

1John 1:5–2:2

Walking in Cleansing Fellowship with God

Thursday, March 14, 2024 • Read 1John 1:5–2:2

Questions from the Scripture text: To what does the apostle now shift in v5? How does his experience of the message match the experience of the living Word (cf. v1)? What is the message? What have some claimed (v6)? While walking in what way? What does this prove about their claim? What are they not doing (“practicing,” NKJ)? What must we walk in, instead (v7)? Of Whom does this make us an imitation? With whom does this give us fellowship? What happens to those who have this fellowship? What if we say that we don’t need this cleansing from sin—what are we doing to ourselves (v8)? What isn’t in us? What must we do with our sins instead (v9)? Upon what attribute of His must we depend? What two things does God do in that faithfulness? What if we say that we don’t even need the forgiveness—what are we making God out to be (v10)? And what isn’t in us? What is the apostle’s goal in making these points (2:1)? What does he assure those who are trying not to sin but stumble—what do they have? With Whom? Who is this advocate? What is He in Himself? And what is He for us (v2)? And what is His capacity for propitiation?

What difference does fellowship God make in our daily living? 1John 1:5–2:2 prepares us for the second serial reading in public worship on the Lord’s Day. In these eight verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **when we have fellowship with God, we walk in His light as those being cleansed by Christ**

Fellowship with God means walking in the light. In v1–4, the apostle commended his message in the strongest possible terms: it is the means by which we are brought into a shared life with the Triune God, through the Son, the Word, in Whom is eternal life. This message, this gospel, is how we are brought into the enjoyment of God Himself.

So, in a real sense, God Himself is the gospel. Now, v5–7 tells us more about Him, and therefore more about what it means to have a shared life with Him. More about Him: He is light and in Him is no darkness at all. More about a shared life with Him: this fellowship with Him means walking in the light.

From the word picture, we can understand what walking in the light means, externally. It means that the rule of our life is not from ourselves, which would be darkness, but from Him Who is light. That is to say that He is the rule of our life. He, through His Word, is the standard and the guide for what we do, what we desire, and what we delight in.

But this idea of the shared life helps us understand another part of walking in the light. Christians have His life in us and His light in us. We have a new birth, a new nature. So, we walk in the light not only when we learn from the Bible what our desires should be, but when we find that as we read the Bible, His Spirit within us actually makes those things our desires.

If we are walking in darkness, however, we must not think that we have fellowship with God. v6 calls the one who thinks that it is ok for Christians to sin a liar who does not practice the truth. Christians must never take our sin lightly.

Fellowship with God means guaranteed cleansing from sin. Now, a Christian might well be alarmed when he learns that if we are not walking in the light, then we have no fellowship with God. For, every Christian in this life still has sin. So, the sentence in v7 doesn’t even finish without assuring us that there is cleansing from this remaining sin.

The one who walks according to the rule of God’s light externally, and with a desire formed by God’s light internally, does so only by that shared life with Jesus Christ. And this Jesus Christ, though a Man, is also God the Son. If we have Him, then we have His blood, and that blood is the most effectual cleanser of what is unclean and consecrator of that which is common. His blood is cleansing believers from their sin, even now already in this life.

Now, in v8, we learn that there is something even worse than the “Christian” who says that it is ok for him to sin. Yes, the one who treats sin as if it is ok is a liar. But the one who says that he has no sin is worse than a liar. He is someone who calls God a liar (v10)!

But, praise God, the gospel is a great helper to us to confess our sin. For, if we have Jesus Christ His Son, the truthfulness and faithfulness of God is not against us but for us. Without Jesus Christ, God would be faithful and just to punish us fully for our sins and to leave us to ourselves forever in our unrighteousness. But if we have Jesus Christ, then God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins (justification) and to cleanse us from all that remaining unrighteousness (sanctification).

So, the Christian is able to look at his sin with eyes wide open. He hates it, because it is darkness that is at war with God. But he feels free to admit it, because God is on his side and will surely win that war. This is why the apostle is writing to teach his readers about the gospel. They are like dear, little children to him (2:1), and he wants to arm them with the truths about God and Christ that will enable them not to sin. “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin”!

How can the faithful and just God do this? How can He forgive and cleanse us? Because our advocate with the Father is Jesus Christ the Righteous! The Father so loved us that He gave His Son, Who knew no sin, to be sin in our place, so that we could be the righteousness of God in Him (cf. 2Cor 5:21). The Father lovingly secured for us the greatest Advocate there can be! And He is our propitiation. He has endured in Himself the fullness of the wrath of God, so that God is entirely propitious (favorable) toward us!

How rich is this propitiation? It will never be exhausted. He didn’t just propitiate for the disciples who believed. He propitiated for an entire world of believers—an entire cosmos, including not just every place, but every time! Don’t worry, dear believer, the justifying and cleansing blood of Jesus has not lost a bit of its power since the apostle first wrote this. Face your sin. Hate your sin. Rejoice in Jesus that God forgives you and shall surely finish cleansing you. And walk against that sin in and by the light of God!

