

# I John 1:5-10 - Walking in the Light of Life

To Read:

1. Psalm 56
2. John 3
3. Ephesians 5:1-21

## I. Introduction

### A. Last week, we look at the introduction of John's letter in I John 1:1-4

1. And we considered that John's letter was written as a letter testifying to glorious truths
2. So, the basis of John's testimony is the incarnation - that God the Son had become a man in Jesus Christ!
3. And the authority of John's testimony is experience - John had seen and heard and even felt that unique union of God and man as he spent time with Jesus
4. The purpose of John's testimony is fellowship - John wanted the fellowship inaugurated in the incarnation to flow through the body of Christ because of the incarnation
5. And the result of John's testimony is joy - joy in sharing the glory of Christ and joy in seeing the glory of Christ

### B. This week we are going to start into the body of John's letter and consider I John 1:5-10

1. As we enter the body of his letter, I want to remember the basis, the authority, the purpose and the result of John's testimony so that we can grasp everything that John is trying to communicate to us here
2. And John is going to start the body of His letter with a glorious statement about who God is - God is light

**C. I 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. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice 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 cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*

### D. Proposition and Outline:

1. Proposition: Christ has revealed that God is light, so if we want to walk with God we must walk in light.
2. Outline
  - a. God is light!
  - b. Walking in the light?
  - c. Applications

## II. God is Light!

### A. As we start this next section of verses we come to one of the core truths of John's letter

1. I John 1:5 - *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.*
2. As we discussed in our overview two weeks ago, John anchors his letter with two truths about God: God is light and God is love - and these two truths will display the futility of the false teachers claims
3. So, our first task this morning is to meditate on what John means when He says that God is light

### B. What does 'God is light' mean?

1. A representation of incredible glory
  - a. Isaiah 60:1, 19 - *Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you... The sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give you light; but the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.*
  - b. II Corinthians 4:6 - *For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*
  - c. Revelation 21:23 - *And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.*
2. A representation of undefiled holiness, especially moral holiness
  - a. Acts 26:18 - *so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'*
  - b. II Corinthians 6:14 - *Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?*
  - c. Ephesians 5:8-9 - *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth)*
3. A representation of unfathomable strength, especially creative strength
  - a. So the Psalm reveling in the glory of God's strength revealed in creation starts with Psalm 104:1-2 - *Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, you are very great! You are clothed with splendor and majesty, covering yourself with light as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent.*
  - b. And the first of God's works was Genesis 1:3 - *And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.*
4. A representation of indelible truth, especially illuminating truth - truth that shows what is really there
  - a. Psalm 119:105 - *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*
  - b. Isaiah 42:16 - *And I will lead the blind in a way that they do not know, in paths that they have not known I will guide them. I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground. These are the things I do, and I do not forsake them.*
  - c. John 11:9-10 - *Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."*
5. So, when John says that God is light, it means that He is all of these things, but here it especially refers to God's moral holiness as it is contrasted with darkness - the absence of the characteristics of God
  - a. Usually when light is contrasted with darkness it evokes the moral aspect of holiness
  - b. God is pure truth in contrast to the lies of darkness
  - c. God's work are perfectly good in contrast with the evil of darkness
  - d. So God is perfect and there is nothing imperfect in Him

