

# Walking in the Light

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[0:00] Well, we can turn back together to our reading in 1 John chapter 1. The main focus this evening is on verse 5 down to the end of that chapter, verse 5 to verse 10.

And the heading of this section in the ASV Bible is Walking in the Light, which is the theme that we see coming across through these verses that we read. Verse 5.

To these verses this evening, we see that there's a sense of walking put across here. There's various themes that come across through that.

We see the darkness and the light. We see the good and the bad. We see a lot of different contrasts in these verses. But they all kind of lead us and guide us towards this walking with God. And how or are we walking with God? When you think of walking with God, what does that bring to your mind? What does it look like to you?

[1:29] What do you think of? Or maybe who do you think of? It maybe leads your mind to think of particular people. Maybe someone you've known and you've thought that person has been walking closely with God.

You can just tell that they're walking closely with God. But perhaps it brings you back to Scripture as well. And you think of parts of Scripture that speaks about walking with God.

Immediately, my mind goes to Genesis when I think of walking with God. You go back to Genesis chapter 3. And there you find when sin came into the world.

When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden. You read in chapter 3 that in the cool of the day they heard God walking in the garden. And it comes across in there as if this was something that was normal.

Something that was usual. Something that had happened on a number of occasions. That God would come into the garden and walk. But that they would be with him. There's that sense of that they would have been there.

[2:32] Because walking with God has a sense of closeness. Fellowship, intimacy with him. But when you look at Genesis 3. And they heard God walking in the garden.

It says they hid themselves. Because they knew that they had sinned. And yet from there you find that Scripture is pointing us towards that walk with God.

Being reunited in a sense. Brought back so that we are walking with God. And one person you maybe think of again in Genesis very early on. Genesis chapter 5 verse 24.

Enoch. And it says of him in that verse. Enoch walked with God and he was not. For God took him. So this idea of walking with God as you see it.

Broken in the garden. And yet with Enoch. That sense of nearness. That sense of intimacy. Having God with us as a people is so important.

[3:33] It just gives us that image of closeness. Of nearness. Walking with God. And as we come into 1 John here. There's that similar kind of vein of walking with God.

And it's put across here as walking in the light. If we walk in the light as he is in the light. We have fellowship with one another. It says in verse 7. So again it's about this closeness.

A closeness with God. That leads to a closeness with one another. A fellowship with one another. Fellowship is another word that keeps coming through.

In this chapter as well. In verse 3. That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you. So that you may have fellowship with us.

And indeed our fellowship is with the Father. And with his Son. Jesus Christ. So John is writing this. That their fellowship. Their closeness. Might be enhanced.

[4:35] Might be increased. But he's writing this letter into the midst of a challenging time. When you look at John 1 here.

He is writing probably to the churches that have been scattered around Ephesus. That's the kind of area he would have been in. The same kind of churches that you read of in the book of Revelation. That John is also the author of the seven churches that he wrote to there. Perhaps it's the same churches he's writing this to as well. And maybe further afield as well.

But he's writing to these churches. He's writing to churches that have been established. But have come into error. Have come into fault.

The letter is written in a time when churches have started to change their outlook on things. To bring false teaching in. And so he's writing to challenge them.

[5:31] He's writing to encourage them. And what we find is as he's writing to them. He's writing to churches that have been influenced by others who have brought a false gospel.

A false teaching. And as you read through 1 John. You find these people described in different ways. Deceivers. False prophets.

Even antichrist is the word used in 1 John here. It's those who are leading the people away from God. They're deceiving. They're giving a false message.

They're leading them astray. And you find that he is writing to them because there are serious errors that have come into the church. In chapter 2 verse 22 of 1 John.

They have denied Jesus was the Christ. Serious error. In chapter 4 verse 2. They are denying that he came in the flesh. And then as we look at this chapter in verse 5 to 10.

[6:33] We see that they are in denial of sin. And all these things. They are major errors. They are things that are going to lead people away.

And lead them down the wrong path. And so John is writing. Writing not just to condemn these things. But to encourage. You see he addresses these issues.

And he does it sternly. He does it in a strong rebuke. But he also does it in a way where he is teaching. Where he is instructing.

You think of the time period that's gone. From say the days of the crucifixion of Jesus. Up until John is writing this letter.

You're probably talking about maybe 40, 50 years. This is towards the end of the first century. The beginning of the second century. That John is writing this letter.

[7:32] So a number of years have passed. And errors have crept into the church. And when you look at our own nation. And look back say the same period. 40, 50 years.

