

# 1 John 1: 1-10 // Walking in the Light

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Preacher: Earl Buchan

[0:00] Today we're going to be in 1 John 1, verses 5-10. 1 John 1, verses 5-10. After today, I'm going to start a series through Matthew.

! And I suspect that will probably take the bulk of 2026. But for today, this is where I was led.

So I'm going to read through verses 5-10, and then let's take it verse by verse. Well, I really hope it's not bursting anybody's bubble here today, but nobody is perfect.

That's what we live with. I'm keenly aware of it every time I look in the mirror. Nobody's perfect. This is what it is. This is what you get. And we're not meant to try.

We're meant to just simply follow Jesus, who is perfect. I love how John, when you actually read the Gospel of John, the letters of John that follow this one, including this one here, he gives us such a really amazing picture into the nature and character of who God is.

[1:52] God is spirit. He's not flesh and blood like us. He was in Jesus. But God is also love. And that tells us a lot about his nature and character.

How he loves us. Oh, how he loves us. We take communion to remember that love. We take communion to remember that thing in our heart that is filling with him.

And God is also light. As we've just read, there is no darkness in him. I studied a lot of other religions in the world. Before I became a Christian, I kind of had to figure things out.

I tried to explain God away. I tried really hard. Being a reader, I read a lot. And one thing came consistently over and over and over again. Many world religions believe that God can do both good and evil at the same time.

It's by his choice, by his whim. Islam is like that. They believe that Allah does both good and evil to the believer. That is a really hard concept to wrap your mind around.

[2:57] The Lord that we read in the Bible, the one true God, has absolutely no darkness in him. He is light. And John reminds us of this. We have to grab hold of this reality.

Because there are some questions in life that are frankly too difficult to answer in the here and now. In the natural world. And one of them is just simply, why do bad things happen to good people?

That is not a simple question. It's a deeply personal one. I've struggled with this. I still struggle with this question. But I did find something not that long ago that made me pause and think.

It was a poem called, I Asked God. I wanted to read. It's author unknown. Nobody knows who wrote this. So I certainly did not. I asked for strength. And God gave me difficulties to make me strong.

I asked for wisdom. And God gave me problems to solve. I asked for prosperity. And God gave me brawn and brain to work. I asked for courage.

[4:02] And God gave me dangers to overcome. I asked for patience. And God placed in me situations where I was forced to wait. I asked for the love of God.

And God gave me troubled people to help. I asked for favors. And God gave me opportunities. I received nothing I wanted. I received everything I needed.

My prayer has been answered. The question of why bad things happen to good people, as I said, is a deeply personal one. I wish I could say I have the answer for you.

I don't. I think anybody who tries to figure that out is going to fall short. Lord, I do know that God's eternal understanding, we're never going to fully understand here.

But when we take just the little lines of this poem and we apply that to our life, we start half asking, Lord, this whirlwind that just ripped through my household. What am I supposed to get from this?

[5:04] If you're like me, my prayers are often like, Lord, get me out of this. But it's a real transition to start just saying, Lord, what am I supposed to learn here? This is hard. It's so hard.

What are you teaching me? Much happens that grieves God. But if he was to stop every bad thing from happening, it removes free will, which is one of the greatest acts of love.

There are some questions only eternity can answer. And so we need to have an eternal perspective. And that takes work. And it takes being aside one another, loving one another, praying for one another.

And when we go through hard times, we walk with one another. But because God is light, if we claim to have a relationship with God, but we walk in darkness, we're not telling the truth.

We're hiding. You know, in the language of recovery, in Alcoholics Anonymous, one of the things that's often said is that there is a difference between secrecy and privacy. Openness is to wholeness as secrecy is to sickness.

[6:10] Now, we should have privacy. We should be able to close our door and kick back and watch a show or whatever. I mean, you have privacy that's allowed there. But when you keep something secretive, where it's like, oh, I'm never going to tell anybody about this.

This is my own private little thing. And I know God doesn't like it, but that's just not going to keep it. You know, not going to, you know, hold it so nobody can see it. Well, that's secrecy.

And it becomes a filter between ourselves and God. We think sometimes, oh, Lord, we feel so far away. You just, my prayers are bouncing off the ceiling. I don't know how to get through to you.

I was once so close to you. And then we get angry at him and we blame him. And in reality, he hasn't moved one bit. But these little secret things that John is calling sin, we hide.