**C. But why does John start His letter with this abstract statement? What does this have to do with His purpose?**

1. This might seem like a statement out of the blue, but in reality, it's closely tied to His introduction
2. First, it's tied to His introduction because this is the message of the incarnation!
  - a. Notice the start of verse 5 - *This is the message we have heard from Him and proclaim to you*
    - i. The message Christ brought to us in the incarnation is that God is light!
    - ii. Christ, in His incarnation, has revealed who God is to us, and that is well represented in light
  - b. John continually comes back to this truth, that Christ, in His incarnation, is the only one who can show us who God is
    - i. So, in I John 4:12 he tells us plainly that - *No one has ever seen God*
    - ii. And in His gospel, He records Christ's words in John 6:46 - *not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father.*
    - iii. No one has ever seen God except Jesus, who is God, so the only way we could know God is if Jesus displayed Him to us, and this is exactly what has happened
    - iv. So John concludes the introduction to His gospel in John 1:18 - *No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.*
  - c. So this continues our theme from last week: Jesus, the Son of God, has shined God's glory into the world and thus we know who God is
    - i. In fact, we could say that the incarnation is the basis of Christ's revelation
    - ii. (As I have been studying through I John 1 and the start of I John 2, I've decided that 'the incarnation is the basis of...' statements can help guide us through I John - so last week we saw that 1) the incarnation is the basis of John's testimony and 2) the incarnation is the basis of true fellowship - this week we'll start with the incarnation is the basis of Christ's revelation)
    - iii. Without the incarnation, we would have no idea who God was, but the incarnation has revealed God to us, and Jesus has revealed that God is light
3. But this is not the only reason as we see as we continue into the last verses of chapter 1
  - a. I John 1:6 - *If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.*
  - b. John tells us that God is light because that is what Jesus showed him, but also if God is light that gives us some clear guidelines for what fellowship with God must look like
    - i. In other words, the revelation that Jesus gave to John disproves the false teachers
    - ii. John is going to show the error of the false teachers by holding up what Christ has taught us
  - c. And this is what Christ taught: If God is light, then if we are walking with God we must be walking in light
    - i. It's a very simple logical conclusion - it is impossible to walk with the Light without being in light
    - ii. If we are walking in darkness it is no harsh judgment but simply an obvious fact that we aren't in the light
    - iii. John isn't trying to teach us subtle truths here but blatantly obvious facts - light goes with light, darkness goes with darkness - a three year old can understand that
  - d. If God is holy and true then God's people must be holy and true as well
    - i. It is irrational and even laughable to think that one can have fellowship with God and be marked by pursuing the opposite of His being
    - ii. If we are claiming to have fellowship with God, we must be walking in the light of God, otherwise we are delusional and truth has no place in us

### III. But then we get to the harder question: what does walking in the light mean?

#### A. If God is light, then what possibility do we have of walking in the light?

1. If God's light represents His perfect glory, His perfect power, His perfect truth and His perfect righteousness, we can't hope to attain to these things in any way
2. So, the question we need to answer this morning is what does it mean to walk in the light as He is in the light?
3. To answer this question I'm going to examine these five verses this morning along with some other passages of Scripture to try to say what walking in the light is and what walking in the light is not
4. And once we've defined walking in the light, then we'll be able to define what walking in the darkness means

#### B. Walking in the light cannot mean sinless perfection

1. Perhaps the most common 'knee-jerk' reaction to what walking in the light means is that it requires perfection of us - if God's perfection is represented in light, then to walk in the light means we must be perfect as well
  - a. And there is a clear element of truth to this statement, which we see in several parallel passages
  - b. Matthew 5:48 - *You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.* OR I Peter 1:14-16 - *As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."*
  - c. God's holiness requires radical holiness of us if we are to have fellowship with Him
2. But sinless perfection is not the basis of what John is teaching us here in I John - this becomes clear when we look at the second half of verse 7 as John describes the position of those who are in the light
  - a. I John 1:7 - *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 cleanses us from all sin.*
  - b. Jesus blood cleanses those who are in the light from sin, so sinless perfection cannot be what John means by walking in the light - those who are in the light need to be cleansed from sin
3. So we need to be clear that walking in the light does not equal sinless perfection
  - a. It does require radical holiness, which we will discuss a little bit this morning and more next week as we enter chapter 2
  - b. But sinless perfection cannot be what John is requiring of us here in these verses

