God is Light

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Date: 01 January 2000

Preacher: Rev D.G.Macdonald

[0:00] We're going to turn back now to the passage of scripture that we read together in 1 John 1. I want us to read again at verse 5.

1 John 1 and at verse 5. This then is the message which we have heard of him and declare unto you that God is light and in him is no darkness at all.
This then is the message which we have heard of him and declare unto you. John has something important to say.
He is a message that he feels pressed to give. It's a message that is burdening his heart. That he feels he must share.
And it is no ordinary message. It's an extraordinary message that he wants people to know about. But there are certain things he wants to make clear about this message that he feels pressed to give.
[1:24] And the first thing he wants to make clear is that this message is from God. He says this is the message which we have heard of him and declare unto you.

He is saying this is not a message that I have received from anyone. It isn't a message I received from my fellow apostles.
It wasn't a message I received from the church. It is a message that I received from God. And now I declare it unto you. What John is seeking to do here is to highlight the importance of this message. It isn't the message of man. It is the message of the Almighty. It is a message that finds its origin in the Creator and in the Judge of all the earth.
And therefore it is a message that is not subject to change or modification. It can't be cast aside as being outdated. It remains as timeless as the one from whom it came.
[2:34] This is the message he says that we received from God. But there is something else he wants to stress. And it is that this is a message that has been sent to us.

We declare this message unto you. And what John here is seeking to do is to stress the relevance of this message. It's not a message that's been given for information purposes only.
It is something that directly relates to our own lives. It is something that has huge significance for each and every one of us.
Here is a message that God wants us to know and to respond to. So that's what he's saying right at the beginning. There exists a message. It originates in God and it is intended for us.
What I want us to do this evening is to look at this message of which John speaks. And we're going to see three things. We're going to see that it is a message concerning first of all God's character.
[3:49] And then secondly that it's a message concerning our claims. And then thirdly that it's a message concerning Christ's cleansing.

First of all then it is a message concerning God's character. This is the message which we have heard of him and declare unto you.
That God is light and in him is no darkness at all. God is light and in him is no darkness at all.
John often speaks of God in very concise terms. God is spirit. God is love. But here he says God is light.
And just as spirit and love describe something of the essential character of God. So does the term light. Yes it speaks of God as the God of revelation.
[4:51] The God who brings knowledge and truth into an environment of ignorance and of darkness and deceit. But here when it speaks of God being light. I think it speaks especially of the flawless perfection of our God.

It is speaking of his absolute and untainted holiness. It is speaking of his complete moral ethical purity. It is speaking of our God as being void of anything that even suggests sinfulness or

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imperfection.
He is light. And in him there dwells no darkness at all. This is the message that was declared from the very beginning of time.
Throughout the whole of scripture we see the incompatibility of this God who is light with anything that even smacks of darkness.
You go to the garden of Eden. And you see the reaction of God against the sin of Adam and Eve. You look at the time of Noah and the flood.
[6:04] And you see the incompatibility of our holy God with the sins of mankind. You look at the story of Moses. And you see Moses approaching the burning bush.

And he is told Moses take the very shoes from off your feet. Because the ground on which you stand is holy. I believe this morning you had a sermon on Achan. And when you look at the story of Achan again what you see is how intolerant God is.
Of anything that speaks of darkness. Of sin. You go into the temple. And everything in the temple speaks of a God who is light. And in whom there is no darkness at all.
You think of the holy place. The holy of holies. Where even the high priest could only enter once a year. And only after that atonement for sin had been made. All these things are speaking to us of a piercingly pure God.
But when you look at the cross. When you look at the cross of Calvary. There you see the reaction of God. To the darkness of sin. As sin was carried by the sin bearer.
[7:14] All these things throughout the whole of scripture. Are telling us that God is light. And in him dwells no darkness whatsoever. He dwells in a light inapproachable.

His eyes are too pure even to look upon iniquity. This is the message. That John is desperate to share with us. That God is light.
That he is a holy. A pure. A perfect. A flawless God. But he tells us more. About the character of this God.
He tells us that not only is this God. Pure and perfect. But he is also faithful. If you look at verse 9. He says this of God.
He says he is faithful. And just. To forgive us our sins. He speaks of God's character. As being. A faithful character.
[8:15] He is faithful to himself. But he is faithful to others. He is the great Jehovah. The covenant keeping God. And again if we look through the whole story of scripture.

