

July 30, 2017

Walking in the Light

"This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. 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, purifies us from all sin."

I John 1:5-10

If we were asked to define Christianity in five words or less what would we say? Most of us would, I think, find that quite a challenge. The Apostle John did it in four words. He would, I believe, have defined Christianity as ***"...walk in the light..."***

To be a believer, a follower of Jesus, means that we have decided to ***"...walk in the light..."***, but what does such a walk mean? In the next several verses John is going to define this concept for us. First the Apostle tells us that this walk does not mean we are sinless. In fact he says, ***"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us...If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives."*** Walking in the light does not mean that I am sinless. In fact I still sin. All of us do.

Walking in the light does not mean that we do not sin, but it does mean that we own our sins. John writes, ***"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."*** This concept is central, I believe, to our walk with Jesus. Somehow we have to come to grips with the reality of our own continuing sinfulness. John wants us to understand that denying our sin is not acceptable. Instead we need to honestly and openly confess our sins and when we do God will forgive us and make us righteous.

Our loving Father can do this because he has created an advocate for us in Jesus Christ, our atoning sacrifice. Because the blood of Jesus satisfies the requirement of the ***"Law of Sin and Death"*** one time for all time, you and I can be forgiven. What is forgiveness? It is the choice not to get even; not to exact justice. You and I are sinners, but because of God's grace in Jesus Christ he can choose not to exact justice and still be God. That's a tough concept for most of us to understand, but it is the foundation concept of grace.

Grace is not, however, a license to go on sinning. Yes, you and I must be willing to confess our sins, but beyond that we must also obey his commands. John says, ***"We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. The man who says, 'I know him', but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him."***



So, as believers who are choosing to walk in the light we are constantly owning our sins and confessing them, and we are constantly trying to keep his commandments. Our two fold task as believer is to own our sins on the one hand and to labor to overcome our sinfull choices on the other by living in obedience to God's commands.

What commands? As we are going to learn from John's letter and as we have learned from many of the other authors in the

New Testament, these commandments have much more to do with how we treat other people than we might think. Ultimately then, John would teach us, *"Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did."*