#### C. In fact, John goes on to say that walking in the light involves acknowledging our sin correctly

1. Verse 8-10 - *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*
  - a. In these three verses John makes two statements about who we are and one statement about who God is, and, based on these, strongly encourages us in confession and repentance of sin
2. First, John tells us who we are - we are sinners
  - a. In verse 8, John tells us that we cannot say that we have no sin
    - i. The interesting thing about that statement is that it is written in the present tense - John is saying that everyone, including those who are in the light, still sins
    - ii. The depth of our sinful nature goes so deep that even after we are cleansed and when we are in the light, we still go on sinning - this statement is made after verse 7
    - iii. To deny this is to be deceived about who we are - if we think we have completely beaten sin, we have no correct perception of ourselves
    - iv. And this complete lack of perception is an evidence of a lack of the Spirit's witness in our life so that those who claim perfection clearly do not have the truth in them
  - b. In verse 10, John nearly repeats himself and says that we cannot say we have not sinned
    - i. The difference between the two statements is the tense, this statement is in the perfect tense, those who say they have never sinned
    - ii. John is saying, with Paul and more importantly with Christ, that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; no one can be free from the guilt of sin
    - iii. Those who claim this fail completely to understand anything about themselves or about God, so John's warning to those who deny their sinfulness is even stronger, if possible, telling them that they are calling God a liar to His face and obviously do not have His word abiding in them

- c. What prompted John to make these warnings is not completely clear
  - i. We know that in later, second-century Gnosticism, the Gnostics claimed that there was a division between flesh and spirit and so the spirit could not be tainted by sin regardless of what the flesh did
  - ii. Perhaps it is an early seed of this teaching - a licentiousness based on the impossibility to taint the soul with guilt - that John is addressing
  - iii. But there are reasons this doesn't quite fit, in fact, the undercurrent of the book may point more towards a legalistic self-righteousness, because the main command the false teachers failed at was not immorality or conventional licentiousness but rather a failure to love
  - iv. Perhaps there is some way in which both of these are true, demonstrating the true nature of both licentiousness and legalism - there is no core difference between the two, they both deny the reality of sin in our lives and discount its evil power
  - v. Regardless, his statements are clear: all of us are sinners and none of us has completely beaten sin
  
- 3. But, in the middle of these verses, John tells us who God is - God is the Savior of sinners
  - a. Notice that in verse 9, John uses two adjectives to describe God: God is faithful and God is just
    - i. God is faithful means that God always keeps His promises - something that we meditated on at length as we went through Genesis, God has made grand promises but He always keeps them
    - ii. And God is just means that God always does the right thing - God judges rightly so He cannot excuse sin nor can He punish the innocent, He will always judge justly
    - iii. At first glance, this doesn't seem like good news - if we are all sinners and God is a just God who must judge sin rightly, this means God must judge us
  - b. But we must remember John's statement at the end of verse 7 - if we are in the light then the blood of Jesus cleanses us from sin, if we are in Christ then we are innocent; we are completely clean from sin
    - i. If we have been cleansed from sin, then God can be just and can turn away wrath - it is the same truth that Paul tells us in Romans 3 saying that God can be both the just and the justifier
    - ii. The just and the justifier is the great central paradox of salvation
    - iii. How can a righteous, holy and just God overlook sin without sacrificing His perfection? He can't!
    - iv. But, in the cross of Christ, God has not overlooked sin, but He has removed it from sinners and condemned it in the flesh of Jesus Christ
    - v. So, in Christ, God can look on sinners with love and favor without sacrificing anything of who He is
  - c. So, if we are in the light, confession of our sin should not be a terror to us, something that we must deny, but we can truthfully confess our sins because we can rest both in God's promise and in God's fairness because Christ has washed our sins away
    - i. In all of the Bible it is hard for me to think of a more glorious truth - God's justness requires that He look with favor on those who confess their sins in Christ - the same attribute that requires that He punish sin has been turned to our benefit because of the sacrifice of Christ!
    - ii. We no longer fear God's justice, we rejoice in God's justice! Because God's justice is the surety of our salvation in the sacrifice of Christ!
    - iii. Now, for God to punish those in Christ would be an injustice, because sin has already been dealt with in Christ
  - d. But John doesn't even say that God stops at forgiving our sins in Christ
    - i. Careful reading of verse 9 shows us that God does two things: He forgives us our sins and He purifies us from all unrighteousness
    - ii. God not only removes the punishment of our sin from us, but, in honest confession of our sin, through the power of the cross of Christ, God makes us new so that we are no longer bound by sin
    - iii. Honest confession brings us right back to, "Be holy as I am holy" - we don't pursue holiness before God by denying our sin, but by honestly confessing it and asking that God, according to His promise and His justice in Christ, would purify us from that sin so that we can pursue Him in holiness