This is how God is revealed. It is the story of God's faithfulness to man. Even when faced with man's unfaithfulness to him. You look at the children of Israel.
Wandering through the desert. Time and time again. Turning their backs on God. And yet. God never turning his back on them. He is revealed as the God who keeps his every promise.
Who is true to his every word. He is revealed as the God who is faithful to his people. Faithful to his promises. He is a God who is pure. But he is also a God who is faithful.
But not only faithful. We are told here that he is also just. He is faithful and just. God never compromises himself.
[9:20] His every action in dealing with man. Is in complete harmony. With his absolute holiness. And therefore he never winks at sin.

He never makes excuses. For the sinner. He will not let his holy demands. His divine justice. Be left unsatisfied. He is the judge of all the earth.
And he will always do what is right. This is why when we look in scripture. And we read about the wrath of God. We see that it does not contradict. The love that he has for the sinner.
Because he is a just God. And he must deal justly with sin. And with sinners. He is pure. He is faithful. He is just.
But he is also forgiving. He is faithful and just. To forgive us our sins. And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
[10:18] While remaining just. While remaining just. And while remaining true to himself. He is also merciful. And forgiving.

Because God has himself found a way. Whereby he can be. As scripture puts it. Both just. And the justifier.
Of many. He has found a way. Whereby he can be true. To his own holy character. And at the same time. Provide forgiveness.

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For sinners. Like you. And me. Is it any wonder. When the prophet Micah is. Penning. The words of scripture. He says. Who is a God like unto you.
Who pardons sin. And forgives transgressions. And who delights. In showing mercy. We must grasp. All these aspects.
[11:15] Of God's character. We must grasp. The fullness. Of this message. About our God. That is being delivered to us. He is a God. Of absolute perfection.

Compared to us. He is completely other. Yet. Still he is a God. Who enters. Into covenant with us. Who keeps his promises to us.
He is a God of justice. A God who never ignores. The presence of sin. Whose eyes. Continually. Are too pure. To look on sin. Whose holiness. Demands punishment for sin.
And yet. He is the God. Who delights in mercy. And in providing forgiveness. For sinners. Like us. That is what we are told.
About the character. Of our God. But I want us to move on. And secondly. To notice. Our claims. Here John.
[12:09] List for us. Three claims. That we tend to make. They might not be claims. That you and I would. Necessarily make. In an audible way.

We might not say these things. With our mouths. But often. These claims. Are suggested. By our own attitudes. Or behaviour. So I want to look at these.
Three claims. And then to. Draw some lessons from them. First of all. Claim one. I have fellowship with God. And yet.
Walk. In darkness. If we say. That we have fellowship with him. And walk in darkness. We lie. And do not.
The truth. Effectively. What this claim is. Is that. We are saying. I walk with God. And yet. At the same time. I'm able to entertain.
[13:06] A life. Of sin. John says. This claim. No matter. Who makes it. Is a lie. Because.

Such a thing. Is just. Not. Possible. For walking. In darkness. And being. In fellowship. With the God. Who is light.
Is an. Absolute. Contradiction. It is. Not. Possible. To walk. With God. God. And entertain. A life. Of sin. It is not. Possible. To be in fellowship. With God. And at the same time. Walk. In darkness. The only way.
To know fellowship. With God. And the only way. To know fellowship. With God's people. Is to walk. In. The light. Now here.
[14:00] John is very clever. With the language. That he is using. Yes he says. God is light. And in him. There is no darkness. At all. But if you think of elsewhere. In John's writings.

Who. What. Is the light. Jesus. Is the light. If you were to look back. Even to. The gospel of John. And John's gospel.
Chapter one. He speaks of Jesus. In these terms. There was a man sent from God. Whose name was John. The same came for a witness. To bear witness of the light.
That all men through him. Might believe. He. That is John. Was not that light. But was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light. Which lighteth every man.
That cometh into the world. So he speaks of Jesus. As being the light. The light. Of the world. So here what he is saying.
[14:58] Is that it is not possible. To have fellowship with God. Out with the person. Of Jesus Christ. That the light.

Of the knowledge. Of the glory of God. Is found. In the face. Of Christ. Jesus. We cannot say. I have fellowship with God.
And walk in darkness. To have fellowship with God. We must walk in the light. And to walk in the light. We must walk. Hand in hand. With the Lord.
Jesus Christ. That's the first claim. The second claim. Is this. We. Have no sin. Verse 8. If we say. That we have no sin. We deceive ourselves. And the truth. Is not in us. This claim. Says John. Is a deceit. We are deceiving ourselves.
[15:53] And the truth. Is not in us. Who is it we deceive. If we say. That we have no sin. Do we deceive God. Do we deceive. The one.

