

~1 John~

Lesson 4- God is Light

Let's begin by reading our text today- **1 John 1:5-7**

Last week we learned what it means to have fellowship in God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. It is in this fellowship that we can have a oneness with Him and out from this close intimate fellowship, we can then have fellowship with the brethren in Christ.

And we learned that this fellowship is a special relationship with God. A relationship for those who abide in Him, for those who have committed their hearts to Him and are faithful to Him. John is writing this letter to believers, 1 John 5:13, and in verse 3 he says, "We are declaring this message to you (those who already believe) so that you MAY HAVE fellowship." This fellowship is conditional on something. It is conditional on our commitment to Him, **1 John 2:24**. Those who love Him and are committed to Him are those who keep His Word. They abide in Him and He abides in them, and this is the fellowship we have with Him. This is not just justification. This oneness proceeds out from our justification, but True fellowship with Him is directly tied to our commitment to Him.

- Our justification is a result of our receiving the Light
- Our sanctification is a result of our commitment to the Light
- And our commitment has a direct influence on our Fellowship with the Light.
 - Justification = **receiving** the Light
 - Sanctification = **commitment** to the Light
 - Commitment = **Fellowship** with the Light

John again tells us that he is declaring the message that he heard from Jesus

† *This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you...* *Καὶ αὕτη ἔστιν ἡ ἀγγελία ἣν ἀκηκόαμεν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀναγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν,*

- This is now the third time in 5 verses John has repeated himself with a variation of these words, "*We have heard and declare to you*"
- "*declare*"- anangellomen, *ἀναγγέλλομεν*, this is the third time we see this word declare, but this word is slightly different than the previous two times in verses 2 and 3, but unfortunately it is translated the same in all three instances.
 - This third "declare" is a compound of , *ἀνα*, + *ἀγγελω*. To raise up a message, to bring back or report a message. This is a message he received from the Word of Life and he is bringing this message back to us to report what he has heard.
 - John uses this word, anangellomen, *ἀναγγέλλομεν*, 7 times in his writings, all of which refer to Jesus, John 4:25; 5:15; 16:13, 14, 15, 25; 1 John 1:5,
- Jesus is the Word of God, the Logos. His very being is the message of God, **1 John 5:9-11**. John tells us that Jesus is the testimony of the Father, and Jesus is bearing witness of the eternal life that has been given to us through Him.
- And John says, "I am declaring this message to you so that you might have two things: 1) an intimate, close fellowship with God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ and 2) so that you might have your joy continually filled up.

For 4 verses, John has been leading us into this message. And this is not just any message. This is a message that He has received from Jesus Christ, the Word of Life Himself. Whom he has heard and seen and beheld and his hands handled.

† *This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you... that God is light... and in Him is no darkness at all.* *ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς φῶς ἐστι...*

- This is the message of Light. John says God is Light. Not that he has Light or gives Light, that is certainly true, but what does it mean that God **IS** Light?

- John gives us a unique perspective that is different than other NT writers. He tells us who God is. He doesn't just tell us what God does, but He portrays who God is. In John 4:24 he says, "God is Spirit"; twice he says "God is love", 1 John 4:8, 16; and here in 1 John 1:5 he says "God is Light".
- And John is constantly showing us who Jesus is. He is the Word who was with God in the beginning and was manifested, ; Jesus is the Lamb of God, ; He is the Living Water. As well as the consistent references to Jesus as the Great I AM. We went through many of these in our first lesson.
 - Through this, you can see John describing the nature of who God is, and not just what He does.

To explain the concept that God is Light, might best done by first showing you the results or the fruit of the Light.

- We first see His Light displayed when God created this universe. On the first day He said, "Let there be light" or "Light become", this wasn't light as we know it because the Sun and Moon weren't created until the 4th day. This light was the building blocks of life. Physicists say there is a "cosmic glue" some type of invisible force that they can't explain that is holding the universe together. As Christians, we know exactly what this is. Hebrews tells us that all things are being upheld by the Word of His power, Heb 1:2. This is the light that God created on day 1.
 - So we see that His Light is the source of all physical life. Everything came out from Him. "*All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made*", John 1:3
- Not only is God the source of all physical life, but He is also the source of eternal life, and this eternal life has come through the manifestation of His Son. The process of manifesting His Son was also the process of revealing His Light to the world because His Son is the manifested Light.
 - After Adam sinned, the darkness of sin and death filled the earth because of the curse of sin, Rom 5:12, and for 4,000 years God began revealing His Light back into the earth little by little.
 - It started when the Messiah was prophesied in the garden, Gen 3:15- "He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise His heel".
 - His Light continued to shine ushering in the Messiah through chosen men like Abraham when He made a covenant saying, "In your Seed, all nations of the earth shall be blessed", Genesis 22:18.
 - And through Moses there was a major manifestation of the Light.
 - God ordained the Lamb and the Passover at the Exodus foreshadowing Jesus
 - God gave His Law through Moses.
 - The Law manifested the Light because it began to expose sin..
 - Paul said, I would not have known sin except through the Law, Rom 7:7.
 - Paul also tells us in Galatians 3:24 that the Law was our tutor to bring us to Christ.
 - It was through the giving of the Law that brought to Light The Law of Redemption and the Kinsman Redeemer- Lev 25, Ruth.
 - The Law began the sacrificial system foreshadowing Jesus' sacrifice.
 - The Prophets as well prophesied of the Light by the foretelling of the Messiah to come:
 - His eternal kingdom - 2 Samuel 7:12-13;
 - the virgin birth- Isaiah 7:14;
 - born in Bethlehem- Micah 5:2;
 - the Messiah's ministry- Isaiah 61:1-2;
 - Messiah's death and resurrection- Isaiah 53; Ps 22; 16:9-11; 68:18
 - These are just a few examples of the Light shining into the darkness until finally when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, and the Word was made flesh and the True Light was manifested in His Son Jesus Christ and He dwelt among us. And His Light shined out in Eternal Life and freed us from the bondage of sin and death.