The church in Scotland. And how it's changed. It's changed in ways we never thought we might see. Errors have crept in. Things are done now that are wrong.

But the question is how do we respond? Do we just condemn? Do we condemn other churches? Or other Christians? Or do we look at ourselves?

And ask ourselves questions too. Are we walking right with God? Are we listening to God the way that we should? Are we walking in light of his word to us?

And what John is doing here is both. He will condemn what is wrong. The truths that they are teaching.

[8:35] The false teaching that they have. He will condemn that. But he will also challenge those who are Christians. Are you walking with God? Are you walking right with God?

So that is what he is doing here. And as he is doing it. He is doing it by testing them through the word of God. Testing them with the word of God.

It is over 500 years now since the reformation in Europe. Which Martin Luther and others brought. Brought the people back to the word of God.

The church was sliding away from the word of God. But the reformation brought that word back centrally into the church. That we have to look on the word of God. And it is something we do not just move on from and forget.

But we always have to come back to the word of God. Because reformation has at its heart a sense of going back. Going back to the word of God.

[9:33] But also going forward. And going forward under the word of God. And that is exactly what John is doing here. Taking them back to the word of God.

So they might go forward by the word of God. And if we want to grow as believers. We want to grow as a church. We have to look and ask.

Are we walking in light of the word of God? We look to his truth. And we look to the truth of his word.

And so John is testing that truth here. And he is showing how he is testing it for our good. And for the good of the church. And to see are we walking in the light of the word of God. And so we want to see the kinds of things that he is challenging here. And we begin first of all with a right claim. A right truth.

[10 : 32] And we see that in verse 5. This is a message we have heard from him. And proclaim to you that God is light. And in him is no darkness at all.

God is light. And in him is no darkness at all. He begins with a sound. A solid truth. God is light. What is the substance of the truth that you have? What is the substance of your faith? Where is it based upon? Is it on your own wisdom?

Or is it on the word of God? John begins with God. God is light. In him is no darkness at all.

But we live in a world where we can have our own truth. That's the way so many see it. There's a statement that's attributed to a former MP.

[11 : 34] A Welsh MP by the name of Anjurin Bevan. I think is how you pronounce it. He was an MP in the very late 1920s into the early 1960s.

And he said this. This is my truth. Tell me yours. It was him that said that. If you're into your music. A Welsh band. The Manic Street Preachers had an album with that very name as well. This is my truth. Tell me yours. And that's the kind of world in which we live.

We're saying there's no absolute truth. We can all have our own truth. This is my truth. Now tell me yours. But that's not the kind of world that God wants us to live in.

That's not the kind of ideas that God wants us to have. We need a strong foundation in life. And that is to be his truth. This is my truth. Full stop, God is saying.

[12 : 33] Now tell me yours. This is truth. And this is the truth that John is giving to us. This is that God is light. And in him is no darkness at all.

And so we need this truth. We need that as the foundation of our lives. Of our church. Of our ministry. Of everything that we are doing. Every way that we seek to live.

This is a truth we are to be standing on. Because there is nowhere else to begin. When it comes to truth. Jesus himself. In the gospel of John.

Chapter 8 says this to us. As he's saying there to the Jews who have believed. He said to the Jews who had believed in him. If you abide in my word.

You are truly my disciples. And you will know the truth. And the truth will set you free. There is a foundation of faith.

[13 : 34] You will know the truth. And the truth will set you free. If we begin with ourselves. We will have a false confidence.

Or if we look at ourselves. We can feel that sense of hopelessness. As we looked at recently. If we listen to world leaders. Those or those in the world who proclaim.

To have found wisdom. If it is apart from God. And his truth it is nothing. John here begins with God. And God being light.

In him is no darkness at all. That's the very foundation of creation. When you look back to Genesis chapter 1.

In the beginning God. That is the beginning. Of all things that we see around us. And in the beginning God made light. To shine into the darkness.

[14 : 33] That is how we came into being. And then when you look at the Lord Jesus Christ. You go to the beginning of the gospel of John. What does it say there? In the beginning again.

In the beginning was the word. And the word was with God. And the word was God. So this is what was there at the beginning. Christ was there. In the beginning he was the word.

And the word was with God. And then it says. And the word became flesh. And dwelt among us.

That is the wonder of the truth. That we have before us.

And what did Jesus say as he dwelt among us? Again in the gospel of John. And he said. I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me. Will not walk in darkness.

But will have the light of life. The light of life. God is light. In him is no darkness at all.

[15 : 32] He is the source of life. And so we ask ourselves then. Who is our God? Who is your God tonight? How do you view God?