Who sees all things. Knows all things. Do we deceive others. If we say. We have no sin. Do we deceive. Our husbands. Our wives. Our parents.

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Our children. Our workmates. The people that. Live close to us. And know us best. Are they deceived. If we say. We have no sin. Neither God. Nor people around us.
Are deceived. By any claim. Of sinlessness. The only person. That we deceive. If we say. That we have no sin. Is ourselves. If we say.
We have no sin. We deceive. Ourselves. And the truth. Is not in us. It is a remarkable. Thing. When you look at. Someone who is.
[16:47] Addicted to gambling. Or someone who is. A drug addict. Or someone who is. An alcoholic. All their problems. Are staring them. In the face.

They are right there. Before them. And yet. Somehow. In some way. They manage to. Convince themselves. That there is no. Problem. They manage to.
Live a life of denial. A life of deceit. Maybe there was a time. When you and I. Managed. To live such a life. Of denial. And deceit. With respect to these things.
Everyone else around us. Could see the problem. But we ourselves. Perhaps. Managed. To blind ourselves. From the problem. That was in our lives.
It is possible for us. To do that. With respect. To sin. Even perhaps. If we recognize. The existence. Of sin. In our hearts. Perhaps we do not.
[17:43] Admit to. The exceeding. Sinfulness. Of that sin. We refuse. To acknowledge. What a massive. Problem. It truly is.

We manage. To blind our eyes. To the horror of it. The grotesqueness. Of it. Before the eyes. Of a God. Who is light. And in whom dwells. No darkness.
At all. And that means. That we are able. Perhaps. To say yes. I am a sinner. But we do not. Actually feel. The horror. Of that problem. If that is the case.
John is saying. Here. It is a sign. That the truth. Is not in us. We are deceiving. Ourselves. And the truth. Is not in us. Again.
John has been clever. With his language. What does he understand. By the truth. Who. What. Is the truth. Well what did John write. In his gospel.
[18:42] He wrote about the words. Of Jesus. When he said. I am the way. The truth. And the life. And no one comes. To the father. Except through me.

Jesus. Is the truth. So if we say. That we have no sin. We are deceiving ourselves. And Jesus. Is not in us. You see. What goes in hand.
In hand. Together. Is a recognition. Of sin. And the presence. Of Jesus. In our lives. We will come back. To that shortly. I want us to look.
At the third claim. There is one other claim. That we are apt. To make. That John mentions here. He says. If we say. That we have not sinned.
We make him a liar. And his word. Is not in us. Here is the claim. That we have. Never sinned. It's a claim. Tantamount. To perfection. And that is something.
[19:36] That only belongs. To God. And to Christ Jesus. So in some ways. It's a claim. Of almost being equal. To. The character. Of God. And of our Lord.

Jesus Christ. And if we. Make such a claim. Then what we are doing. Is that we are denying. Everything that God. Has said. About us.
And therefore. That makes him out. To be a liar. If we say. That we have not sinned. We make him a liar. And his word.
Is not in us. Now no doubt. By now you can see. Where I'm going with this. Who. What. Is the word. Again.
If you think back. To John. Chapter 1. He celebrates there. The word. That was made flesh. The word. That came into this world. The logos.
[20:29] He is speaking. Of the Lord. Jesus Christ. Again. And he is saying. If we make. Some claim. Of perfection. If we say. We have not sinned. Then we are making.

God out. To be a liar. And it is proof. That Jesus. Is not. In us. So this message. That. Is dealing. With our claims. I believe.
Is stressing. Two things. In particular. It is stressing. Our absolute need. Of Jesus. Without the word. Without the truth.
Without the light. That is Jesus Christ. There can be. No relationship. And no fellowship. With God. The thing. That you and I need.

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More than anything else. Is to know Jesus. Who is the truth. Who is the light. Who is the word. Of God. But there is something else.
[21:22] That. We have to learn. From these claims. And it is this. That a Christian. Is someone. Who is conscious. Of the presence.

And the problem. Of sin. The Christian. Is someone. Who is conscious. Of the presence. And the problem. Of sin. Perhaps.
Even tonight. The thing. That is disturbing. Your heart. The most. The thing. That is. Perhaps. Tearing you apart. Is the consciousness.
Of sin. Within you. Perhaps. Even. Over this weekend. The one thing. That maybe. Is holding you back. From even going.
And professing. Faith. At the table. Of the Lord. Is the sense. Of sin. That you have. In your heart. The Christian. Who is light. And in whom.
[22:17] There is no darkness. At all. Then we become. Very sensitive. To the ugliness. And the horror. Of sin. When we know. Jesus Christ. Who is the truth.