And they become filters between ourselves and our Father. And that's where some of the problem happens. Because you cannot walk in darkness and have fellowship with God.

[7:12] Because light and dark do not coexist. Darkness cannot be around light. Even if we turned off all of the lights in this room, the light from outside would come through these windows.

You get my meaning. Verse 6. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

We all sin. We all fall short of the glory of God. Sometimes that's a Tuesday morning, you know, or a Monday morning, or a Thursday morning. You wake up and you're just not feeling in the army at the moment.

And your thoughts go sideways. Or somebody cuts you off in traffic. And you just have a few choice words that are just going to come out, maybe even verbally. We all make mistakes. We all blow it. None of us are perfect here. The sooner we accept that, I think the easier it's going to be. So, if we confess, I'm sorry, if we constantly make mistakes as a Christian, if we're all sinners, then don't we walk in darkness?

[8:16] No. And I want to explain why. It's because the word walk here describes a pattern of living. So, if we make a mistake, if we do something wrong, and all of a sudden it's not like, you know, God's up there and he's going to just press the smite button and you're going to have a really terrible day.

No, it's not like that. But if you have a pattern of living, a pattern of behavior that moves you further and further and further away from relationship with him, okay, that's a bad thing.

That is something we need to repent from. Something we need to recover from. A pattern of living is a habit. And that is a lifestyle. And if a lifestyle is born in secrecy, then there's no light in it.

We have to be careful of that. John isn't saying that a Christian may not stumble in darkness by accident or simply have a bad day. It doesn't mean that you're out of relationship with God if you have a bad day.

If your attitude's terrible and everybody around you finds out, you know, you're not away from God. You're just having a bad day. But if you have a repeated pattern of behavior where this is all you are, that may be something to look in the mirror and ask yourself, what if I'm wrong?

[9:33] What if I need to change, Lord, in order to be closer to you? How can I do this? If you decide each day that you're going to lie to

everyone, or if you're going to choose sin every day, then you're not walking in the light.

We aren't. Are you walking in the light this morning? Did you come to church ready to praise the Lord? Or did you come to church with daggers out?

There's one walking in the light, one walking in the darkness. I can't decide that for you. I was telling Crawford earlier, you know, my process on a Sunday morning is, I wouldn't wish it on anybody. I wake up early or am woken up early by my alarm. And I start, it's like, oh, Lord, you know, get rid of myself. That's where it starts. And it's not easy.

Is there a living, breathing, active relationship with God in your heart? Is that something you can look at and say right now? Is there a living, breathing, active relationship with God in your heart today?

[10:47] Verse 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. Now, you know, when you read this, if you're reading this and you're kind of, you're getting into it, let's pretend you're the first time ever reading this.

Okay, just pretend. Just go with me on this. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with God, right? No. No. With one another. Oops.

That sounds complicated. It is. But this is, again, I'm going to read it. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we'll have fellowship with one another.

If we do not have fellowship with one another, are we relying on God? Or is our own bad attitude becoming sin? I have to ask myself this.

You have to ask yourself this. Did you come here walking in the light this morning? You don't have to leave here walking in darkness. But how did you enter in?

[11:51] If you really have a relationship with God, you're going to have a relationship with God's people. And that's sometimes messy. And sometimes it's difficult. Families argue.

We have moments where it's difficult for sure. That's actually pretty normal. How you handle those moments is either in the light or in the dark. What you choose to do in those moments either builds a bridge or divides further.

And the Bible has some very big things on division in Titus. But we'll get to that another day. The folks who go around saying, I love God, but I really hate that guy or girl.

Well, there's something wrong with you, my friend. That should not be a part of our vocabulary if we are walking in the light. Do you see how challenging this is? You see how difficult this is on a day-to-day basis?

And how important it is? Because God's nature and character is light. And there is no darkness in him. Verse 7.

[12:58] 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. These roads have obstacles.

I get it. Not all of this is easy at all. You've probably been hurt by Christians. You might have been a Christian hurting someone else. This is not an easy road.

But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. That's verse 9 in this passage we're going to get to. There's a greater truth than the offense.

If you're both walking in the Lord, then you should have the same fellowship. Now, to be clear, that does not mean you need to like one another. Like can be up and down all the time.

You know? And that's okay. But love is a higher calling. Because you can love someone you don't like. You can love them and do loving things for them that show this world that love is a greater call than bitterness.

