

## How Does One Walk in the Light?

### **Walking in the light**

If we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin. (1John 1:7)

Yes, we must walk in the light! Jesus is in the light. Let's walk in the light! Now, if this lesson ended here, we would leave knowing that we should walk in the light. But the real question should be: how do we walk in the light? Let's answer that question. Let's continue reading.

If we say, "We have no sin," we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1John 1:8-9)

John mentions confessing our sins. In fact, if you look at verses 7 and 9, they seem very similar. If we walk in the light, the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. If we confess our sins, God forgives our sins. Is walking in the light the same thing as confessing our sin?

There are a lot of verses about confession in the Bible. However, there are only two verses in the NT that specifically talk about confessing our sins. 1John 1:9 is the one. We will look at the second later. Before we do, John has more to say in his gospel about walking in the light.

This is the judgment: The light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. For everyone who practices wicked things hates the light and avoids it, so that his deeds may not be exposed. (John 3:19-20)

Walking in the light is about making our deeds known, that is, confessing our sins. But loving the darkness is about hiding our sins and refusing to confess. This is why so many love the darkness. Notice that those who did evil did not want the light, because the light exposes their evil deeds.

Now this is a hard truth: if we don't want people to know about the bad things that we do, then we will hide our deeds--which is loving the darkness. By doing this, we are refusing to walk in the light. Those who hide their sins and do not confess them run from the light. John wrote this in Revelation:

Then the kings of the earth, the nobles, the military commanders, the rich, the powerful, and every slave and free person hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. They said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the One seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb, because the day of Their wrath has come! Who is able to stand?" (Rev 6:15-17)

Why do you think people will run from Christ when He comes again? They love the darkness; they don't want their deeds seen! Sadly for them, all deeds will be made known in the last day (Ecc 12:14). No one is able to hide their deeds.

Remember that 1John 1:7 says that Jesus Himself is in the light. Christ is in the light; He does not hide anything from us! Besides, He has no sin to hide!

Just like we can see someone when they are walking in a lighted room, we must be spiritually walking in the light by displaying our entire spiritual life: our faith AND our shortcomings.

### **Confession**

We know we must not hide our sins. Prov 28:13 says, "The one who conceals his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them will find mercy." We must confess them. But who do we confess them to? I believe we should always confess our sins to the person (or divine being) we sinned against. We've all sinned against God. I believe all sin should be confessed to Him. But God should not be the only one we confess to. Here is the second verse that specifically talks about confessing our sins.

Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. (Jam 5:16)

We are to confess our sins to one another. The way James words this seems that we are to confess our sins to one another regardless if we sinned against them. It doesn't matter if they were involved in the sin or not.

In 1John 1:9, John said that if we confess our sins, we are cleansed and forgiven. James now adds if we confess our sins to each other we may be healed. It is interesting that James uses the term "healed." He does not use "forgiven" or "cleansed" as John does. Yet, I believe that John and James are talking about the same thing. All three verses flow the same way and are about the same subject. If we add all three together, we get this:

If we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, confessing our sins to one another and pray for one another, we have fellowship with one another and God is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins with the blood of Jesus, His Son, and cleanse us from all sin and from all unrighteousness so that we may be healed. (Combination of 1John 1:7, 1:9, Jam 5:16)

Therefore, we are expected to confess our sins, our flaws, our short-comings, and our biggest mistakes to one another! And this draws us closer together with each other and with God.

### **Confessing to one another**

First of all, this is a VERY hard thing to do. It is easier to privately confess to God who keeps our secrets than it is to openly confess to another human being. But hiding our sins from each other is keeping us apart! Many of us are struggling with various sins in huge ways, and if other Christians are unaware of this, those sins can slowly pull us away from God and His church. We must be a part of each other's lives: in their faith and in their shortcomings.

When we confess to another person who is flesh and blood, the experience is altogether different than confessing to God. Confessing to one another is such a relief! Because, when we find a godly person to listen to our spiritual problems, we will hear that godly person say, "I'm sorry to hear that. I love you. I struggle with things too. I want to help you with this burden and carry it with you." It is at times like this that we know: not only is God on our side but God's church is on our side too!

And as we are the church, may we respond like this when a fellow Christian comes to us confessing. Helping each other in our struggles with sin is one of the functions of the church. The benefits of confessing our sins to each other are great benefits indeed! I would really love to talk more and more about all the incredible blessings I have experienced by confessing my sins to another, but that is best left for a one-on-one conversation.

When two people confess to each other, the two people are able to help one another in indescribable ways. It is a good idea to get together with such a person once a week and continue to confess struggles with each other. It is amazing how easier it is to walk in the light when you have someone who is flesh and blood to be accountable to! To be both accountable to God and accountable to someone in the church makes sin much easier to bear problems and cure sins.

Through confessing our sins to one another, we may be healed of our struggles with sin! This is why I believe James uses the word "healed." Using the church in this way is the greatest weapon we have in getting rid of sin from our lives. God uses the church as His tool to help us in any struggle we are facing. Sin is a serious issue. Wouldn't you want God AND the church behind you?

This works in another direction as well. If you find yourself not praying as much as you should (and that's definitely all of us) or not studying the Bible on your own, ask someone to help you. Help each other, remind each other, pray for each other. And to increase the fellowship between us all, confess our sins to one another.

### **My confessions**

I could sit here and say that we must confess our sins to each other. But what is the point of that if I don't do it myself? Here are my sins that cause me to struggle the most.

I tend to lie. Lying can be an addition like nearly everything else. It is very easy for me to exaggerate anything just so what I'm saying can seem so much more important or amazing. It is so easy to want to lie to escape getting in trouble. These are temptations for me. I have lived with this sinful habit for years until marriage. Turns out, I'm not really good at lying. It took someone to get really close to me (my wife) to help me get out of the darkness of lying and to come to the light, admitting that I do this. Because she is aware of this sin of mine, she can help me conquer it.

There is prejudice. I tend to be quick to judge people. Even when based on limited information, I label people in my mind without taking the time to get to know them. It is so easy for me to assume so much about a person and convince myself that they are this or that kind of person. I confess that I tend to be prejudice. I thank God who has brought

various people and experiences to my life that can remind me not to be like this. Confessing this to others also helps keep me mindful and accountable.

I have been guilty of an unwillingness to forgive. In one situation in particular, I was deeply hurt by someone in the church. For those who have spent many years in the church, who hasn't experienced this? There is weakness all around: in me and in others. Times may come when this spiritual weakness hurts someone. Because I was hurt in this way, my speech was never really favorable toward this person. Once my wife pointed this out to me and I realized what I was doing, it was time for me to confess this sin. It was time for me to let go of pride and to forgive this person. This state of sin is very dangerous because Jesus said that God will not forgive us if we do not forgive others. I was not able to conquer this sin until I confessed to a godly mentor who helped me understand the irrationality of an unwillingness to forgive. It wasn't until I confessed that I was healed!

What man can say that they do not struggle with lust or pornography? I thank God for marriage because being able to confess all things with my wife has always been healing, though sometimes temporarily painful. Now, whenever I have thoughts about another woman or have a "crush" on some celebrity, I confess to this to my wife. It is divinely amazing how immediately after confessing, the temptations are removed! Confession heals; confession heals, confession heals!

The conclusion is this: to walk in the light is to confess our sins to one another.

If we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin. (1John 1:7)

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1John 1:8-9)

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