



Series: You're Invited

Sermon Title: You're Invited to be Known

Date: 4/19/2026

**Big Idea: Deception is destructive. Confession is healing.**

In **1 John 1:5-10**, the apostle John writes to believers who claim friendship with God while some are deceiving themselves - walking in darkness and refusing to face the truth. The result is broken fellowship, both with God and with one another. John's words call us to confront an uncomfortable reality: deception kills relationships, but honest confession rebuilds them.

### **1. God - who He is.**

#### **1 John 1:5**

John opens with a foundational declaration: God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. This is one of the most significant descriptions of God in all of Scripture. John is not simply saying that God provides light - he is saying that God is light. His very nature is pure. There is no deceit in Him, no shadow of compromise, no hypocrisy of any kind.

Light reveals what is hidden and brings life. In Scripture, it is the symbol of God's holiness, truth, and goodness. That same God sets the standard for relationship with Him. Genuine friendship with God means aligning our lives with His character - not pretending, but being open and truthful before the One who already knows every thought.

### **2. The deception. What it is.**

#### **1 John 1:6**

The danger John describes is saying one thing while doing another. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth (v. 6). Walking in darkness is not simply about having struggles or failures - it is about hiding them. It is the pattern of living with unconfessed sin while maintaining an outward appearance of spiritual health.

The word walk in Scripture refers to a lifestyle, a consistent direction. John is describing people who claim to know God but persistently live in

ways that contradict His character. Deception does not always look dramatic. It can look like a habit quietly ignored, bitterness held in the heart, or pretending a relationship is fine when something is genuinely broken. As long as hiding continues, fellowship suffers - with God and with others. You cannot have genuine intimacy in the dark.

### 3. Walking in the light: God

#### 1 John 1:7

Walking in the light does not mean walking perfectly - it means walking honestly. John calls believers to bring their real selves before God, acknowledge sin, and invite His cleansing. The result is striking: fellowship with one another and ongoing cleansing through the blood of Jesus (v. 7). The Greek verb cleanses is a continuous action - not a one-time event but an ongoing process. This is how relationships with God and others stay healthy.

John then anticipates the tendency to minimize sin. In **1 John 1:8-10**, he presents three attitudes:

1. **denial** (If we say we have no sin), confession (If we confess our sins), and
2. **defamation** (If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar). The path back to light is
3. **confession** - which in Greek means to say the same thing God says, to agree with Him about our sin.

The promise is firm: he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (v. 9). God does not forgive by overlooking sin - He forgives because Christ paid for it fully at the cross.

**James 5:16** adds the relational dimension: confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. Confession does not end with God. It ripples outward into community. When we live truthfully before God, it frees us to be truthful with others. Hiding produces isolation. Honest confession builds the kind of community where real healing can happen.

Have you been walking in the shadows? A broken trust, a hidden offense, a secret burden? The invitation stands. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive. The God who is light is not waiting to condemn - He is waiting to restore. Every confession is a step back into the light, and every step opens the door to deeper fellowship with God and with the people around you.

## Discussion Questions

1. John says God is light and in Him is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5). How should that shape the way we think about our relationship with Him?
2. What is the difference between struggling with sin and “walking in darkness” (1 John 1:6)?
3. Why is denial of sin described as self-deception and ultimately calling God a liar (1 John 1:8–10)?
4. Verse 9 says God is faithful and just to forgive. Why is it important that forgiveness is based on His character and not our performance?
5. James 5:16 connects confession with healing. What makes confession to others difficult, and how can it lead to stronger relationships?