Who is the light. Who is the word. Then we know. Only too well. That we are sinners. That we have sinned. That we are sinning.
That we are sinful. And that is something. That burdens. Our hearts. So tonight. If you are aware. If you are conscious.
Of the horror. Of sin. In your life. Then praise God. For it. Because that. In itself. Is a sign. That you have. The very presence.
Of the spirit. At work. In your life. It is a sign. That you know. Something. Of the greatness. And the glory. And the purity. And the perfection. Of the Lord. Jesus Christ.
[23:12] And therefore. That consciousness. Of sin. Rather than holding you back. Should encourage you. To go forward. And to profess. The name. Of Jesus.

We have seen then. This message. This message. About God's character. This message. About our claims. But then the last thing. I want us to notice here.
Is this message. About Christ's. Cleansing. So far. The message. Has brought before us. Something about. The purity of God. Something about.
The problem of sin. But now. This message. Brings before us. Something about. The cleansing. From sin. What does it have to say. To us. About the cleansing. From sin.
Well again. I would suggest. Three things. It is telling us. That for the cleansing. Of sin. That the cleansing. Was costly. Complete. And conditional.
[24:08] It was costly. Complete. And conditional. The cleansing. That we receive. Is costly.

Cleansing. Cleansing. Is possible. Forgiveness. Is to be found. But that cleansing. That forgiveness. Comes. At a price.
Look at verse seven. 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. What price. Was paid. For the forgiveness. Of your sins. And mine. Well without. The shedding of blood. There is. No remission. For sin. And when you look back. At the Levitical system.
[25:03] You see. The thousands. Of gallons. Of blood. Of blood. That was shed. You see. The blood. Of animals. Being poured. Time and time again.

In the temple. Of the Lord. But here. We are being told. That the blood. That was shed. To make remission. For our sins. Was not the blood. Of a calf.
Or a goat. Or a lamb. But it was the blood. Of a man. It was the blood. Of Jesus. Christ. That was the price.
That was paid. For the forgiveness. Of your sins. And mine. It was the blood. Of Jesus. Christ. This blood. We can.
Call it. Beautiful blood. Because it was the blood. Of the sinless one. That was poured out. To pay. The penalty. For sin. When you think of.
[26:00] Peter. When you remember. He was speaking. About. Christ. As being the lamb. That was slain. For the forgiveness. Of our sins. This is what.

He has to say. About the blood. Of Jesus. You know. That you were not redeemed. With corruptible things. As silver and gold. From your vain conversation. Received.

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By tradition. From your fathers. But with the precious. Blood. Of Christ. As of a lamb. Without blemish. And without spot. It was the blood.
Of the sinless one. That was shed. For the sake. Of our sins. Blood. Beautiful blood. Beloved. Blood. The blood. Of Jesus Christ. His son. Cleanses us. From all sins. From all sins. It was the blood. Of the son.
[26:56] Of God. It was the. Blood of the one. Of whom he said. This. Is my one. And only son. In him. I am well pleased.

God spared not. His own son. But delivered him up. For us all. So that we would know. The forgiveness. The forgiveness. Of our sins. Do we begin.
To even grasp. How costly. Our forgiveness. Is. It cost. Jesus. His blood. It cost. The blood. Of the sinless one.
It cost. The blood. Of the beloved one. To save. Your soul. And mine. We see then. That our forgiveness. Was costly.
But we also see here. That forgiveness. Is complete. We're told that. This blood. The blood. That was shed. Cleanses us.
[27:54] From all. Sin. We're told that. It cleanses us. From all. Unrighteousness. So we're being told. That the blood of Jesus.

Cleanses us. From all kinds of sin. And from every one. Of our sins. John is saying. This is the message. We declare to you. That the forgiveness.
That you have. Been given. Is thorough. It is complete. It is perfect. Can you imagine. What it would be like. This night. If Jesus.
Had atoned. For every. Single sin. That we had ever. Committed. In our hearts. In our minds. In our mouth. By our actions. Every single one of them. Apart.
For one. One. For one. Perhaps. There was one thing. One sin. In our lives. That. He did not. Atone for. How would that.
[28:51] Leave us. Before God. In God. There is no darkness. At all. His eyes. Are too pure. Even to look. Upon one sin. And so.

