

Fellowship: Walk In The Light

1 John 1:5-10

MPS Christians live in fellowship with God when we walk in the light of His righteousness.

OBJ Every person can know that they are living in fellowship with God by three tests of walking in His righteousness.

INTRO

READ 1 John 1:5-10

*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. ⁶If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷But 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. ⁸If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. **1 John 1:5-10***

The One John introduces in verses 1-4 brought a message. And that message is the one proclaimed so others can hear and believe. John summarizes the message by saying(.5), “*God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.*” Of this statement, John Stott says there is no more comprehensive statement about the comprehensive being of God than this.¹ **What does it mean to say that “God is light”?** Light is used throughout the Bible in a number of ways, “for knowledge, for purity, for prosperity, for happiness, and for truth.”² Light stands for all that is good and righteous. And of God John states not that He has light nor is “a” or “the” light, but that He is light with no darkness at all. **God is light declares that He is perfection in every realm.**

God is light is the message. And a message this potent is worthy to be proclaimed! John began with a powerful introduction by revealing that the life we have in Jesus is sourced by His power to bring us into the same fellowship with God. And now he moves to show us that the way we live is also sourced by the very nature and character of God. **God, who is light, empowers those who live in fellowship with Him to walk in His light.**

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OBJ John provides **Three Tests of Fellowship** to clarify what it means to walk in God’s light. With each test a contrasting reality makes certain what he means.

1. Test of Conscience. .6-7

“If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷But 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.”

John begins with the claim one makes to have fellowship with God but walks in darkness. When this is true, he states that they lie and do not practice the truth. But in counterpoint to this he states, if one walks in the light as God is in the light, then they enjoy fellowship with one another and Jesus’ blood cleanses from all sin. **The first test of fellowship is one of a clean conscience; “Does what you claim about your life align with how you live?”**

It is a lie to claim to have fellowship with God while walking in darkness, living in a way that is opposed to God’s truth. Even if only in one area of your life. What you claim about your life only matters to assess how you live, to confirm that the two are

¹ John R. W. Stott, [The Letters of John: An Introduction and Commentary](#), vol. 19, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 74–75. Stott states, “Of the statements about the essential being of God, none is more comprehensive than God is light.”

² Charles Spurgeon, [Spurgeon Commentary: 1 John](#), ed. Elliot Ritzema, Spurgeon Commentary Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014), 1 John 1:5.



in agreement. True fellowship with God only exists when one's claim aligns with the practice of their life.

TRANS Of great interest, though, is to consider what integrity produces to clarify one's discernment in this matter. When a person walks in the light, they have fellowship with other Christ-followers and their sins are cleansed by Jesus. This statement provides a wealth of insight for us, aligning not only one's practices with their claims about life, but even more, aligning the relationships that they enjoy with other Christians by the reality that they are right with God because they have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus. One of the main reasons people stay relationally distant and neglect to build community with the church is because they are guarding their guilty conscience. Many do this by staying in close proximity TO the church, but never becoming one WITH the church. It is easier to impress or fool people than to trust Jesus to make you right with God. You must believe the gospel to build true fellowship WITH other Christ-followers. **A conscience cleansed by Jesus' blood is essential for real community in the church.**

TRANS There are a couple of realities that will be helpful to point out here for clarification. First, John is not saying that everyone who participates in the life of the church enjoys true fellowship. Remember, fellowship is the mutual sharing of life, through struggles and successes, for the benefit of growth and maturity into Christlikeness. There are many who participate in the church without fellowship, just as there are many who claim the name of Jesus Christ but remain under condemnation for their sin. You may have the whole church fooled, but you will not fool God and you cannot trick your own conscience. The church and other Christians cannot clean your conscience for you. But they are the ones God has ordained to remind you in word and deed of the only One who can, Jesus. And that's the real importance of Christian fellowship.

Second, John is not identifying a group of people that live perfect lives. IF he were, there would be no need for forgiveness and cleansing. Those who enjoy true fellowship with other Christians are not those who have learned to walk perfectly. Rather, they have learned to listen to Holy Spirit conviction THROUGH their fellowship with other Christ-followers, to remember Jesus's sacrifice and apply it to their life for forgiveness and cleansing, and to encourage others in this. When you walk WITH people, you experience the true blessing of fellowship, growth and maturity into Christlikeness and the joy of His people that it brings.