Is he this infinite God? Infinite, eternal and unchangeable God. That we see in the scriptures. Or is he that God of your own making?

Your own design? A God who you want to keep. In the confines of your own box. Of the way you want things. There is another quote.

It is attributed possibly to Voltaire. The French writer. But that is debated. But it says this. If God made man in his own image. Then man has returned the compliment.

What does it mean? Well God made us in his own image. That is what we see from the very beginning. From the outset of Genesis. Genesis. But what you almost see from Genesis onwards. [16:33] Is man making God in his image. In other words. Making God the way he wants. And we are all guilty of that at times. Making God into what we want.

Not allowing God to make us into what he wants. And therefore what we see is. John is challenging this. He is saying you are not God.

You cannot confine God. You cannot restrict God. Because God is light. And in him is no darkness at all.

And this is the one we should desire that fellowship with. John is not here sharing speculation. This is my truth. Now tell me yours.

He is pronouncing truth. It is with authority. The authority that has been given to him. In verse 3 here.

[17:32] That which we have seen and heard. We proclaim also to you. He is passing on this message. This message of authority. This message of truth.

But the people were not listening. The people were not listening. That was the problem. They didn't accept this authority. They wouldn't accept Christ as an authority over them.

The question for us is are we listening? Are we listening? Are we receiving this truth? Are we seeing the authority that it has? That from the very beginning.

God was word. God became flesh in the person of Jesus Christ. Christ. An American preacher once put it across like this.

When speaking of the Lord Jesus from the very beginning. He said Jesus was the only man who had a heavenly father. But no heavenly mother.

[18:35] Who had an earthly mother. But no earthly father. Who was older than his mother. And who was as old as his father. He is there describing the very nature of God in the person of Jesus.

How he was there from the beginning. How he is the one who has authority. How he is the one who is truth. God is light. In him there is no darkness at all.

Without this light we fall into lies. And that is what then John goes on to warn of. The lies.

The false claims. That we can so easily fall into. And we see that there are three here. The first in verse 6. If we say we have fellowship with him.

While we walk in darkness. We lie. And do not practice the truth. What is he saying here? It is this idea that people have.

[19:39] In John's day. Have the neuron day as well. I can walk in both the light. And the darkness at the same time. That is a dangerous place to be.

If he says. We have fellowship with him. While we walk in darkness. We lie. It is a serious thing. Can we have fellowship with God.

And yet at the same time. Be known as walking. In the darkness. Walking. In untruth. It doesn't go. It is like.

Having a dimmer switch. On our faith. A dimmer switch. If you go into our room. And the dimmer switch. Is turned right up. The light is bright. The dimmer switch.

Then if you turn it. Just makes the light. Go dimmer and dimmer. Until it is almost dark. It can be very handy. It can be very effective. If someone is coming to visit. You will say.

[20:35] Turn the dimmer switch down. So they don't see the dust. We will hide things. In the darkness. And that is a bit like. What this is suggesting. About our faith. That we are saying.

That we have fellowship with God. But yet we are still trying to walk. In the darkness. It is like we are trying to hide things. In our life. The dimmer switch. Is being turned. Down.

But there is a consequence. It says. You are a liar. If we say. We walk in darkness. We have fellowship with him. While we walk in darkness.

We lie. And we do not practice. The truth. The truth. Is not in us. And the question that John is asking here is. What is our fellowship with God like?

What is our walk with God like? Is it a fake fellowship? Is it one when we are just seeing. We are trying to walk with him. And yet at the same time.

[21 : 36] Walk in darkness. It cannot be done. It is no such thing as a Sunday Christian. You cannot live. Like a commandment.

And say. Six days will I do what I want. And the seventh. I will keep holy. That is not how it works. A Christian is walking with God.

Seven days. Constantly. You cannot have fellowship with God. And continue. In an unrepented sin. It cannot happen.

There has to be. A contrast. You are either walking in the light. Or you are walking in darkness.

There is beautiful weather outside today.

And the forecast is great. For the week ahead. And we look forward to that. Next week I am sure there will be many people coming into the church. And your colour will have changed.

[22 : 34] You have been out in the sun. You have turned red. You have turned brown. Because you have been in the sun. You have been in the light. But if you claim as it was here.

That you have been to the beach. That you have been in the sun all week. And there is no change. You are pale. People would ask. Well. How? The sun has not touched you.

There is no change. It is the kind of thing that John is saying here. If you are walking in the light.

There is a contrast. There is a difference. It leaves its mark.