4. So walking in the light requires honest confession of sin, exposing our sin to God for it to be dealt with in Christ
  - a. If John is right about who we are and is right about who God is, then confession is the only way to walk in light of the truth - it is the only hope we have of walking in the light of God
  - b. So, we should not hide our sins from God but rather expose our sins to God in honest confession
  - c. Paul puts it this way in Ephesians 5:8-14 - *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."*
  - d. Walking in the light means letting the light of God expose who we are, to demonstrate the depth of our sin and the glories of His redemption and to not hide from that exposure
  - e. Instead, we seek the light of God to expose our sin so that He can perfectly purify us from that sin

**D. And thus walking in the light requires that we put our trust in Christ's atonement for our sin**

1. We have already upheld this truth as we discussed confession of sin, but I wanted to make this clear; walking in the light first and foremost means trusting in Christ, because apart from the work of Christ we have no hope of walking in the light - allowing the light of God to expose our sin would be merely terror to us
2. John records Christ's words in John 12:35-36 - *So Jesus said to them, "The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light."*
3. To believe in the light, to trust in Christ who is the light of the world, is the only hope we have, so, as we have already looked at, John puts the propitiation of Christ at the center of his argument in these verses
  - a. I John 1:7 - *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 cleanses us from all sin.*
  - b. Walking in the light means trusting the blood of Jesus to cleanse us from sin, we confess our sins and then place our trust in Christ to cleanse us from sin
4. And here we can tie this truth back to John's core theme because the incarnation is the basis of propitiation
  - a. John introduces here in verse 7 a theme that will propagate through the rest of His book - Jesus' work for us has been a propitiation, a sacrifice that covers guilt and appeases God
  - b. Walking in the light must be based in Christ's propitiation for us, but Christ's propitiation requires the truth of the incarnation - if we reject the incarnation, we reject Christ's propitiation and we have no hope
  - c. Hebrews 10:1-10 - *For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'" When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), then he added, "Behold, I have come to do your will." He does away with the first in order to establish the second. And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*
  - d. 'But a body you have prepared for me' is at the center of the sacrifice of Christ - without a body prepared for Him he had nothing to offer on our behalf, He could not suffer for sinful man because He was not a man, but in the incarnation He has taken our likeness and born our guilt

**E. And, as we confess sin and trust Christ, we strive to know and to walk in accordance with the perfect light of Christ**

1. We started by saying that walking in the light cannot mean sinless perfection, but as we go on we are getting closer and closer to I John 2:1 - *My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin*
  - a. We'll deal with the full weight of this verse next week, but we're charting a course toward it
  - b. Honest confession of sin is not a disregard for the horror of what sin is, exposing ourselves to God's light must accept and even desire the purifying power of God's light in our lives
  - c. We can't ask for forgiveness and cleansing unless we really want forgiveness AND cleansing!
2. Paul says in Ephesians 5:8-11 - *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.*
  - a. We just read these verses to demonstrate what walking in the light means in exposing our sin to God
  - b. But Paul starts by saying if we are in the light then we must walk in the light, that is in goodness, righteousness and truth and not be marked by the things of darkness, immorality, impurity and greed
  - c. God's light is like an intense UV lamp, if something is exposed to it the contaminating bacteria are going to be burned away, we can't expose ourselves to the light of God without a change in our lives
  - d. It's like jumping into the concentrated beam of a magnifying glass knowing it will destroy us, but rejoicing in that because our sin is being destroyed and we have hope that we will be recreated in Christ
3. So, walking in the light must involve pursuing radical holiness because we have been forgiven from sin and because God is exerting the power of the cross of Christ in our lives to purify us from sin
  - a. Walking in the light is not sinless perfection, but it is a humble and honest pursuit of sinless perfection through the work of Christ

**F. So walking in the light is no merit to us, but a lived out confession of who God is and His work in our life**

1. We read John 3 earlier this morning because it tells us about the one who walks in the light, and this is what John says - John 3:19-21 - *And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."*
2. When we walk in the light, we allow the light of God to expose our sin for what it is, but then, as His light purifies us, it also exposes the works of God in our life
3. And those works are exposed, not to give us glory, but to give God glory - these works have been carried out in God - they are the result of the purifying power of God's light in our lives
4. Walking in the light is walking in the sight of God's glory and walking for God's glory