It would leave us. Still condemned. Forever. It would be. The case. That we would be as lost. With that one sin. Supposing. We had one sin.
We would be as lost. As if we had. A hundred. A thousand. A million sins. We would still be condemned. Before an all. Holy God. But this is the message. That John declares to us.
That the blood of Jesus. Cleanses us. Not from. Most of our sins. Not from nearly all of our sins. But from all our sins. It washes away.
All our unrighteousness. It takes us. Who are filthy in sin. And it makes us clean. In the eyes of God. It is complete.
[29:47] Cleansing. But there is one other thing. He says about this forgiveness. It is conditional. It is conditional. Upon confession.

If we confess. Our sins. He is faithful and just. To forgive us our sins. And to cleanse us. From all unrighteousness.
He is saying. If you want to know. This cleansing. If you want to know. This complete forgiveness. That comes through Jesus Christ. If you want to know. What it is.
To be justified. In the presence of an all holy God. Then what you must do is this. You must confess. Your sins. And you must confess. Your sins.
Directly to God. You must go to him. And you must say to him. Father. I have sinned. Before heaven. And before you.
[30:43] It must be personal. It must be a confession. Of your own sin. Of the sinfulness. Of your own heart. That's what you must go. And confess.

Before the almighty. But as you do it. You must believe. You must believe. You must believe. In the promises of God. You must believe. In the power of God. You must believe. In the love of God. You must believe. And trust. In this word. That he has given to us. When he says. If you confess. I will be faithful. I will be faithful. And just. To forgive. And to cleanse.
From all unrighteousness. Do you remember. What it was. That God said to us. Through the prophet. Isaiah.
Way back. In the Old Testament scriptures. Where there. If you remember. Isaiah. Is. Pleading with the people. And he's telling them.

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[31:37] And he's saying. Come now. Let us reason together. Saith the Lord. Though your sins. Be as scarlet. They shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson.

They shall be as wool. That is the promise of God. That if we confess our sins. He is faithful. And just. To forgive us our sins.
And to cleanse us. From all unrighteousness. We are seeking. To prepare ourselves. To sit around. The Lord's table. On the Lord's day.
God willing. And as we. Look at the Lord's table. We can see it. As a place of remembrance. Where we remember. The Lord's death. Till he come.
We can see it. As a place of profession. Where we profess. The name of Jesus. As our Lord and Savior. We can see it. As a place of thanksgiving.
[32:34] Where we give thanks. To the God. Who loved us. And gave his son for us. We can see it. As a place of fellowship. Fellowship with Christ. And with our brothers.

And sisters in Christ. We can see it. As a place of hope. A place where we are looking forward. To the return of our Christ. We do this.
In remembrance of him. Until he come. But when we look at the table. We must also see it. As a place of confession. Because the table.
Is the sinner's table. And when we go to the table. We go to profess. Our sinfulness. Our incompatibility.
With God. We go to. Profess that. We are sinners. And that we are absolutely. Dependent. And reliant upon. Jesus Christ.
[33:29] And the blood that he shed. For the sake. Of our souls. We go professing. Not that we are good enough. To be there. But that we see ourselves.

Bad enough. To need. Jesus Christ. And we go to celebrate. The broken body. The shed blood. The body that was broken.
The blood that was shed. For sinners. Like ourselves. This coming Lord's day. Will you. Will I. God willing. Be at the sinner's table.
Remembering. The sinner's. Saviour. Let us pray. Lord God. And our Father. We pray. That you would help us.
To understand. That you are indeed. A holy God. So that we would be humbled. In our hearts. And that we would. Stand in awe.
[34:25] Of your. Character. And of your purity. We ask. Oh God. That you would also. Give to us. Painful though it be. A glimpse.

Of our own hearts. So that we would see. The exceeding sinfulness. Of the sin. That lies within us. But Lord God. Give to us too. A glimpse.
Of Calvary. For there we would see. The sinner's. Saviour. Christ Jesus. Our Lord. And we ask. Oh God. That. All our hope.
And all our faith. Would be placed. In that Christ. Who loved us. And gave himself. For us. Lord God. We thank you. That there is.
A fountain. Filled with blood. We thank you. That there is. This fountain. For. Uncleanness. To cleanse us. From all our sins. Lord God.
[35:19] We ask. That you would assure us. Of that forgiveness. This night. So that we could rejoice. Together. In Christ. Our Saviour. Hear our prayers. For we ask these things.

In his name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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