

Shine – Walking in the Light

8/15/21

1 John 1:15-2:2

Sunday AM

You likely know there's nothing faster than the speed of light. Light travels at 186,282 mps, or 670,616,629 mph (*like me*). To give you some perspective on how fast this is – if you could run at this speed, you could circle the earth at the equator 7.5x in 1 sec. By comparison, it'd take a plane traveling at 500 mph over 50 hrs to circle the planet just once. **Light!**

Last week we launched into a series about God's light w/ us – and what it means to **Shine**. For the Christian, we're called to shine brighter so that our lives testify to the reality of Christ as we reflect the glory of God.

*Let your light shine before others, so they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*

**Biblically** – when God speaks of light, He's inviting us to see Him for who He really is, but also to distinguish the difference b/w right/wrong, good/evil, truth/untruth, and what's of God/what's not of God.

For us, to **shine** for God's glory requires that we believe/receive that Jesus is the light – and that we know Him as our Savior and walk w/ Him as our Lord.

Today, as we continue looking at our calling to **shine** – I want to take a few min. to discuss what it means to **walk in the light**. Look w/ me at 1 John 1:5-9.

*This is the message we have heard from Him and declare to you: God is light – and in Him there is no darkness. If we claim to have fellowship w/ Him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if **we walk in the light**, as He is in the light, we have fellowship w/ one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be w/out sin, we deceive ourselves and His truth is not in us. Yet if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:5-9*

To appreciate this text requires we understand the context. 1 John was written to believers *to authenticate their faith and to encourage them in the maturing process in the midst of being challenged by a number of heresies/false teachers.*

John's epistle reminds us that we all go thru ups/downs in our faith. Yet, no matter our struggle – whether inside/outside of us – our faith isn't predicated on our activity but on God's grace. Meaning our faith is only verified by our love for God/others. Thus, our calling is to live in each day in increasing consistency under the influence of the H.S. to allow Christ in us to live/love thru us – better known as *walking in the light*.

**Here in this text**, John invites us to *walk in the light* by reminding us that our example is Jesus. Even more, John explains WHY it is so important that we walk in stride w/ Jesus in the light of His love/grace.

I The **PLEA** to Walk in the Light

As discussed last week, to **walk in the light** begins w/ God b/c God is light. This is a reference to the nature of God – He is the embodiment of truth who dispels all darkness b/c *He is holy, holy, holy*.

*Our God takes no pleasure in wickedness – no evil dwells in or among Him. Psalm 5:4*

It's also a reminder that as a result of the fall, we're all sinful/unholy – and separated from God b/c of our sin. But God, who is rich in mercy, did for us what we could not do for ourselves – in that while we were still sinner, Christ did for us.

*God made Him, who knew no sin, to become sin for us, so that we could be made right w/ Him. 1 Cr. 5:20*

*God demonstrated His love for us in this way – while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8*

This means the starting point of having a relationship w/ God begins w/ the light of God and culminates at the cross. In Jesus, God has made a way for everyone to be reconciled w/ Him – this is the power/purpose of the cross. Then, once a person has received God's grace thru the transaction of faith, He calls/enables them to walk in His light thru the ministry of the H.S.

*You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. 1 Pt 2:9*

**In salvation** – God brings us into His light. *But being in the light is not the same as walking in the light.* **IOW** – there's a difference b/w having a relationship w/ God and having fellowship (or intimacy) w/ God.

**Re-share** – I'm a dad of (4). My kids are born of me, and therefore, we have a ***relationship***. Nothing they do can change that they're my children. Still, while they are my children, our relationship doesn't guarantee intimacy/fellowship. ***Intimacy*** is based on their abiding communication/obedience – and so it is w/ God. Our ***relationship*** is based on the transaction of salvation, while our ***intimacy/fellowship*** is based on our obedience/response to His Word/will.

**IOW** – *walking in the light* is the activity of living the Christian life in the light of God's love/truth. In this walk, there's a moral/missional component – and neither can be occur thru our human ability/ingenuity, but only thru Jesus in us living thru us.

**Morally** – to walk in the light means we are living transparently and above reproach b/c we refuse to harbor anything we wouldn't want to be seen or known *by God or by others*.

**Missionally** – walking in the light implies activity – that is, w/in us there's a compelling that moves us into G.C. motion to love others the way Jesus loves us.

*The love of Christ compels me b/c I am convinced...*

Walking in the light implies activity. The Christian life might feed upon contemplation, yet it's displayed thru action. *Relationship necessitates fellowship – and fellowship necessitates action. Spurgeon*

To ***walk in the light*** is to live moment-by-moment in abiding, holy, intimacy w/ God in every aspect of our lives compelled into action by our relationship w/ God. It's a *lifestyle* that imitates the character/actions of Jesus as it seeks to share the love of God w others. It's not trying to live your best moral life for Jesus; but rather, it's living alert to God's truth under the influence of the H.S. always allowing Christ in you to live/shine thru you. ***See also the abiding life!***

II The **PATTERN** for Walking in the Light

Understanding the analogy, walking indicates ***activity, direction, progress, and growth***. **Meaning** – *Jesus in me is supposed to be living thru me. I am to become an imitation/replica of Jesus*. This isn't to imply perfection, but to underscore that our pattern/example is Jesus. He ***IS*** the author/perfector of our faith.