Listen to the Scripture describing God's Light.

Psalm 27:1- *The LORD is my light and my salvation...* (This equates God's Light to Salvation)

Psalm 43:3 LXX *Send forth your Light and your Truth. They guided me and led me into your holy mountain and into your tent.* (God's Light is Truth and it guides us into His glory)

Psalm 119:105- *Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.*

Psalm 119:130- *The entrance of Your words gives light...*

Psalm 37:6- *He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday.* (Light is Righteousness)

Psalm 36:9 LXX- *For from you is a fountain of life; in your light we will see light.* (God's Light is equated to Life)

John 1:4 *In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.* (God's Light gives Life)

1 John 1:2- *the life (the Light) was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—* (God's Light gives Eternal Life)

Now, listen to the Scripture describing what happens to those who receive this Light.

John 1:12- *But as many as received Him (the Light), to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:*

1 Peter 2:9- *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*

Colossians 1:12–14-¹² *giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.* ¹³ *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,* ¹⁴ *in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.*

Ephesians 5:8–9-⁸ *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light* ⁹ *(for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),*

Notice the common theme to what the Light does to those who receive it. It rescues us from the bondage of darkness. This is the comparison John is showing in his epistle between the Light and darkness.

Based on what we just learned about the Light and now going back to 1 John 1:5 that says, "God **IS** Light and in Him is no darkness at all", this means God is the source of Life, both physical and eternal, and He is Truth, He is Righteousness, and He is Holiness.

Or another way to say it, is God's Light is everything that Jesus is, because Jesus is the "*the express image of the Father*", Heb 1:3. "*If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father*", John 14:9 Jesus is the manifestation of God's Light. He is the True Light that came to give Life, Truth, Righteousness and Holiness to all who believe in Him.

2 Corinthians 4:3–6-³ *But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,* ⁴ *whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.* ⁵ *For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake.* ⁶ *For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* (Jesus is the manifested Light of God that has been shone in our hearts by the Word of God)

God is Light and Jesus is the representation of that Light.

† *This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you... that God is light... and in Him is no darkness at all.* *καὶ σκοτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδεμία.* (And in Him there is no darkness, not one)

- God is perfect Light and dwells in unapproachable Light, 1 Tim 6:16, and in Him is no darkness at all... or as John says in 1 John 3:5... in Him is no sin.
 - Darkness is in direct opposition to Light. Darkness is synonymous with evil and the bondage of sin

and death, **John 3:19-20**.

- So John begins to make this contrast between the Light and darkness; specifically between those who are committed to the Light, and those committed to the darkness. Those who are in fellowship with the Light and those in fellowship with the darkness.
 - John makes this uncompromising statement leading from verse 5 into verse 6. He says, “Since God is Light and in Him is no darkness at all, if you say you have fellowship with Him (who is the Light), but you walk in the darkness, then you are a liar.” Period.
 - There is no ambiguity, no compromise in his words, no exceptions
 - This is what Jesus said in Matthew 7:18- *A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.*
 - You can’t have fellowship with the Light if you are walking in the darkness.
- This is why John is so matter of fact. This is the message he heard from Jesus. He says, “These aren’t my words, I’m just reporting to you what I have seen and heard.”
- So is John telling us that Christians don’t sin? No, absolutely not. In fact he says in verse 10 that if you say you have not sinned, you make God a liar.
 - So the issue isn’t whether we will sin or not, because we will sin, the issue is what have you committed your heart to? Are you a slave of sin or a slave of righteousness?
 - If you are in fellowship with God, you are therefore committed to the Light and you can’t walk (or be in fellowship) with darkness.
- Since this is the message of Jesus Christ, lets go to the gospels and see what Jesus had to say about this. **Jn 8:12, 31-36; 12:25-26; 35-36; Matt 6:19-24, 33;**
- The heart of Jesus’ message is to surrender everything to Him. Commit your life to Him. Yes you might sin and indeed you will sin, but He says, “I’ve taken care of that, My blood has cleansed you from all unrighteousness. Just commit to Me, don’t be a slave to sin, but follow Me, serve Me, abide in Me and let My Words abide in you.”

Next week we will dive deeper into verses 6-7, looking at this contrast between the light and darkness.