



# 1 John

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An Exegetical Series

**1 John 1:5-10: True Fellowship with God**



# Last Week 1 John 1:1-4

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The Apostle John's claim is that he is both an eyewitness and a credible witness providing meaningful testimony about Jesus Christ (the "Was"). Because John, and the other Apostles, personally heard, saw, and touched Christ, he can truthfully testify about:

- Who Jesus is
- What Jesus did
- And how Jesus' physical manifestation affects professing Christians through fellowship and joy.

# Last Week 1 John 1:1-4

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On the Post-it board, there is a QR Code that will take you the church website where you can access the lesson from last week: both the audio and the powerpoint.

And if you're so inclined, the first two weeks are also there but only the powerpoint; there is no audio from the first two weeks

# This Week: 1 John 1:5-10

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## Two Key Themes Emerge:

1. The major theme of *Light and Darkness* (v. 5)
2. The Immediate contextual use of *Fellowship* now further expounded upon by John (v. 6)

## Logical Movement of Thought:

- John will argue “If we say X...but do...Z...then...N” or “If we walk in X...then A & B”

If the logical movement feels confusing, I will clarify as we walk through it!

# Light, Darkness, and Fellowship

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## Light and Darkness (1 John 1:5-7):

A Theological Foundation: God is Light

- Not a *Metaphysical* statement about God's being or his "physical" existence (i.e., that God is actually a photon outside of the universe)
- Rather, this is a Metaphor tracing back to John's use of Light in the Gospel of John used 16 times (see John **1:4, 5, 7, 8, 9; 3:19, 20, 21; 5:35; 8:12; 9:5; 11:9, 10; 12:35, 36, 46**) Specifically, we will look at John 1:4 and 8:12

# Light, Darkness, and Fellowship

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## Light and Darkness (1 John 1:5-7):

- Remember: John's Gospel lays the Foundation and 1 John provides the Ethical implications of that Foundation!
- John's Gospel essentially says, "Jesus *is* the Light, in that, he is both the life giver in creation and life is *in* him physically and Spiritually!"
- 1 John picks this up by now noting an ethical reality about God, embodied in Christ: "God is ethically and morally pure!" — Now, we will see the implications of this truth

# Light, Darkness, and Fellowship

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Light and Darkness Related to Fellowship (vv 6-7):

John's logical train starts in v. 6, "If we say..."

- ...We have **fellowship** with him, and yet we walk in darkness, we are lying and are not **practicing** the truth..."
  - **Fellowship** = (Nuanced shift) professing to know Christ and walking in the light (connects to v. 7b)
  - **Walk in darkness** = Living in unrepentant/confessed sin (more on this on v. 9!)

# Light, Darkness, and Fellowship

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Light and Darkness Related to Fellowship (vv 6-7):

John Continues in v. 7...

- “If walk in the light...”
  - If we live in the same character as God—who is pure and morally and ethically perfect—we if live in the same manner (not moral perfection!) and habitual living, we fellowship directly with God!
  - This is possible because of Jesus’ life—whose example we are to follow—and his atoning death

# Light, Darkness, and Fellowship

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Light and Darkness Related to Fellowship (vv 6-7):  
John Continues in v. 7...

- Fellowship with God means to:
  - Experience the joy of reconciliation to God
  - Experience the joy of being cleansed from sin (darkness is equated with sin, here!)
  - Experience the joy of being loved by God who has cleansed you by His Son's death and resurrection, and now that love is yours to give to each other

# Light, Darkness, and Fellowship

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## Sin and Darkness More Fully Equated (8-10)

- While “sin” is not given a description (Cf. Gal 5:19-22), it is equated with darkness, in that, darkness is contrasted by light, sin is what we are cleansed from, and thus saying we have no sin assumes moral relativity.
- To say “I have no sin,” while claiming fellowship with God via cleansing from sin is *self-deception!*
- We do not have truth if we believe this deception

# Light, Darkness, and Fellowship

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## True, Ongoing Fellowship with God (v. 9-10)

- The one who truly fellowships with God recognizes something about themselves:
  - “Even though God has cleansed me from sin...I still sin.” (v. 9; example! **Luke 18:13**)
- Yet, something more profound is happening.
  - God’s commitment to his covenant of grace by ongoingly forgiving all confessed sin by his cleansed children (Cf. v. 7b...again!)

# Light, Darkness, and Fellowship

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## True, Ongoing Fellowship with God (v. 9-10)

- Therefore, “if we say we have not sinned...” (v. 10)
- Karen Jobes says, “The perfect tense of the verb “have sinned” (ἡμαρτήκαμεν) suggests a persistent state of denial of sin in the past that has led to the present state, rather than an individual and temporary instance...”
  - In plain English...someone believes and says they have never sinned ever at any time!

# Light, Darkness, and Fellowship

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## True, Ongoing Fellowship with God (v. 9-10)

- How does saying “I have never sinned!” make God a liar? Because we have sinned and he sent Jesus Christ to be the atonement for that sin so that we would set free from sin and restored and reconciled to a fellowship that God has both intended and desired to have with us!
- This accusation is the culminating idea from v. 6 and v. 8: denying sin keeps us from fellowship with God!

# What's the Big Idea?!

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> John has called us, the reader, to consider the fact that what he is telling us about God is true! And what he has shared is that God is morally pure and ethically right

> If we claim to have fellowship with God, in that, we profess to know God by being cleansed from sin while (a) walking in sin, (b) saying we have no sin, (c) or that we have NEVER sinned, we have no fellowship with God.

Period!

# What's the Big Idea?!

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- > By contrast, one who does know God “walks in the light...” in that he orders and lives his life as God does, to the best of his ability
- > The one who knows God and fellowships with God recognizes his own sin, and he confesses his sin with confidence because he knows the love his savior has for him, in that, he will forgive and is just to do so because all of his sin has been forgiven in Christ!

# What's the Big Idea?!

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The question is twofold:

1. Are you the one who walks in sin while saying you walk with God? Do you deny that you sin? Do you deny that you have ever sinned?
2. Are you the one who walks in the light as best as you can, who, along the way, recognizes your sin and actively confesses that sin to a faithful and just savior?



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