

1 John 1:5-7

“Walking in the Light”

Introduction

It would be ridiculous to us if someone who was born blind suddenly started telling everyone they could see, while walking into doors, tripping up steps, and still needing to be helped around. What would we know by their actions? We would easily know that they were not telling the truth. How? Because we can actually see and they are tripping all over the place. John writes this letter in part to combat the errors that were spreading around the Johannine community.

We have now made it through the introduction and into the message of the letter. The entire book of 1 John was written so that we might know the joy of living with the full assurance of our salvation in Christ. John provides this assurance by providing some tests that believers can use to examine their life and faith to see if they are truly saved. These tests sound very different than the test of preachers I have heard, but they are God’s tests and can therefore be trusted. If you pass God’s test, what does it matter if you fail a man’s? To use Paul’s words, “If God is for you, who can be against you?” It is not God’s will for His children to be uncertain about whether they are truly saved or not. You could say these tests reveal the *behavior of a genuine believer*. John writes about the behavior or lifestyle of those who truly have fellowship with God verses those who simply say they do.

As you study through the book of 1st John you will see that John provides some *fruits of faith*. In other words, by looking at John’s epistle, you can see what fruit faith produces and if your life has that fruit then you can be assured and know that your faith is genuine. Tonight, I

want to begin by looking at 1 John 1:5-7 and think together on “walking in the light.” That is really the first “fruit” of faith that John mentions. As we examine this “fruit of faith” I would like to point out some “signs” that this fruit is blooming in your life.

1. The Faithfulness we Express

John begins by stating that this is the message that “we” or the disciples have heard of him. So, we know that what John is getting ready to say has come first from the Lord, Himself. This is not John’s opinion, but Christ’s word. He writes that the message is, “that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.” David wrote in the 104th Psalm, [Psa. 104:1](#) “Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty. ² *Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment:* who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain.”

Matthew records in his gospel that when Christ was transfigured before Peter, James, and John that “his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light” (Matt. 17:2). Paul wrote that Jesus dwell in “the light which no man can approach unto” (1 Tim. 6:16). James said that God is, “the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17).

In the scripture light is used to describe the physical light of the sun created by God. It is used to describe God’s holiness. It is used to describe moral purity. And it is also used to describe salvation. 2 Cor. 4:4, “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” Ephesians 5:8, “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of the light.”

Gary Burge explains this analogy well. He writes: “When John affirms that God is light, he is recalling an idea whose lineage begins in the Old Testament. In Exodus 3 Moses experiences God as fire. In 13:21 God’s presence as fire illumines the way the Israelites travel in the desert (cf. Num. 9). Thus, when the tabernacle is erected, God’s presence is signaled with fire in the golden lampstands (8:1-4). Fire brings light, and so similarly God is described as light” (Burge).

God and His glory are often referred as “light” but what does it mean? Psalm 36:9 states, “For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light.” John Macarthur says that this is “a Hebrew parallelism, using two statements to say the same thing.” This Psalm equates light and life. John writes the same thing in John 1:4, “In him was life: and the life was the light of men.” God being light is both His truth and His moral character. In our passage, I think all areas are touched. John starts by pointing to God’s holiness and moral purity. God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

God the Father is light and possesses or contains no darkness, no sin, no corruption, no wickedness, no pollution whatsoever! He is Holy and everything He is and does is just, righteous, and pure. John goes on to makes the connection between God, the Holy One and those who profess to know Him. Against the grain of his day and ours as well, John states that if we profess to have fellowship with God and walk in “darkness” then we lie and do not practice the truth. We are not doing the truth or living in obedience to the truth if while confessing to know the light, we live in darkness.

It’s worth remembering that John is writing to believers who were hearing from different groups one of which was teaching what is believed to have developed into Gnosticism which teaches that matter was inherently evil and the spirit was good. It is easy to see John’s rebuttal in the passage, isn’t it? V.6, “If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie,

and do not [do] the truth.” Those individuals were claiming to fellowship with God while living in sin.

Claiming to know God while walking in darkness is like someone saying they are obeying the law while breaking it. It would be like me telling my parents that I love them while never doing anything they asked me to do and totally disrespecting them. It is like the woman who lives with an abusive man but stays with him because he says he loves her. Those are convoluted definitions of love even by human standards, and we are dealing with heavenly standards!

What does it mean for us to walk in the light? Commenting on the word “walk” Matthew Henry writes, “It is known that to walk, in [a] scripture(al) account, is to order and frame the course and actions of the moral life, that is, of the life so far as it is capable of subjection to the divine law.” There are several meanings to this but let’s just look at a few.

Walking in the light means that we are not defiant in our disobedience

A man by the name of Smalley is quoted as translating the word walk in V.6 as “living habitually in darkness” and says that it “implies a determination to choose sin rather than God as one’s constant sphere of existence.” True faith displays itself in faithfulness and that is quite the opposite of this definition. The one who professes to have fellowship with God and lives in continual and determined rebellion against God and His word does not know God, does not practice the truth, and is a liar.

Walking in the light means we are headed in the right direction

Someone may feel relief on that point but at the same time, wonder if you are walking the light. Well, let’s go back to Matthew Henry’s definition and ask ourselves if we are walking in the light. Is our life and are our actions framed by the word of God? Asked another way, does the word of God determine how we live and how we

act? God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship and walk in darkness we lie and do not do the truth.

I think we will all readily admit we aren’t following as we should be but ask this question. Which direction are you headed? Is the pattern of your life more described by your rebellion or your obedience? I didn’t ask if you were perfect. I asked if you were heading in the right direction. If you frame your life with the word of God or if the word of God determines how you live your life then you are heading in the right direction!

Walking in the light means that obedience is the desire of your heart

Walking in the light reveals that obedience is the desire of your heart. In John 3, Jesus said, “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov’d. ²¹ But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.’

Coming to and walking in the light reveals that the works we do are not done in our self, but instead are carried out in God. We come to the light because we desire to obey Him. We come to the light because we desire to be like Him. We come to the light because we desire to see Him. That is the desire of our heart!

Conclusion

Is that the desire of your heart? Do you desire to obey your Lord? Do you hate it when you disobey Him or are you proud of the sins you commit against Him? The answers to those

questions reveal where you stand with Him. If you walk in darkness, you do not do the truth. But, if you walk in the light as He is in the light then you can know that you are being cleansed from your sin by the blood of Jesus, which, Lord willing we will look further into next time.

Let’s pray: Father, thank you for the privilege that it is to look into your word. Would you help those in darkness to see the light and help those who are truly in the light to see and know that so that their joy might be full. Would you do for us, what David asked you to do for Him, quicken us or make us alive in your way. Help us to be Holy as you are Holy, Father. May we walk in the light as children of the light, for your honor and glory. In Jesus name we pray, amen.