If you are not walking in the light. It leaves its mark as well. That will be seen. It will be seen in how you are living. And so are we walking in the light?

Or are we trying to say we can have both? You can't. It is a false claim. You are a liar. He says. And the truth is not in you.

[23 : 32] And you see the second false claim here in verse 8. If we say we have no sin. We deceive ourselves. And the truth is not in us.

Again this is a claim that the false teachers were making to the people. Deceiving themselves and deceiving others. If we say that we have no sin.

I cannot say that. No one can say that. Sin is a dangerous thing. Sin is a deadly thing. And if we say we have no sin. As it says here.

We deceive ourselves. And the truth is not in us. We deceive ourselves. We are telling ourselves a lie.

Not just lying to others. As in the first part here. But we are lying to ourselves. We deceive ourselves. We are living a very dangerous life.

[24 : 34] There was a lady in England. Who had an ornament on her mantelpiece. And was there for 30 years. And she kept it polished.

She kept it nice. From time to time. When she had grandchildren visiting. She would take the ornament down off the mantelpiece. And let them play with it. Sometimes they would go out into the garden.

And throw this thing to one another. They didn't know what it was. But it was just like a toy. Then after 30 years. She learned something about it.

Something that startled her. Something that frightened her. It was a bomb. And for all these years. It had been sitting there on the mantelpiece. And the children and the grandchildren. Playing with it.

Unaware of the danger. And that's the kind of thing. That we see here. If we say we have no sin.

We deceive ourselves. We're playing with a bomb.

[25 : 30] That could go off at any time. And so John is saying. This is not to be you. The truth. The word. The truth is not in us.

Then he says in verse 9. If we confess our sins. He is faithful. And just to forgive us our sins. And to cleanse us. From all. All unrighteousness.

So he says. Don't be deceived. Don't deceive yourselves. It's not a case of saying no sin. It's a case of saying. Confess your sin. This is the only way.

You're going to be right with God. This is the only way. You're going to walk in his light. Confess your sins. Why hide your sin from God. When he knows it anyway.

And the beauty of it is. He is able to forgive. He is faithful to forgive. When we confess. He doesn't say. I might.

[26 : 28] He says. If you confess. He is faithful to forgive. Otherwise. He would be unfaithful. He would be unjust. But he is faithful.

To forgive. And so you see. We cannot say. We have no sin. Because that is lying. To ourselves. So the first one is lying to others.

Second one is lying to ourselves. And then we have the third claim. In verse 10. If we say. We have not sinned. We make him a liar. And his word.

Is not in us. You see. They're getting more and more serious. If we say. We have not sinned. Not just that we have no sin.

Now. It's not like. Things have changed. But we have not sinned. We've never sinned. This is another false truth. That the people were being led astray by. We have not sinned.

[27 : 26] Well if we say this. It's not. We lie to others. It's not. We lie to ourselves. What does it say? We make him a liar. We make him a liar.

And the word. Is not in us. So you see. The three are linked by lies. You lie. To others. You lie to yourself.

Or you make him a liar. But you see also. The three are linked. To the word. In verse six. If we have. Fellowship with him.

While we walk in darkness. We lie. And do not practice the truth. The word is not in us. You see the same. In verse eight. If we say. We have no sin.

We deceive ourselves. We lie to ourselves. And the truth is not in us. The word is not in us. Verse ten. If we have not sinned. We make him a liar. And his word is not in us.

[28 : 23] The word is mentioned. In all three. The word. Is not in us. We are dismissing. The truth. We are dismissing. The word of God.

That very thing. That we started with. That we need truth. We need the truth of God. We need the truth. Of his word. We are claiming.

Wisdom. To ourselves. Otherwise. Otherwise. But we are sinners. We make God. A liar.

Otherwise. And if we make God. A liar. Everything that he has done. For us. Is pointless. As Paul says. In Galatians.

The seriousness. Of making God. A liar. Is seen there. Galatians two. Verse twenty. The life. I now live. In the flesh. I live by faith. In the son of God.

[29 : 17] Who loved me. And gave himself. For me. I do not nullify. The grace of God. For if righteousness. Were through the law. Then Christ died. For no purpose. If we go any other way.

We make God. A liar. We nullify. The grace of God. And we say. Christ died. For no reason. Do we want. To be like that.

Do we want. To nullify. Everything. That Christ. Has done. For us. Or do we see. That we are indeed sinners. We are indeed sinners. We had God.