**G. In conclusion, walking in the light is the same as repent and believe, but it emphasizes their ongoing nature**

1. We must continue in repentance, acknowledging the continuing sin in our life
2. We must continue resting in Christ's work for us
3. And, as a necessary result, we must be running after Christ in obedience, not resting in sin
4. So that we are continually giving glory to Christ who has purified us from sin

**H. Having determined what walking in the light means, what does walking in darkness mean?**

1. It's simple, walking in the darkness is the opposite of all these things.
  - a. Walking in the darkness is not acknowledging our sin correctly, whether it is in licentiousness or legalistic self-righteousness, those in darkness will not expose their sin to God
  - b. Walking in the darkness is not trusting in Christ's atonement, because they have not come to terms with who they are, they have no need for who Christ is
  - c. Walking in the darkness is not trying to walk in accordance with the light of Christ, since they have not come to Christ for power to defeat sin they see no need to pursue righteousness in Christ
  - d. Walking in the darkness is not confessing God's work in our lives, since they have not come to Christ for power to defeat sin they see no need to glorify God for the work that has been done in and for them
2. So walking in darkness is often associated with blindness - we'll see this as we go on through I John
  - a. And as we look at the characteristics, walking in darkness really is blindness
  - b. It is blind to who we really are and why we need Christ and it continues blindly down to destruction

## IV. Applications

- A. Like last week, as we do applications, I want to return to the five desires that I listed during our overview of I John**
1. You'll remember that I listed five things that I hoped to get out of our study of I John, and, in order to constrain myself, I'm going to let those desires guide my applications this morning
  2. I had five applications for five desires in my first draft, but I've cut down to three applications for time's sake
- B. First application: Understand and appreciate the person and work of Christ more**
1. As we've looked at this passage this morning, we've seen two aspects of Christ and His incarnation upheld
    - a. We have seen that Christ's incarnation is the basis of His revelation of who God is
    - b. And we have seen that Christ's incarnation is the basis of His propitiation that washes away sin
  2. So this morning I encourage you to let those truths sink into your heart
    - a. Meditate on what it means that Christ has revealed God's glory to us
      - i. Think about how little we deserve to enjoy the glory of God, how we renounced this joy in our sin
      - ii. And think about how well Christ has displayed His glory to us, though we could not see God's glory Christ has come to show us His glory
      - iii. And think about how Christ has humbled Himself in order to do this, He left the glory and splendor of heaven to take a body of flesh so that you could see and enjoy His glory
      - iv. As you think about these things, let joy overwhelm you as you see how good Christ has been to you!
    - b. Meditate on what Christ has revealed to us about God
      - i. Think about what it means that God is light
      - ii. Think about the power and the glory and the holiness and the truth that characterize God
      - iii. Think about how different that makes Him than you, but how in Christ He has provided for you to walk in His light!
      - iv. And praise God for who He is and who Christ has revealed Him to be
    - c. Meditate on what it means that Christ has washed away our sins in His body
      - i. Think about the depth and the horror of your sin before God - how it is a denial and denigration of His perfect light as revealed in Christ
      - ii. And think about how great it is that Christ has removed that immeasurable burden from you
      - iii. And think about how great a price that Christ paid to remove that burden from you, that He took a body of flesh so that he could die in the flesh to pay the penalty of your sin
      - iv. And be overwhelmed in joy and wonder that your Creator would do such a thing for you!
  3. So, my first application this morning is for you to know and to enjoy Christ as the revealer of God's glory and as the propitiation for our sins
    - a. Let those meditations guide and direct your thoughts and your joys this week
- C. Second application: Devotion to earnest prayer**
1. This morning, we've meditated on why we should confess our sins before God and how we can confess our sins before God and I don't want this meditation to fall flat
    - a. If confessing our sins before God is the first step to walking in His light, willingly letting His light illuminate our sinfulness, then our prayers should be marked by confession of sin
    - b. So this week, I urge you to spend time in confession of sin before God - not because I want you to wallow in sin, but because I want you to be confident in Christ before God so that you can display yourself rightly before God and His light can chase away the darkness of sin from your life
  2. So, as you go to personal prayer this week, based on the confidence you have in Christ and in God's faithfulness and justice, devote yourself to honest confession before God
    - a. Acknowledge before God the many sins that still plague you and mourn before God over them
    - b. Seek God's light to illuminate those sins so that you can see them for what they truly are and ask God to illuminate sins that you have not yet seen so that you can see sin for what it is
    - c. Ask that God's light would purify you from these sins, confess these sins with an earnest desire that God's light would chase away the darkness of sin and give you a new heart and a new love that love's Christ more than your sin
  3. So, my second application this morning is a devotion to prayer marked by confession of sin
    - a. Let confession of sin be a glory to God in Christ and an evidence that you are walking in the light

