

**WALKING IN THE LIGHT- First John and the Path to Living Deeply in Christ - Part four**  
**Sunday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021 - 10:00 a.m. - Teaching #2070**  
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## **WALKING IN THE LIGHT (Part 2)**

**1 John 1:7-10** - "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. [8] If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. [9] If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. [10] If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

Last week we laid the foundation for today's teaching. Walking with God isn't a matter of continuing to believe that Jesus Christ died for my sins. That's only a tiny part of it, and, according to John, not a big enough part to keep me in fellowship with Father God. Ongoing fellowship depends on ***how I respond to the light of God's revealing presence in my heart.*** It's not an ***intellectual*** thing. It's not a ***creedal*** thing. It's an ***honesty*** thing. And it's an ***obedience*** thing.

### 1) **HOW TO OPERATE FROM A POSITION OF SPIRITUAL STRENGTH**

**1 John 1:8-10** - "**If we say we have no sin**, we deceive ourselves, and **the truth is not in us.** [9] If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. [10] **If we say we have not sinned**, we make him a liar, and **his word is not in us.**"

Notice the repetition of those phrases "***If we say we have no sin***" and "***If we say we have not sinned.***" There are ***two*** ideas here. ***First***, there is abundant provision for all my sin to be forgiven and removed. The terrible scene of self-destruction John paints doesn't ***have*** to happen. That's why these fearful verses start with that word "***if.***" These terrible events aren't ***necessary.*** They don't need to be the case at all. There is no lack of ***willingness*** or ***provision*** for both the ***forgiveness*** and ***removal*** of ***all*** my sin and guilt.

Fellowship with God can ***always*** be maintained. John has already talked about that. Let's be clear about what John is saying in these verses. ***My sin doesn't have to be a barrier. My sin has been dealt with. The barrier doesn't really come from my sin. The barrier comes from denying my sin.***

That's what the Psalmist David made clear in his well known words, "***If I regard iniquity in my***

**heart, the Lord will not hear me."** *There is no provision in the cross for those who deny their sin.* You can't **cling** to sin and still claim **forgiveness** of that sin. The only sin that's forgiven is the sin that is hated.

But there's a **second** idea in these phrases that carries more warning. Clearly, John is saying my sin **can** and **will** continue to be damming - **carcinogenic** to my soul - even after Jesus has been confessed as Savior and Lord, if I cease to cooperate with the Holy Spirit and walk in the light on a daily basis.

"Well, who in his right mind would make the claim to be without sin? Who would have the nerve to say "I have not sinned"? In one sense **nobody**. In another sense **lots of people**. Nobody in his right mind jumps to his feet in a testimony meeting and says **"Thank God, I have never, ever sinned. There is absolutely no stain or form of any kind of sin that has ever been in my life!"**

But that's not what John is talking about in those verses. Let me put into actual example what John is talking about. He's talking about all of those times when in the little secret areas of life the Holy Spirit clearly says to my heart, **"Don, that's wrong. That's flat out sin and you know it."** And then (perhaps without ever saying a thing) I **act like I never heard the Holy Spirit at all. I keep on going as though what I did wasn't seriously sinful.** Or, perhaps more accurately, I assume that, OK, I'm not perfect. But God's grace covers my sin.

**But it doesn't.** God's grace **only** covers the sin I bring into the light. The cross of Jesus has absolutely no effect on sin unrepented of. And the aged John has a burning concern about people in that church who were being confronted about sin **but apparently didn't feel any need for cleansing at all!**

The world we live in washes away the very concept of sin from our minds. My problems come from my upbringing, from society, from my environment, from the pressure of my peer group, from my genetic make up, from the stress and psychological strain of life. But not from sin.

John is saying the attitude that screams, **"It's not my fault"** lies very close to the surface of my life. And it manifests itself every time God calls me into the light of fresh repentance.

2) **THE RESULT OF LIVING INSENSITIVELY TO MY OWN INDWELLING SIN**

**1 John 1:8-10** - "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. [9] If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. [10] If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

When John says "**if we say we have no sin....**" he doesn't mean claiming the same kind of sinlessness as Jesus Christ. He means "**saying**" we aren't sinning when our fellowship with God says we are. And he says something terrible happens when we deny what the light of fellowship with God reveals:

***"....the truth is not in us"(8) and "....his word is not in us...."(10).***

I want to look at another passage from the same writer - John - on another occasion when he used those same phrases:

**John 8:31-37** - "So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, **"If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, [32] and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."** [33] They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?" [34] Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. [35] The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. [36] So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. [37] I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me **because my word finds no place in you.**"

***"My word finds no place in you"(37).*** That's exactly the idea being dealt with in our text in First John when he says, "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us"(1:10). But notice how this account from John's gospel starts out. All of the words of Jesus recorded by John are spoken to those who pictured themselves as Jesus' ***friends***. John is careful to point out that they ***"had believed him"***(8:31). But during the short time of this exchange they move from ***believing*** in Jesus to ***wanting to kill him***.

Here's why. These people liked Jesus. They liked what He did and what He offered. He **healed** people. He **forgave** people. He **performed signs and wonders**. He freed them from the weight of dead, legalistic religion. What wasn't to like?

Nothing. Until He started talking about their sin, their pride, and their need to be cleansed **in spite of the fact that they were already Abraham's descendants and already believed in Jesus**. He told these religious people that they never did get past the place where they had to embrace the words of Jesus even when those words humbled them.

They could **start** fellowship with Jesus just by **hearing** about Him and **believing** what He said. Jesus hadn't fully revealed all that His Lordship would entail for their lives. Things were just beginning to unfold. But if they wanted to **continue** in fellowship with Jesus they had to love Jesus even when Jesus told them they were wrong. And these good, church going, religious descendants of Abraham hated Him for that.

Finally, you can hear the desperation in Jesus' voice when He says, "You want to kill me. And it's all because **you have no room for my word.**"

When I was a kid we used to sing a song around Christmas time. Some of you may know it. It was called "**Have you any room for Jesus?**"

"Have you any room for Jesus?  
He who bore your load of sin  
As He knocks and asks for entrance  
Sinner won't you let Him in?

Room for Jesus, King of glory  
Hasten now His word obey  
Swing your heart's door widely open  
Bid Him enter while you may."

So that's John's heart in our text today. You can't keep the life of Jesus alive without the word of

Jesus instantly ruling every area of life. Walking in the light requires ***exactly the same thing for all of us***. I must refuse to live at any moment solely on the accumulated resources of my past spiritual experiences or reputation. I must never get beyond being a child at heart.

The challenge to all of us is to stay in the light - to constantly allow the truth of God's word - ***not just for doctrinal, theological purposes*** - but the truth that can make people spiritually joyful and free - ***to allow it to have uncluttered access into the dark and private corners of our hearts***.

And the only ***test*** for that, and the only ***proof*** of that, isn't in what we say or sing or profess. The only proof is when His presence probes into an area of my heart that is a little tender and painful for Him to touch. Don't make God liar when He speaks. He won't abide long in the heart that calls Him a liar. Yield. Bend. Come into the beauty of the light. If you could clearly see your entire future, you would always choose to walk in the light.