

Title: **THE WALK, THE WITNESS,**
 AND THE WASHING

Text: 1 John 1:7

Subject: *Walking in the Light*
 And Washed in the Blood

Date: Sunday Evening — February 5, 2012

Tape # 1 John #7

Readings: *Bobbie Estes and Joe Blakely*

Introduction:

Our text will be 1st John 1:7. The title of my message is **THE WALK, THE WITNESS, AND THE WASHING.** — 1st John 1:7. — **THE WALK, THE WITNESS, AND THE WASHING.**

(1 John 1:7) “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Walking in the light and washed in the blood, those words set forth the character of God’s elect and our confidence before God. **John is talking about**

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communion between God and his people. He has described God's holy character. Knowing that "*God is light and in him is not darkness at all,*" we are convinced that it is not possible for men to have communion with God until they are reconciled to him by the blood of Christ. Here John shows us that no man can look upon himself as being one with God and reconciled to God by Christ except those who, walking in the light, trust the blood of Christ God's Son alone to cleanse them all sin.

As you read through this short epistle, you cannot fail to see that John was a man who had experienced what he was talking about. He wasn't passing along second hand information. He had experienced the grace of God. The fact is, we can never learn anything in this Book except as we experience it. You cannot know the Gospel until you experience it, until you experience the power of God unto salvation in your soul. No aspect of Gospel truth is ever truly known and learned until we have tested, tried, and proved it. When the power of Gospel has been made

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known in our souls, then we know it, but not until then. The Gospel of Christ must be experienced to be known. Let me show you what I mean —

- You cannot know sin until you know your own sin. Total depravity is more than a doctrine to those who have tasted the bitter purification of their own hearts.
- You cannot know the grace of God, except you taste and see that the Lord is gracious.
- You can never know the love of Christ, except the Lord Jesus put himself in your heart.
- You can never know the preciousness of Christ's precious blood until you have experienced its saving, cleansing power.
- You can never know the blessedness of Christ our Advocate with the Father, until you need his unfailing advocacy and intercession before God.

He believed what he wrote. **John spoke as one having authority, because he spoke from deeply felt experience.** God, make me that kind of preacher!

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- Preachers today are licensed and ordained by the church. Prophets of old were ordained and sent by God.
- Preachers today go forth armed with degrees and credentials. Preachers of old went forth anointed by the Holy Ghost.
- Preachers are questioned by committees and hired to preach what the church believes. God’s servants of old came preaching, “*Thus saith Word of the LORD.*”
- Preachers today give themselves to programs, visitation, and church business. Preachers of old “*gave themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word.*”
- Preachers today preach and men are persuaded to move their membership. Prophets of old preached and sinners “*were pricked in their hearts and cried, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*”
- Preachers today pray and the organ plays softly. Elijah prayed and the fire of God fell.
- Preachers today are afraid that they will offend someone. Paul was afraid that he wouldn’t. — If

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there is no offence, the Gospel has not been preached. — If the offence of the cross is not obvious, the preaching is less than useless!

May God the Holy Spirit give me grace to preach the Gospel to you with the authority of God and the boldness of grace experienced in my soul!

There are two great lessons that we are taught by the Gospel. These are lessons which every man must learn by experience, if he is to be a true Christian.

- First, we learn that sin is an exceedingly great and evil thing.
- Then, we learn that the blood of Jesus Christ is an exceedingly precious and powerful thing, able to put away sin.

If you and I are true believers, we have experienced these two great Gospel truths. We know that our sin is worthy of eternal wrath before God. And we know that the blood of Christ alone can wash us and make us clean before the holy Lord God. With these things

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in mind, I want us to look at 1st John 1:7 together. May God the Holy Spirit, whose Word we have before us, be our Teacher and inscribe his Word upon our hearts by his omnipotent mercy, love, and grace.

(1 John 1:7) “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Proposition: In this verse the Holy Spirit teaches us that our acceptance with God is the blood of Jesus Christ his Son.

Divisions: There are three lessons for us in this verse, which set forth the character and confidence of God’s elect.

1. All who are united to God by faith in Christ walk in the Light.
2. Those who walk in the Light have fellowship with God.

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3. The blood of Jesus Christ alone can cleanse us from all sin

We will look at the first two lessons briefly, and spend the bulk of our time looking at the cleansing power of the blood of Christ.

THE WALK

*First, we learn that – **All who are united to God by faith in Christ walk in the Light.** Here John puts the case hypothetically. — “*If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*” This is what John is saying: — If we have the remission of sins by the blood of Christ, we walk in the light. If we have a saving interest in Christ as our Redeemer, there is a corresponding conformity of heart to the image of God. This is a very strong description of the character of God’s elect.*

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God Himself is Light; and everything in the world that is good is an emanation of God. — James tells us, “*Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*”

Light is here set before us as the essence of God’s character. That is to say, everything about God is pure, holy, and true. Light is a symbol of truth. Darkness is a symbol of error. Light represents holiness. Darkness is a proper figure of sin. Light reveals; therefore, it is a proper representation of knowledge, especially spiritual knowledge. Darkness is a token of ignorance. And so, light is an excellent way to describe God’s nature.