[14:00] That love is a uniter and not a divider. And someone can have a bad day and you cannot like that bad day. And that's okay. There's nothing wrong with that. You know what it is a call to do, though, is to pray for that person.

Not pray against them. Pray for them. Maybe even ask them, how can I pray for you today? You know, one of the weirdest things, but you can say this, okay?

If somebody's treating you wrong and they're having a bad day, how can I be praying for you right now? It's a bit of a dagger to the heart. But it's a genuine question if you ask it genuinely. How can I pray for you right now? You seem to be going through a rough time and I want to help.

How can I pray? Ephesians 4.32 says, Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God and Christ forgave you. There's no ifs, ands, or buts here.

Be kind to one another. Kind, kindness, be kind to one another. Tenderhearted, not hardhearted. Bitterness has no place in a tender heart.

[15:05] Forgive one another. Because of those bad days, because of the things that happen that may think, well, ruffle the feathers, forgive, release. There's a bigger calling that we have, a bigger mission in Christ.

If we're walking in the light, then we'll have a continual cleansing from Jesus in our life. It's not really a foreign concept when you think of it. I'm going to assume that we shower or bathe on a regular basis, okay?

I'm going to assume that we wash our hands if they get dirty. If you take that mindset with sin, right, do the same. Just not a physical thing.

It's in here. Lord, please fill me with your Holy Spirit again. I'm acting like a jerk. And Lord, I need your heart. I need your spirit to change me from the inside out so that I can love your people the way you love them.

I dare you to start praying that prayer. It's a tough one. But it's a good one. Romans 3.23 says, For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

[16:12] There isn't anybody that's walked in here, this building that is holier than anybody else. Again, I hope I'm not bursting anybody's bubble. We have all sinned. We all fall short of the glory of God.

We do. We need one another. We need his word. We need forgiveness. We need to seek him. Have you glorified God perfectly from the time you woke up this morning to sitting here right now? Well, let me answer for you. No. I haven't. Sometimes I need coffee before I'm even speaking English in the morning. Anybody who lives with me can attest to that. It's just grunts and groans and it's not even the Holy Spirit.

It's just I'm just not, I'm not a morning person. So I can tell you with certainty that my thoughts were not of God the moment I woke up. My alarm went off and I thought, okay, here I go.

And I got here and then I started to pray and I started to get into that place again. It takes work. But nobody is perfect. This means we need to be cleansed on the regular.

[17:14] We need to come to the Lord and say, Father, I just, you know what? I'm having a hard time being your guy or your girl today. Help me. I need it. I don't think there's a better example of this in Scripture than when Jesus is washing the disciples' feet.

Jesus goes around and he's washing the disciples' feet and Peter says, no, you can't wash my feet. And he's thinking like, you're God. You can't do this. And Jesus says, Peter, if I don't wash your feet, you'll have no part of me.

And then Peter, of course, which, you know, I've got to love him. He's kind of a jump in, feet first kind of guy. And he just says, well, then not my feet, but all of me. And we come to Jesus that way when we're forgiven.

We're thinking, oh, that's such a load off my shoulders. I feel forgiven. I know I'm forgiven. And that's how easy it is when we come to Christ. We ask forgiveness.

We receive forgiveness. It's a beautiful, simple thing that happens. But our feet are still walking out out in the world. They get dirty.

[18:20] We stub our toe or stub someone else's toe sometimes. That means we need to keep on cleaning the feet. Lord, wash my feet. Lord, wash my heart today.

It's a little stained from the world and I need more of you and less of me in this day right now. That's what it means to constantly being cleansed.

It's not a ritual. It's not a religious thing. It's simply a relational thing with God. It brings us closer in relationship with him. We have a messy world.

We pray to have a renewal of our minds when we're feeling beaten up. We have to confess when the language flow freely or something in our mind is bitter or resentful or unforgiving.

We have to pray for the release of that. Father, make us more like you. The work of Jesus on the cross doesn't just deal with the guilt of sin in our lives. It deals with a stain of sin that would cloud our relationship with him.

[19:27] And that's the thing about sin. Like I said, it's like filters. If you're into photography at all, it's like you can have filters on the lenses. It gives a nice little thing, you know, a little sunset kind of glow or anything like that.

But sin is like this blackened one that keeps us from our vision from God. And that's why we need to say, Lord, just remove that today. Father, remove those lenses. I don't want to be far from you.