**D. Third application: A devotion to earnestly loving and fellowshiping with one another in our local church**

1. I want to spend an extra minute on this last application, because this is where John goes in the middle of this set of verses - you might notice that I have not yet mentioned one phrase that John uses in verse 7
  - a. I John 1:7 - *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 cleanses us from all sin.*
  - b. Isn't it interesting that John says the first result of walking in the light is fellowship with one another?
  - c. So, in my last application, I want to ask why walking in the light leads to true fellowship with our fellow believers and then to charge you to pursue fellowship in this way
2. So how does walking in the light, in honest confession of sin and pursuit of God's holiness, lead to fellowship?
  - a. I think there are at least three ways that fellowship is the result of walking in the light
  - b. First, when we walk in the light we end up relating to each other in the same way, a way that encourages fellowship with each other
    - i. When we walk in the light, we honestly acknowledge our own sins, and we expect others to struggle with sins as well - we agree that no one can say they are without sin
    - ii. So we interact with each other humbly - neither puffing ourselves up with pride thinking we have less sin nor judging each others failures taking unnecessary offense at each other sins
    - iii. Instead we judge ourselves and others rightly so that our love can be marked by the truths of I Corinthians 13:7 - *Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*
    - iv. We bear and believe and hope and endure all things because we know that we are all sinners together being remade by Christ
    - v. Fellowship is destroyed by prideful legalism when certain members believe that they are better than everyone else because they have followed the rules better, but fellowship is encouraged when we all can honestly and humbly acknowledge our own sin and expect the same from others
  - c. Second, when we walk in the light, we end up pursuing the same goal in a way that encourages fellowship
    - i. When we walk in the light, we not only honestly acknowledge sin in our midst, but we desire to destroy sin in our midst through exposing it to the light of God
    - ii. If all of us have this one common goal, then when we meet together we have a strong basis of fellowship - all of us here are fighting to destroy sin by the light of God
    - iii. We don't need to hide from each other or pretend that we are perfect, instead together we can fight against the sin that still is in our midst, fighting together as one body encouraging each other in the work
    - iv. Fellowship is destroyed by licentiousness when certain members believe that they can do whatever they want in the Christian walk, but fellowship is encouraged when together we fight against sin
  - d. Third, when we walk in the light, we are all motivated by the same thing
    - i. When we walk in the light, our goal and our joy is in the light of God, seeing the light of the glory of God in the face of Christ
    - ii. And if we all share this same joy, it gives a great basis of fellowship, all of us are enjoying the same thing, we are all enjoying the same person, our hopes and our joys are wrapped up in Jesus Christ
    - iii. Having different desires and competing goals destroys fellowship, but fellowship is encouraged when we have a common desire to enjoy Jesus Christ together
3. So, if walking in the light produces fellowship, then pursue these things to enhance your fellowship in our body
  - a. Pursue honest acknowledgement of your own sin - don't puff yourself up or push others down, we are all sinners here and this should be a place where we can honestly confess our sin without judgment
  - b. Pursue holiness - don't allow yourself to be an example of licentiousness in our body, nor ignore your responsibility to encourage others to pursue holiness, make our fight a team effort, as it were
  - c. Pursue joy - don't hide your desire to seek joy in Christ as we are in fellowship, display your joy in Christ so that it becomes infectious and allow others' joy in Christ to infect you as we all enjoy Christ together
  - d. In other words, walk in the light so that you can have fellowship with one another as the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanses us from all sin!