- God is true. He cannot lie.
- God is ineffably holy. He can do no wrong.
- God is all wise. He alone can make men to know wisdom.
- Where there is light darkness cannot exist.
- And so where there is the saving knowledge of God men no longer walk in darkness.

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But by nature we are all born in darkness and live under the dominion of darkness. Isaiah describes the dreadful condition of the human race as men who grope about in darkness like one who is blind. When we knew God by the works of nature, we glorified him not as God. Neither were we thankful. We became vain in every imagination, and our foolish heart was darkened.

- Men by nature are under the darkness of sin.
- We are by nature under the power of the Prince of Darkness, who continually blinds our hearts to the grace and glory of God in the Gospel.
- Our darkness is increased by human religion and self-righteousness.

Those who are in darkness cannot discern spiritual things. — *“The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned”* (1

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Corinthians 2:14). Those who walk in darkness cannot perceive Gospel truth.

- The guilt of sin is too high for the carnal mind to see.
- It cannot perceive the excellence of God's character.
- The sin darkened heart sees nothing of value in God's faithfulness to His promise, or in the validity of the covenant
- Tell the natural man of Christ's glory and beauty, love and grace, life and death, resurrection and ascension, intercession and saving power — But he sees nothing in what you say.

Man by nature is the embodiment of darkness.

In conversion God brings men into light. — *“For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ”* (2 Corinthians 4:6). As soon as the

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grace of God comes into the heart, it brings us into light.

The grace of God shining into our hearts makes as great a difference as did the eternal light of Jehovah upon the dark creation, when God said, “*Let there be light, and there was light.*” As soon as God the Holy Spirit begins to work upon the soul of a man, he illuminates the heart. The sinner perceives at once his desperate sinfulness. He abhors his sin. He labors to be free from sin. He cries out for mercy. And he finds mercy in Christ. Henceforth, he no longer loves sin. He is no longer guided by the policy of darkness. He walks after the light of truth, holiness, righteousness, and knowledge.

If God has brought us into light, we see as we never saw before. We are “*in the light!*” We who were darkness are now children of light. — “*Ye are not of the night, nor of the darkness.*” “*Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.*”

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Here is a dazzling description of the believer's character. — The believer is one who “*walks in the light as he is in the light.*” I have tried to look this text in the face. It is a high standard, too high for any man to set up. Can we ever attain to it? Can poor flesh and blood ever be able to walk clearly in the light as he whom we call “our Father”? Of him it is written, “*God is light and in him is no darkness at all.*” Certainly, that is more than we can expect. Yet, I think this much must be said.

The model which is set before us is that of absolute perfection and absolute holiness. It is written, “*Be ye holy: for I am holy*” (1 Peter 1:16). “*Be ye therefore imitators of God as dear children*” (Ephesians 5:1). **We can never rival the perfect holiness of our God. But that must be the goal we seek.** — “*Follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.*” The pattern which our lives must copy is the Lord Jesus Christ himself. He says, *I have given you an example,*

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that ye should do as I have done” (John 13:15). — I cannot dwell in the light of the sun. That would consume me. But it is my joy to walk in the light of the sun. Even so, I cannot dwell, as a mere man, in the light of God’s holiness. His very holiness is a consuming fire. But I delight to walk in the light of his holiness.

THE WITNESS

If we are God’s, we walk in the Light. That is the first point. Now, look at the witness. — **Those who walk in the light have fellowship with God.** When John says, “*We have fellowship one with another,*” it is obvious that believers, all believers, all who walk in the Light of God have fellowship with one another.

- All are born of the same Father (John 1:13).
- All are bought with the same Price (1 Corinthians 6:20).
- All are members of the same Body (Colossians 1:18).

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- All are taught by the same Spirit (John 16:13).
- All walk in the same faith (2 Corinthians 5:7).
- All are serving the same Master (Matthew 23:8).
- All are heirs of the same inheritance (Romans 8:17).

But in this place John is not talking about horizontal fellowship of men with men. He is talking about a vertical fellowship of men with God!

(1 John 1:7) “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Imagine that! We have fellowship with God and God has fellowship with us! We now live in the same realm, in the Spirit. And this Spirit of Life and Light bears witness with our Spirit that we are the sons of God (Galatians 4:4-7; Romans 5:1-11; 8:1-17).

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(Galatians 4:4-7) “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

(Romans 5:1-11) “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only [so], but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

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“6 ¶ For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. 8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. 11 And not only [so], but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.”