I don't want to feel far from you. I don't want to feel like my prayers are bouncing off the ceiling. I don't want to feel like I'm making everybody angry around me. Lord, I need you. I need people to see more of you and less of me.

Whatever is there, whatever secret thing that I'm clinging on to, whatever I'm holding on to for dear life that is just mine and nobody else's and is causing my life to decay, Father, pluck that from me like a weed.

Lord, help me. I'm going to read verse 7 again. 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.

[20:28] If you write in your Bibles, if you do that, maybe circle all sin. All means all. Do you believe that today?

We can be cleansed from all of our sin, from the generational sins we grew up with, from the sins of others imposed upon us, from the sins of our own past, the sins against our own families, our employers, our friends, maybe even our enemies.

We can be cleansed by the blood of Jesus. All the lying, the stealing, the gossip, adultery, murder, all can be cleansed. All can be cleansed in the name of Jesus.

Sins that haunt us every day. Things from our past that we can't quite let go of and we're like, just Lord, I just want that chapter to go away. Unfortunately, it can't, but it can be forgiven and brought into a new context with the life of Christ.

There's no reason why anyone, myself included, there's no reason why anyone needs to leave here today with a haunt from the past. You can give that to Jesus right now and be free.

[21:41] Notice it says, cleanses us. It's a present tense. It's not past. It's not future. Here and now.

If you're waiting for a sign, just like faith was with her baptism, right? If you're waiting for a sign, this is it. He can cleanse you today.

He can cleanse us from all of our unrighteousness right now. There are things that happen in our lives that are thrust upon us. We have to look at it and say, wow, did that really happen?

Did that hurt really hurt? Did that harm really harm? Our mind starts second-guessing. Do we really do that? Was it really that bad? especially when you get some distance between you and the issue. If you're like me, you look back and you have chapters in your past you do wish you could erase. Things you said, people you were, things you've done, there's times where it would be nice to go back and just erase that chapter.

[22:47] Isaiah chapter 1 verse 18 says, come, now let us reason together says the Lord. Though your sins are like scarlet they shall be as white as snow.

Though they are red like crimson they shall become like wool. Through what Jesus has done for us on the cross dying for us to pay a price so we can be eternally free through his blood we can turn back that clock and be forgiven and start afresh.

Verse 8 if we say we have no sin we deceive others and the truth is not in us. You're not going to find perfection this side of heaven. You won't. The closest we came was when Jesus came to visit but we won't find it here and it won't be in ourselves.

How many of us really accept that we sin and make mistakes? It's not easy to hear. I know it can maybe even be an immediate reaction of like oh it's a very religious word.

Yeah but I think you understand the concept. We've all blown it. We've all made mistakes we need to apologize for. All of us.

[24:04] There's just some that we really have to apologize to God for. That's sin. saying that we're without sin is a pretty scary place to be because the word says this you have to ask yourself a question who receives his mercy?

Sinners. God's mercy rests with sinners not people who don't think they need it. I'm good I live a clean life I go to church I do my tithe right I do all of the good things my heart is dark I hate everybody but you know I come to church not good enough but inside out is where it has to change and this is what we're being taught here in this word when we walk around and we may say well you know I'm only human it's just me that's an excuse yes you are only human that's a great step of humility if you look at it right but it doesn't mean it's an excuse from keeping those secret private little things or holding on to bitterness or holding on to resentment when that is not living in the light we have to live in the light we should it's a choice the real victory power and forgiveness comes when we admit that we're a sinner because we have an amazing savior redemption ripped through the surface of time when that baby was born and that cry was given redemption our way home to heaven is because of Jesus dying on the cross paying that price for our sin for us now I can't make it a more complicated process because I kind of laugh when I start going through that Romans 10:9 if you believe in your heart you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and rose from the dead you'll be saved it's as simple as that well that sounds religious okay and I've said it before you have a favorite restaurant you go to one that you want to tell the world about how is it any different from saying Jesus is Lord you know if I find a good restaurant I can't shut up about it but Jesus is my Lord he saved me I can't shut up about that either so you get my meaning it's that simple Jesus is Lord he rose from the dead and you're saved it's as simple as that verse 9 if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness getting back in step with God getting back in step with God requires confession not to me between you and him