**Phrase** – *If we walk in the light, as He is in the light...*

**as** – is a term of comparison directing us to an example given to us by God – which is **Jesus**. Jesus is the standard of the believer's life – He is our goal. We are to know Him and to be like Him. Thus, **the objective of every Christian should be to look/act like Jesus!**

*Be imitators of God, as beloved children – and walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Eph. 5:1-2*

So, although we're earthly and He's eternal, although we're sinful and He's holy, although we're limited and He is limitless – **we're called to pursue and live in the light of who God is and what He's done for us.**

I'm reminded of what Paul wrote in Philippians 3:12:

*Not that I've obtained this or have become perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ has taken hold of me. I don't consider myself yet to have taken hold of it; but one thing I do: I forget what is behind and reach forward to what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

**IOW** – I accept that I'll never achieve perfection this side of heaven, but that's not going to keep me from pursuing/striving to surrender my all to Jesus today. Every day, I seek/hope to be a little more like Him.

I get – *He must increase; I must decrease.* John 3:30

**Question** – How do we pattern ourselves after Jesus?

*Have nothing to do w/ godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, **train yourself to be godly.** For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. 1 Timothy 4:7-8*

To train oneself to be godly requires **understanding, effort, commitment, and discipline.** We have to go into spiritual training. We have to be people who *study to show ourselves approved of God by handling His Word w/ accuracy.* We have to *seek if we hope to find.*

**Most importantly** – *we have to fix our eyes on Jesus who is the author/perfector of our faith – who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame – we must consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men so that we will not grow weary or lose heart.* Hebrew 12:2-4

**IOW** – Jesus is our model – the goal of the Christian life is to be just like Jesus. To do this requires we lay aside the sin that entangles, we make the mission of God our priority, we focus our sights on Jesus, and we never forget who He is and what He has done for us.

**And what is the benefit?** Why does this even matter? Isn't having fire insurance enough? While there are a number of Biblical reasons, I want to point out the (2) promises found in this passage.

III The **PROMISE** of Walking in the Light

*...we have fellowship w/ one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be w/out sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:7-9*

A We have **FELLOWSHIP** w/ God/Others

**TBH** – the phrase – *we have fellowship w/ one another* – has caused some consternation among scholars. Is John talking about our relationship w/ other believers or w/ God? **But what if its both.** Truth is – the reason we can have intimate community w/ others is b/c we have intimacy w/ God. ***Jesus unites us.***

There's beauty/relevancy in knowing that b/c of Jesus, we can spur one another long in the light. Even more, we have a responsibility to thrive together in the faith. John will on to say that if God's *agape* love is in you, then it'll show in your ability to *agape* love people.

**Isn't this what Jesus told His disciples** – *By this will all people know you are My disciples b/c you have agape (my love) love for others.* John 13:35

The promise is b/c we have fellowship w/ God, we can have genuine community w/ others around us b/c Jesus brings us together to give us purpose/mission.

B We have **FORGIVENESS** Guaranteed

***What an amazing certainty.*** We have the promise that our relationship is secure b/c of the transaction of faith that provided for our salvation – but also, we have an advocate w/ the Father who's ever interceding on our behalf for when we stumble in this life by responding to the desires of the flesh instead of to the H.S.

**Remember** – our relationship w/ God is based on our salvation, but our daily intimacy (fellowship) is based on our decision to live under the direction of the H.S. or to respond to the inclinations of our flesh.

**This is Galatians 5** – *the flesh sets its desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.*

This doesn't give me a license to sin (Romans 6), but a promise that in the event that I stumble, God's grace is more than sufficient to restore my intimacy w/ Him.

**I believe this is David's story.** He was a man after God's own heart, but in a moment of flesh, he chose a way that'd gratify his flesh that was catastrophic.

As w/ all acts of carnality – when we set God's grace in us to the side to indulge our flesh – sin occurs. And as w/ David, sin always takes us farther than we want to go, keeps us longer than we want to stay, and costs us more than we want to pay. And sadly, like David, we all reap the consequences of what we have sown.

Now watch this. David repented. He participated in the OT equivalent of God's promise in 1 John 1:9. And it's recorded in Psalm 51.

<sup>1</sup> *God, have mercy on me according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my trespasses. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so, you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge... <sup>7</sup> Cleanse me w/ hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow... <sup>10</sup> Create in me a pure heart, and renew a steadfast spirit w/in me. Don't cast me from your presence or take your H.S. from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and give me a willing spirit to sustain me.* Psalm 51

**Let me tell you what I love most about this promise:**

There is but ONE thing faster than the speed of light – and that’s forgiveness/grace of God. When we truly turn our lives from sin to Him – *instantaneously* – He creates w/in us a clean heart and renews a right spirit. He doesn’t cast us to the side but restores to us the joy/intimacy of knowing and walking w/ Him.

Thus, the great benefit of *walking in the light* – is that we can live knowing that as God guides us, nothing can separate us from His love/care for us. **We are His!**