What sins have you been shrinking from admitting that you commit, or perhaps neglecting to admit that you commit? Why are they a big deal? How can we see if we are treating them as no big deal? Why mustn’t you do that? What would it look like to treat them as a big deal? How can you be sure that you will be cleansed from them?

Sample prayer: Lord, forgive us for how much darkness there is in our walking, even though we have fellowship with You and walk in the light. We are ashamed that we have often treated our sin as if it were a small thing, and are in danger of being liars about our profession of faith. And even worse, Lord, we have rationalized our sin so that we did not even call it sinful. So we have even been in danger of calling You a liar. We have been faithful, but You are faithful. We have been unrighteous, but You are just. Now by that blood of Jesus Christ, which has propitiated for all who believe in Him from the entire cosmos, forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness, we ask in His Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP51B “From My Sins, O Hide Your Face” or TPH340 “There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood”

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

First John 1 verse 5 through first, John 2 verse 2. These are God’s words. This is the message. Which we have heard from him, and Declare to you, that God is light. And in him, there is no Darkness at all.

If we say that we have fellowship with him and 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 Christ, his son. Cleanses us from Olson.

If we say that, we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. And the truth is not in. 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 that we have not sinned, We make him a liar and his word is not in us.

My little children, these things I write to you. So that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ, the righteous And he himself. Is the propitiation for our sins. And not for ours, only. But also for the whole world.

So far, the reading of gods inspired. And there it worked. Well, the first thing We hear about as he continues to explain his reason for writing, Remember, or I remind you, That last week. He declared part of his reason for writing. Is to announce to them that which they had seen and heard and even handled with their hands.

The Living God. Who had become, man? In order. That he who has life in himself, would be. Our life, not just in. A mechanical way. Well, or in a sustaining way. But even by means of fellowship with him, That believing into the true Jesus, which of course requires believing the truth.

About Jesus. Is the means by which we come to have a shared life. With God. Uh, and so Uh, his writing so that his readers may have a shared Doctrine with him. Not just so that they can have good theology. Although it's always good to have good theology. But so that together with him and all true, Christians everywhere throughout all the ages.

They may have a shared life with God himself. What's difficult as it is to believe for. Very partially Sanctified family. Humble circumstances around a table. Is precisely what we have. A shared life. With God himself. Now, if we have a shared life with God himself, Then it makes sense as he comes now into verse 5.

Through the second verse of chapter 2, That the good news is not. First of all, good news about us. It's good news about God. What's good news about the God in whom? There is only light. And no Darkness at all. And so the question is, Am I, are you?

Someone who has a shared life with God. And so, he He says God is lightning him. There's no Darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie. And do not practice the truth. There are two ways of walking in darkness and neither must be Uh, true about you.

The first is according to the outward principle. Walking according to something else in the word of God. Having something else. Than God's word as the rule of your faith and your life. So, if Your own ideas or the expectations of men, Or. Getting to enjoy, whatever it is that you want to enjoy.

Or anything else other than God himself. By way of his word, is the rule of your life. Then indeed, you are walking in darkness. Like someone in Pitch Black. Um, walking through a world. That is full of Hazards on every side. And surely you will fall off. The narrow path and plummet to your destruction.

Indeed, if you walk in darkness you are walking in destruction. Well, that's the external principle. The internal principle is Whether you have new life from the Lord inside you, Whether your desire. Is to walk with him. To do what is right to enjoy him. To bring in glory. To love him with all your heart.

To love your neighbor to love your brother. If you don't have this as an internal principle, Within you. Then you are walking in darkness. The lamp of your body, your eye. That which perceives things desires things. According to the, Anthropomorphism of the eye or metonymy of the eye. If that lamp is darkness, then how great?

Is your Darkness? Now, does this mean that we That have no sin at all. No. He immediately continues in verse 8, if we say, That we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. So if you heard about the internal principle of walking in the light and are using that as a test, do I have a shared life with the Living?

God, Well, do I walk in the light? Yes, I have his word as my rule. Yes, I want. To honor him, glorify him love him obey, but I so continuously fail, Sometimes, it's not even after family worship but even within family worship. My mind Strays my heart goes after something else.

I find that even gathered with the household before the face of God, my I am not walking as I would like. Well. Those who walk in the light in this life are not those who have no sin. Because if you say that you have no sin. So, if you hear the first part and say, oh, Surely I have the shared life.

With God, I haven't sinned since I was However,

Tried to minister to a lady who Um, I have no doubt how to demon. Because, Yeah, she was extremely frail. In her 80s. And she was about to have surgery that might kill her. Just trying to talk to her about. The gospel, and Christ is the To reveal God, forgives us, our sins and cleanses us from all unrighteousness.