(Romans 8:1-17) “[There is] therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do, in that it was

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weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded [is] death; but to be spiritually minded [is] life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind [is] enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”

“10 ¶ And if Christ [be] in you, the body [is] dead because of sin; but the Spirit [is] life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in

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you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. 12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 ¶ And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with [him], that we may be also glorified together.”

Our life is hid with Christ in God!

(Colossians 3:1-3) “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set

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your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

The Holy Spirit teaches us that there is a mutual fellowship, a mutual existence between God and our souls in Christ, a oneness and a communion of light and life!

If we walk with God as God is in the light, the secret of God is with us, and our secret is with God. God opens his heart to us; and we open our hearts to him. We have become friends! We are bound and knit together, so that being made partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, we live like Enoch. — We walk with God. Our conversation is not in this world, but in heaven, from whence we look for our Redeemer.

THE WASHING

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Here's the walk. — “*We walk in the light as he is in the light.*” Here's the witness. — “*We have fellowship one with another!*” Here's the washing. — “*And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin!*”

(1 John 1:7) “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

“*And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from all sin.*” — This is a promise of God to His people. This is the assured confidence of all true believers. We are cleansed from all sin by the blood of Christ. Realizing our great sinfulness in all things, we are made aware of the fact that we have no grounds of acceptance with God but by the blood of Christ. And we are confident of the power of Christ's blood to put away sin. We trust the blood of Christ alone for our justification and sanctification.

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We are guilty of sin, and the law demands our punishment. The guilty sinner must die. Many seem to think that the Gospel was devised to soften down God's harshness towards sin. Such men are greatly mistaken, never is the heinousness of sin and the holiness of God more plainly displayed than in the sufferings and death of Christ as our Substitute. The Gospel does not in any way lessen the claims of God's law against us.

The law demands perfect obedience and righteousness from every man in heart and conduct. The law demands the death of every transgressor. Yet, we are plainly told that God accepts us, pardons us, and justifies us. How can that be? "*The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*"

Jesus Christ assumed our place before the law of God.

- He took our sins upon himself.
- He was made to bear our guilt.

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When Christ assumed our sins as a man he became guilty before the law. *“He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”* And Jesus Christ endured the punishment due to us from the law.

- The pardon of sin can come only by the blood of Jesus Christ God’s Son.
- His blood must be shed for the remission of sins. *“Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins”* (Hebrews 11:6).

God is gracious and merciful, willing to spare the sinner. But he is holy and just, requiring the punishment of sin. Therefore, Christ became our Substitute. *“Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins”* (Romans 3:25).

Our Lord himself pleads the merits of his blood in heaven to put away sin. *“By his own blood he*

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entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” (Hebrews 9:12).

It is this blood of Christ which the Holy Spirit applies to our hearts in regeneration to purge our conscience from dead works to serve the living and true God. This is “*the sprinkling of blood that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*”

- That which makes this blood effectual is the fact that it is the blood of God the eternal Son. If our Redeemer is himself God almighty, the work of our redemption must be effectual.
- It is this shed blood of Christ which we trust for our complete justification.
- But our text shows the continual influence of the Savior’s blood. We trust the blood of Christ alone to cleanse us in sanctification as well.

There is a greatness in everything we see here.

- Our sins are great.
- Christ’s atonement is great.

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- The love of God in giving Christ as our Redeemer is great.
- Christ's satisfaction is great.

Observe also the marvelous simplicity of the Gospel. — *“The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”*

- There is not a word in the text about rites and ceremonies.
- Nothing is said about the sacraments.
- Nothing is mentioned concerning legal obedience.
- Nothing is said about experience, emotion, or feeling.
- Everything is in Christ. — The blood of Christ alone puts away sin. — The blood of Christ alone gives us fellowship with God (Colossians 1:20-21).

(Colossians 1:20-21) “And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, [I say],

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whether [they be] things in earth, or things in heaven. 21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in [your] mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.”

Children of God, we have a complete cleansing from all sin by the blood of Christ!

- We are cleansed from all sin.
- We are cleansed now.
- We are cleansed for certain.
- We are cleansed forever.

And, mark you, the entire work is ascribed to our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. Any one sin, in any degree is enough to exclude us forever from heaven and drag us down to hell. But we have none! When Christ washes away sin, he washes away all sin (Colossians 2:13-14).

(Colossians 2:13-14) “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having

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forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”

APPLICATION

- Never forget, my friends, the heinous character of sin.
- Stand amazed in the knowledge of God’s great love.
- Go on trusting the merits of Christ alone for all things.
- Make use of the Savior’s blood daily. — He is a fountain opened for cleansing.
- Any sinner may plunge into this fountain and be clean.

(1 John 1:7) “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

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Amen.