glory of his name because it is true and holy and number two it is he is for the flourishing of his people who cannot flourish or have joy that is complete in John's words unless they are seeing him and believing him and trusting him and knowing him and serving him as he is that's why the apostle preaches

[ 30 : 39 ] Christ again this is part of what it means that God is light we should take very seriously how we study his word and how we speak of him and just then when we hear those two and we feel perhaps crushed under the weight of that we get to the third point which fleshes things out a bit better on biblical terms that God is light means that he is paternal it means that he's our father it means that he's not like earthly fathers who are impure and who are not precise but who are still offended when you misrepresent them he is pure and he is omniscient he knows everything he's precise and he is paternal he cares for his people may it be banished from the church the idea that Jesus came to save us from the father he did not come to save us from the father the father sent him in love what kind of twisting is that well I understand why it happens because we acknowledge that Jesus is our redeemer and mediator and that he bore the wrath of

God on our behalf but we need to know that the lamb of God also bore the wrath of the lamb on our behalf not just the wrath of the father the wrath of the triune God he did save us from the wrath of God but not merely the wrath of the father that's an important distinction to make lest you begin projecting your failure of a father's attributes on God the father no we were under the wrath of God we were but we were under the wrath of the triune God he was not divided and Jesus died upon the cross willingly and with profound love to save sinners but underneath that we have this truth that he was sent by the father it pleased the father to crush his beloved son so that we might be atoned for and saved see when I say

God is precise I'm thinking about things like this the father has been misrepresented by so many by not thinking clearly enough about the fact that God sent his son in love and that we were under the wrath deservedly of the triune God I understand how we have gotten there in many respects but we need to clear that up so that we know that God is not divided and that we may know that God is paternal that we may cast our cares upon him for he cares for us that we may know that he doesn't abandon us even in moments where we find that we have been imprecise about him or impure in his presence he cares for us and he cares for us perfectly and infinitely in his son this is what it means that God is light he is pure he is precise and he is paternal

God is light there is no darkness in him in the face of our sin in the face of our sufferings in the face of chaos in the world or in the church in the face of our fears our uncertainties God is light he is absolute light he is truth he is the writer to the Hebrews says faith is to believe that he is he is holy and he is good that God is light means that he is trustworthy that God is light means that he is immutable he does not change or waver or diminish that God is light and that he has sent his son means that the people of God have all of Christ for all of our lives there is no sin in him and there is no error in him there is no darkness there is no ill will in

God there is no selfishness in God there never has been and never will be there is no sin in him he is holy holy holy there is no manipulation in him he is not crafty he is wise and trustworthy he is never misguided he is never in error ever he is faithful and true confession time here at our elders retreat I was told that if I could weave Kamala Harris word salad into the sermon a certain elder whom you probably would not guess would give me a \$20 bill so last week I did it I said our God is perfect and true and when he speaks it is never word salad he never says to us that we shall look to be unburdened by what has been and

[ 36 : 17 ] I'll add to that he doesn't have very much to say not in the same way that she did about the significance of the passage of time which she repeated I think five times in one paragraph and made no sense when God speaks it makes sense now there might be mystery and glory that is too much for our finite brains to grasp in certain things that he says but it is always spirit and life truth perfect authority love it is always precise it is always paternal our God speaks it's part of what it means that he's light it's part of what it means that there is glory in his son because by his son he speaks and has spoken some of you perhaps need to hear him speak to you afresh in his word even about specific struggles weaknesses fears things that have developed patterns in your life

I don't know I haven't been in much fellowship with most of you lately but I know what it's like to be a Christian in a body of death and I know that I need every day desperately to see his light and so do you and so does Raytown I just thought on the way down here there's this book by one of my favorite authors named David Barron he was a kind of student of Adolf Sophia who you've also some of you have heard of Adolf Sophia was converted through the preaching of Robert Murray McShane's evangelistic friends in Hungary and came to faith at age 8 and ended up being a pastor on the outskirts of London contemporary with Spurgeon some of you don't care about that some of you do I do so that's why I'm saying it one of these days you're going to meet Adolf Sophia if you're in Christ and I'm just trying to help you not be embarrassed when you bump into him in the age to come but one of his students David Barron wrote many wonderful books and one of them is about the prophecies about the

Messiah in the Old Testament he's a Messianic Jew scholar evangelist and the name of the book is Rays of Messiah's Light Rays of Messiah's Light and maybe I'm just tired but I thought yeah may there be Rays of Messiah's Light in Raytown may the Rays may Raytown be known for the Rays of Messiah's Light may it be through the church and the advance of the gospel for his namesake no word solid with God he's never double tongued his warnings are ponderous and weighty if you are under his warnings you cannot escape them on your own and his promises are true and sweet if you are under his promises then there is no power in hell that can divert their fulfillment this is precious this is part of what it means that God is light okay well I made it one page made it a half page last week one page this week we're on our way maybe I need to write a book or something what does it mean in verses 6 and 7 this phrase walking in the light walking in the light well some synonyms of this in the