And she assured me that. She knew she was a that she knew she was saved because she hadn't seen since she was 19 years old. Well, if we say that, we have no sin. We deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

So the the believer, the one who is walking in the light, who has Fellowship shared life, With God. With the Triune God in Christ, is not one who has no sin. Here's one who has a new life and a new rule. And, He has God himself in Jesus Christ.

To deal with his sin. So, it doesn't have no sin. He has a God who deals with his sin. If we confess our sins, he is faithful. So, if we confess that we are unfaithful, Then we are telling the truth about ourselves. But praise God, which is the more important truth.

The truth about yourself. For the truth about God. The truth about God is the more important truth. He is faithful. And just righteous. To forgive us, our sins. And to cleanse us. From all unrighteousness. If we say that, we have not sinned. We make him a liar and his Is not in us.

And so the one who thinks that he is sinless, The one whose conscience is. Pricked. Who never feels guilty before, God, who never enjoys that fresh forgiveness, he is faithful. And just to forgive us, our sins, Who never Longs with? For the completion of that cleansing. He's faithful and just To cleanse us from all our unrighteousness.

The one who has no consciousness of sin. Whatever. God. He thinks he has Is not actually the god of the Bible. Because the god of the Bible. Has truly said, That we continue to sin. Throughout this life. And so if we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar.

It's between you and your God. You are the one who tells the truth, and your God is the liar. You don't have the true God.

But praise God. He is not just. Of the right character. Faithful and just, But he has actually accomplished. The Forgiveness of our sins. And secured. The cleansing of our unrighteousness. My little children, these things I write to you so that you may not. And if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ, the righteous And he himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world.

So there was only one provitiation that ever had to be offered. Jesus. Propitiation. Waiting for Sophia to ask Mommy, what does propitiation mean? Unless she's

heard it enough and she knows.

Propitiation. Is related to our word propitious. Entirely favorable. Now, God is not entirely favorable to our sin. In fact, he hates it with all of his anger with all of the intensity of his Holiness. His commitment to himself is righteousness and Justice. And love everything and God hates. And so if God is to go, if God is to be entirely propitious towards us, He must be his wrath must be.

Propitiated. Satisfied. And indeed on Christ at the cross. Jesus Christ, the righteous. Himself. Was the propitiation for our sin. The one who swallowed all of the wrath of God. The one who endured. All of the wrath of God. And he has done so, so completely That nowhere in the world.

At any time in history. Does that satisfying of the wrath of God run out? And so, the one who has fellowship with God, The one who walks in the light, the one who has the life of God in himself. When he sees his sin. He hit it like God hits.

And he trusts that God will cleanse him from it. And so it's a right understanding of God and the right understanding of Christ and a right understanding of what Christ has done, In obtaining, our forgiveness. And the right understanding of what Christ has done in securing our cleansing from sin, All of these truths combined together in the mind and art of a Christian.

So that he doesn't ignore his sin. Confesses. Listen. And, That he doesn't tolerate his sin. He doesn't confess her sin and say, I sin because the whole Bible says, everyone's a sinner. Therefore, it's okay. Because everyone's a sinner. He says, I sin. Because the Bible says everyone's a sinner and that I'm a sinner.

And it is not okay. God is not okay with it. Jesus Christ had to propitiate. For the Forgiveness of it. And Jesus Christ. Is the life and the light. By which I will be. Cleansed from it. His blood will cleanse me from all unrighteousness. And that for which his blood has been spilled.

Is valuable enough is All of my effort. And so all of that reasoning together. Uh, all of that reasoning comes together by the work of the Holy Spirit and the heart and mind. Of these Believers to whom he writes. He says my little children and today we get to be the apostles.

Uh, little children. Walking, after As he follows Christ. This is my little children, these things I write to you. So that you may not, And so, if you do have that new principle, In which you're walking in the light and not in the darkness, And you don't want. To sin.

It bothers you. You hate that. You keep doing it. Well. Consider the Contents of this passage. And, Means by which God sanctifies you this renewing of your mind. To understand him to understand Christ, to understand the cross, to understand how your forgiveness was purchased to understand that his blood has been spilled to cleanse you.

And the Holy Spirit. Blessing, these things to you. You will not just be more resolved against your sin. Which you will actually progress. And putting your sin to death. And may God give us to do. So let's pray. O gracious God my heavenly father, we thank you. For this portion of your word.

And which you have held yourself before us, And you indeed. O Lord is light. And then you indeed O Lord there's no Darkness at all. And yet while we walk in your light yet, There is Darkness that remains in, But you have given your son, our Lord Jesus, not only To propitiate that we might be forgiven.

What to cleanse us to? Shed his blood. That we might be consecrated that we might be made clean. And consecrated. Even from that sin, which remains And so help us by your spirit. Bless. Even this portion of your word and our time in it together, bless it to us.

Unto the end of cleansing us from all unrighteousness. Which we ask in the name of your son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.