God knows what our problems are you know one of my favorite things I read this year is just like you know when God called you he took your stupidity into account right you know and I like that because it's true he knows us he knows you the depths of your soul he knows who you are he knows where you've come from he knows where you're going he knows you so hiding things from him just doesn't make a lot of sense have an open conversation with him you can even just be driving your car like Lord I really blew it I'm so frustrated I'm so angry I don't know what to do with this I keep taking it out on so and so or whatever all this kind of stuff that's how simple it is you don't have to come up to the front here I'll just say this sometimes that's a little too easy because I think the hard part is knowing it in your heart and walking it out on a

Monday morning okay that's the hard part do that hard work if sin is present it does not have to come in between ourselves and God we can be cleansed from all unrighteousness and as I said it comes from a place on the inside out I want to read a little bit of Luke here chapter 18 verse 9 to 14 he also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and treated others with contempt two men went up to the temple to pray one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector the Pharisee standing by himself prayed thus God and I am emphasizing because it sounds bad God I thank you that I'm not like other men extortioners unjust adulterers or even like this tax collector I fast twice a week I give tithes of all that I get but the tax collector standing far off would not even lift up his eyes to heaven but he beat his breast

[28:58] God be merciful to me a sinner I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled but the one who humbles himself will be exalted the tax collector agrees with God's assessment of him do you think the religious man made God smile that day no this is important our sins cannot be forgiven simply by confession it's not magic it's not a transaction if that were the case I'd have to carry a notebook around or actually more accurately record my entire day so I could go through it and confess every single sin as I listen to it before I go to sleep because by that logic if I mess up once and I forget to confess it then I'm going to have an eternal separation from God that does not sound like the nature and

character of our Lord does it no there's something deeper here we are not forgiven because we confess we're forgiven because of the cost of our sin was taken on by Jesus on the cross we're saved we're free and our debt has been paid fully in Jesus and John talks about confession here because it is vital to maintaining a relationship with

God confession is vital to maintaining a relationship with God it's important if you feel far away it's quite possible there's something you have to admit something you have to say yeah I see that Lord I'm sorry I didn't bring it earlier can you help be honest with him make it plain make it straightforward spend some time with him and just call it out Lord I struggle with this I know you know that I just want you to know that I know that will you help verses 9 to 10 I'll close shortly after if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness if we say we have not sinned we make him a liar and his word is not in us God is not unfair God is fair he's not unjust Jesus took the penalty on our behalf we are free but it's like that thing in

Romans 10 9 right if we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord if we do that confession that means it's already inside of here is it not it's something that we believe wholeheartedly in our legal system there's something called double jeopardy you can't be tried for the same crime twice sin and actually it comes from this framework sin is like that if you've been forgiven your sin it's the enemy that keeps coming back and saying hey remember when you were that person remember when you did that that's the enemy it was God forgiven you already now you may have to deal with the aftermath of that sin there may be things you have to clean up in your life there may be things you have people you need to make reconciliation with that's just a part of walking out that decision to walk in the light that's okay but God is fair he's not looking at somebody and saying well I value them more so therefore I'm going to forgive them more or easier no no no no we all sin and we all fall short of the glory of

God we all need to repent we all need to be in a place where we come to him and we love him you can be forgiven and it starts today right here right now if you don't believe in God you can be forgiven if you believe in God you can be forgiven it starts today so I want to leave this challenge if you're wanting a new relationship with God and I'm talking to the believers as well as people who may not know him yet if you want a new relationship with God it's a matter of just simply saying yes and tell someone you don't have to tell me grab someone beside you and just say you know what will you pray for me I did this a while back when I was at the back and people prayed and a guy came up and said I want something new and we prayed for the newness of his life we prayed that Jesus would enter his heart and he said yes but it doesn't have to be up down there it doesn't have to be up here it could be right where you're sitting right now Lord I want something new let's pray Father I just am deeply grateful for how simple you make it for all of us for all of us that are sitting here today if we have known you for a long time but there's a little bit of dust on our shoulders or maybe our feet just need to be cleansed from just the sins of the weak Lord help us to be humble enough to point it out and ask your forgiveness now make right what we need to make right but Lord if there's people here who don't know you yet then I ask you'll make yourself real to them in a way that is just very obvious you don't have to have it all figured out you don't need to know what to do even but if there's a moment for anybody listening that's here right now that wants to say yes to Jesus say yes to

[34:43] Jesus Jesus and walk with him in the light so father may our hands and feet may our hearts and mind all reflect the beauty of your glory in Jesus name amen