New Testament could be keeping in step with the spirit in Galatians 5 or abiding in Christ which we see on various occasions or walking in love or Acts 9 walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Spirit it means feasting and trembling before God's word it means a life of prayer and communion with God that's part of what it means to walk in the light there is no walking in the light without prayer brothers and sisters is your life of prayer is your time logged in prayer is it absent or growing thin well then so will it be more profoundly challenging for you to walk in the light it's in beholding him that we are changed and you don't need some legalistic thing to I've got to log three hours of prayer today and then God will love me it's not a he loves me he loves me not kind of thing it's a he loves me and therefore I want to see more of his light it only makes sense it would be a strange thing if I had married my wife and then never talked to her never dated her never enjoyed anything about her never cared for her never wanted to be in her presence never wanted to laugh with her never wept with her when she was grieved over something and then when you came to me and said brother you're neglecting your wife what is the deal with you and I said hey we're married man yeah that's why I'm bringing this up to you

I'm bringing this up to you because she's your wife and you're supposed to be caring for her and loving her you should be concerned about things that have to do with her and then I say yeah but at one point in the past we were separate and now we're together Brian that's not the point I mean that's a beautiful thing there's a union there it's beautiful but you didn't get that union just so you could sit once a week and say I have the union you pursued that union so that you could know her and love her and fellowship with her and it makes no sense for the church of God to be in union with Christ and to be his bride and to have no concern to spend time with him to hear him to cherish him it's not the hours logged in prayer that will earn that for you it's the upshot it's it's the fruit of the union like Bonhoeffer says about marriage it's it is not we who keep the covenant but the covenant that keeps us so we are kept by this new covenant but it doesn't make sense to be in the new covenant and not to pray not to learn to love prayer even if you have times that are difficult in prayer even if you have prayer meetings that are never seem to get much more than a foot off the ground

[ 42 : 51 ] I remember when I was trying to work out about a year and a half ago I was got the subscription to the Y membership at the Y and I was spending time shooting by myself shooting hoops every now and again with somebody else and I told the guys in my missional community hey yeah I got I got an hour and a half of shooting around and I'm a little sore and they said hey send us a video next time set your phone up send us a video of you shooting so I did for their sake and I recorded about five minutes of myself shooting getting rebounds shooting you know making most of them I will say making most of the shots but in my mind having grown up watching Michael Jordan I envisioned that when I was fading for this jump shot that I was probably at least three feet off the ground and when I looked and I thought I'm going to cut this video down to a minute send them the best minute I looked and every time I shot my feet they came about this three inches off the ground I thought what in the world is going on

I used to be able to I used to be able to jump and I can't jump so much anymore why did I bring that up there was an analogy there thank you maybe the prayer meetings feel afterwards like they've barely gotten off the ground that's not the point pray that you may better be able to pray together in the spirit and keep praying as one great man of prayer said a long time ago when he was asked how do you grow in prayer he said pray until you pray keep going saints not so that you may earn the light of God but because the light has already shown well that's what it means to walk in the light it also means real life in the local church real fellowship something that is a rare phenomenon on planet earth real fellowship in the light this is absolutely vital this includes then what we think about in verse 9 with confession and forgiveness believers should pray for forgiveness for their sins and they should pray for one another and forgive one another confession is not a negative thing it is a Christian reality and in fact it is only a Christian reality a heathen man can say

I shouldn't have done that that was bad that's a kind of confession but Christian confession does something that no other confession can do it renews our conscience and awareness of the union that we have with Christ and it renews and strengthens our fellowship one with another and so it's a troublesome thing if churches are being built and established by people that are not walking in the light with one another and secret jealousies and envies gossip about one another hidden sins pornography here drunkenness here other sins are being held in the darkness and then and then people are relating to one another in terms of that kind of darkness and then slapping on top of it bless you brother oh praise God the gospel is good that that's not fellowship in the light in fellowship in the light there is liberty and only in that place almost done kids that God is light means that he is pure that God is light means that he is precise that God is light means that he is paternal that he is pure means that he's holy that he is precise means that he is true and beautifully and precisely true it means the light is true it means the light is clear that he is paternal means that he is warm toward his children the light is warm warms our cold hearts in times of backsliding and repentance it warms our fellowship with one another it makes it something that is no longer a playground for the powers of darkness where we can speak

Christian platitudes but not actually have the love of the brethren a knowledge of God as light establishes these realities and therefore we must see that he is light well I had about 40 verses I was going to read on this truth that God is light but you can go and do that word study on your own let us remember brothers and sisters that the light has come that the light who is Christ has come the light has shone in our hearts by the grace of God 2nd Corinthians 4 the light is spreading and will continue to spread the gospel is not imprisoned and let us remember that the light will prevail our Lord will return soon and when he comes everything will be made new clear thinking about God as light helps us rightly to think about ourselves about the world about the church and about the mission that we've been given closing passage 1st John 3 1 to 3 see what kind of love the father has given to us that we should be called children of God and so we are the reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him beloved we are God's children now and what we will be has not yet appeared but we know that when he appears we shall be like him because we shall see him as he is and everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure are you walking in the light brothers and sisters

Christ Church may Christ Church and all the churches of God among the nations walk in the light together the purity of God the preciseness of God and the paternal warmth of God's grace must be central to our fellowship and worship may we dwell together in the light and like John the Baptist proclaim the supremacy and excellency of the one who is the light the light of the world God is light and in these last days he has spoken to us in his son may we hear him and love him and herald him he he he