Has declared it. We are all sinners. We need his grace. Psalm 14. Verse two and three. The Lord looks down. From heaven. Upon the children of men. To see. If there are any.

Who understand. Who seek God. They have all turned aside. They have together. Become corrupt. There is none. Who does good. No. Not one.

[30 : 14] All have sinned. And fall short. Of the glory of God. So who is right. Who is right. Are we right.

To say. We have never sinned. We have no sin. Or is God right. Who says. We all sin. And fall short.

Who is the liar. We lie to ourselves. If we think. We have not sinned. That sin. That sin. That sin. That sin. Doesn't need.

Dealing with. But God. Has come. That. He might deal. With these things. What we need to do. Is realize this. The seriousness.

Of sin. But also. The grace of God. Who is faithful. And just. To forgive. John Calvin. Once put it like this. Let us each. Consider. And examine.

[31 : 06] Ourselves. So as to acknowledge. That we are ruined. Until we are redeemed. By Christ. We are ruined. Until we are redeemed. By Christ.

Can anyone say. Here tonight. We can walk in darkness. But also. Have fellowship with him. No. Can anyone say.

Here tonight. If we say. We have no sin. Can anyone say. We have no sin. No. Can anyone say. We have never sinned. No. What we need.

Is the truth. The truth is. That we are sinners. Who fall short. Of his glory. And what John. Is doing here. Is bringing. The people back.

Teaching them. That we are to walk. In the light. Of the scriptures. We are to walk. In the light. Of God. Verse 7. But if we walk.

[32:04] 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. This is the desire.

Of John. For the people then. The same as it is. For all of us. Here. Tonight. To have this fellowship. With one another. And the blood of Jesus. Cleansing us.

From all. Our sin. Why? I'll go back. To verse 4. As well. We are writing. These things. So that. Our joy.

May be complete. That we might have joy. In the Lord. Through fellowship. With one another. And with. The father. And his son. Jesus Christ.

He came. To save us. From our sins. He is faithful. And just. When we confess. To forgive us. Our sins. But for that. We need to. Confess. We need to acknowledge.

[33:02] That we are sinners. And to do that. We are to walk. In the light of God. Not in the darkness. Because a godly character.

Does not. Cannot. Will not. Develop. In darkness. We are to come. And walk. In the light. Of his truth. The light.

Of his gospel. The light. Of his good news. To have fellowship. With one another. Father. And to have that. Closeness. That fellowship.

With him. The father. And the son. The Lord Jesus. So we take sin. Seriously. And we come.

To the truth. That we might. Confess our sin. And that he is faithful. And just. To forgive. Let us pray. Lord.

[33:59] Our gracious God. We do. Thank you. For your word. We thank you. For all. The instruction. It gives to us. We thank you. For the wisdom. That we have. From you.

As our God. And when we have. Our own wisdom. In this world. That we so often. Lean upon. We thank you. That your truth. Brings us back. Brings us. Into the right paths.

Brings us. Under its teaching. And under its rebuke. And its challenge. It does all things. For us.

And we thank you. That it leads us. To your son. The Lord Jesus Christ.

Even in these words. That we have. Been looking at. This evening. We see the contrast. Of light.

And darkness. That in Jesus Christ. We have one. Who is the light.

Of the world. That if we walk in him. We would not walk. In darkness at all. And so Lord. Lead us.

We pray. Forgive us. Our sins. And cleanse us anew. That's all we ask.

[34:55] We ask in his precious name. Amen. We're going to conclude. By singing. To God's praise.

In Psalm 43. The Scottish Psalter. Version. Psalm 43. At verse 3. To the end of the psalm. The tune is invocation.

Psalm 43. On page 264. Oh send thy light forth. And thy truth. Let them be guides to me. And bring me to thine holy hill. Even where thy dwellings be.

We'll sing from verse 3. To the end of the psalm. To God's praise. Oh send thy light forth.

And thy truth. Let them be guides to me. And bring me to thy holy hill.

[35:56] Even where thy dwellings be. Then will I turn God's altar row.

To God my chief and joy. Yet God my God. I name to praise.

My harp. My harp. My harp. My harp. I will employ.

I will employ. Why art thou then cast out my soul.

What should discourage thee? And why with fixing thoughts are thou?

[36:58] This quieted in me. Still trust in God for him to praise.

Good for thy head shall love. Give up my governance.

Is thou help. My God. My God. My God.

That doth me save. That doth me save. After the benediction I'll go to the main door.

We'll close the benediction. Now may grace, mercy and peace from God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit rest upon and abide with you all now and forevermore.

[37:57] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Thank you.