The test of conscience reminds us that when you do not have a clean conscience, you will never live an authentic life among others. Vulnerability will threaten you constantly and invitation from others to it will feel like an attack against you. When you don't have a clean conscience, not only will you never find fulfillment in practicing God's truth, but you will find little satisfaction in fellowship with God's people. "Church" will be a drudgery to you because God's people are a drain on you, constantly guarding your true self from being exposed in contrast to the claims you have made about yourself. **In the first test of conscience, one can know they are walking in God's light because the fellowship of God's people helps them to apply the gospel to produce spiritual fruit in their life.**

Q? Are you living close TO the church, or are you One WITH other Christ-followers in life together?

2. Test of Confession. .8-9

⁸If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

To say we have no sin is a confession that says far more about us than only to make a claim about our actions. While most people would be hesitant to say that they are without sin, they are quick to say that they are good. But God's Word says otherwise. When our confession does not align with God's truth, our life is shrouded by deception. No matter how passionately or genuine we may be, when we say we have no sin, not in action, attitude or deed, but more deeply, in nature, character and being, then we live under the darkness of deception because God's truth is not in us. When we say we have no sin, our confession stands in opposition to God's truth that states that there are none who are righteous. (Romans 3:9-18) This wrong confession places us not merely in the "poor decision" category, but in the deceived one that is absent of truth. The God who is light is truth. **When our confession stands in opposition to His Word, His truth is not in us.**



Q? Knowing that we are sinful, what then is our hope?

John counters the lie that deceives with the truth that sets free. When we confess our sin, when we agree with God's truth about our nature and being, we put our trust and hope in His light for us. And in His light is the gospel, which reminds us that Jesus died to atone for our sins. Then, the Father forgives and cleanses us from all unrighteousness because He is faithful.

Confession identifies the conviction by which we live our life. What John teaches us here is that the confession we make about the practices of our life, "sins" (.9), must inform our understanding of our nature and being, that we are "sinful" (.8). When we make a confession, whether positive and negative, we clarify not only what we do but who we are. Confession enables us to recognize our true nature that is opposed to God, because of sin, not merely recognized in sinful actions to be corrected, improved, fixed, or healed, but sourced in our sinful being that demands we be atoned. When we confess our sins, we recognize the sinful actions of our life as the fruit produced by the sinful nature of our being and turn to the One who is light to save us from our deception. **The test of confession reveals that you are either confessing your sin regularly, trusting in Jesus by the gospel to forgive and cleanse you, or you are being deceived about who you really are.**

APPL Does your confession bring God's forgiveness and cleansing, or your greater deception? How you practice your confession will reveal what you really believe about yourself through it. **In your confession to the Lord of your sins, do you merely account for your "mess-ups" or "brokenness", or do you recognize before Him your unrighteousness in every way, to throw yourself upon His mercy and grace for forgiveness and cleansing of your whole being?**

3. Test of Truth. .10

¹⁰If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Finally, John culminates in what actually happens when one claims that their life is without sin. When we make this argument, no longer is a person on the defensive, but has now gone on the offensive to attack God. By their claim they have accused Him of being a liar. They have set themselves up as the judge of God, as the righteous one who is more worthy than He. The claim does not pertain to an individual action from their life but addresses the whole substance and source of life. When we argue with God about what He says in His Word, what He calls sin, we make the claim that we are sufficient to source our own life. And, that we are sufficient to judge him. By this claim, what one really accomplishes is to show that God's Word is not in them at all. And to not have God's Word in you is to not know God or to be in fellowship with His people at all. **The test of Truth reveals whether God's truth is in us or not, by whether we make our confession in accordance with His truth, so that we, by the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit, walk in the light of His Truth.**

God is light. If you want to walk in the light, live in fellowship with God and His people, then you must walk in God's truth. Every other way other than God's Truth is darkness and deception.

Christians live in fellowship with God when we walk in the light of His righteousness.

APPL Vote NO on Amendment 3

1. It attacks God's goodness in human dignity, value and worth by murdering babies.
2. It opposes God's goodness in creation by usurping and undermining parental authority.
 - a. This has already happened in CA and MT.
3. There is no such thing as "healthcare", reproductive or otherwise, that depends the murder of another.
4. It is very bad legislation written to hide its true motives and produce what they do not want you to know by ALTERING the MO Constitution, which makes it virtually impossible to reverse.

IF you are a Christian, there is zero rationale or justification of support for this Amendment 3.

