

God Is Without Any Darkness Within Him

by Rolfe Barnard

The sermon emphasizes the necessity of recognizing God's holiness and the importance of living in accordance with that truth to maintain fellowship with Him.

Duration: 55:21

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 14:6, 1 John 1:6-10

Topics: "Sin And Repentance", "Walking In Light"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares stories of individuals who have experienced great loss and hardship due to their indulgence in sin. He emphasizes the importance of recognizing the cost of sin, both for ourselves and for others. The preacher recounts a letter from a woman who initially opposed him during a meeting but later realized the sin in her life and repented. He urges the congregation to seek the fellowship of God and to walk in the light, acknowledging that the journey may become more challenging but ultimately leads to spiritual growth. The sermon is based on the first epistle of John, discussing the descriptions and concessions made by different types of people in relation to their sin.

Transcript

I want now you to turn to the first epistle of John, and I want you to follow me, and I'll be helpful, and if I can, and I want us to let the word of God teach us something this morning. We're going to take up the business of the fact that God is utterly without any darkness within him, and we're going to study here the Spirit's description of three different kinds of people, and then the Spirit's remedy. I want us to read verses 6 and 8 and 10, and then go back and read verses 7 and 9 a little later.

Here is God's description of three kinds of people, and the professions they make and the confessions they make about the way they're living. The first one is described in verse 6 of chapter 1, the first epistle of John. If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth.

Verse 8 is another man. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. Verse 10 is another fellow.

If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us. Now, the Bible is not written, I repeat, to confuse us, but it is written to humble us. And you can't be lazy spiritually and get to heaven.

I know that's true. A fellow told me down in South Carolina last year, he got offended at me. He said, Preacher, I can't read.

And you say if I don't get earnest about this seeking the truth, then I'm going to miss out. He said, I can't read. I said, you better get somebody that can to read to you.

You better get somebody that can to read to you. Because this book wasn't written to put up on the parlor table and be admired. This book has got to be studied.

And you need all the help you can get. I come along and say one thing, somebody else says something else, and you're going to have to answer to God for what you could know about his will for you and what you do know. You need to study this book.

Some years ago, I was up in the state of Maryland and stayed there two weeks in a meeting. And about twelve years later, I got a heartbroken, pitiful letter from a woman. We had a hard meeting, and about twelve years later, I got this letter from this woman.

And she said, I want to tell you something of what's happened since the meeting. She said, in the meeting, the Lord used you to take the word and show me a sin in my life. And said, I booked you, I opposed you, I talked against you, all during the meeting.

And she said, here's the price I've paid. My husband was accidentally killed, my oldest son died on the operating table, I've lost my home. And she said, take all that to bring me to quit holding on to that sin and cussing the priest.

And she said, when I meet the Lord at the judgment, I know I'm going to have to meet him. And I'm the one who breathed the Spirit, and resisted the Spirit, and resisted the truth, and held on to sin. I was this time in a meeting, and we'd come face to face with this plea that I want to lay on every heart of every member of this Church.

I wonder if we realize how much it costs us and others to indulge in any known sin. Any known sin. I want us to look at that for a little while this morning.

Here are three men. The first one is sound in doctrine, but he isn't right in his living. I was over at one of your homes this week, and they showed me your, I don't know, what you sort of believe, written up by one of your leaders.

And that's fine. That's fine. Now, a fellow can be right in what he says he believes, but if he doesn't translate that into right living and right conduct, let's see what he does.

Let's look at verse 6. If we say that we have fellowship with him, that's God. But at the same time, we say we have fellowship with him, that we are on good terms with him, that his smile is upon us, that he listens to us when we pray, that he guides us daily, that we're conscious of his presence. At the same time we say that, we walk in darkness.

What do we do? We lie. Here's a fellow that's trying to deceive the other fellow. He's seeking to deceive his neighbor, his fellow church member.

But he knows that God is holy. He wouldn't doubt verse 5. This, then, is the message which we've heard of him, and declare unto you that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. There's no bitter darkness,

there's no bitter wrong, there's no bitter, can't find a thing wrong with God.

He dwells in utter light without even a shadow of darkness. He's perfectly holy. He's perfectly upright.

Now, this fellow says, I've got fellowship with him. But at the same time, he says, I'm walking with him, I have fellowship with this one in whom there is no darkness at all. At the same time, he's walking.

He ain't believing. That ain't his doctrine, but it's his practice faith. And he's walking in darkness.

In other words, he is engaging in that which he knows is not right, which he knows is not holy. Now, that fellow, the word says, is a liar. When he says that he has any fellowship whatsoever with God, while at the same time, he's walking in any kind of darkness, and it has to be no darkness, you see, for him to be responsible.

What does he do? He lies, and he does nothing else. Let's see what the next phrase is. And he does not the truth.

First, he's trying to deceive others, and he lies when he says he has fellowship with a holy God. While he's walking, practicing something that isn't, won't stand up under light, you see. And when he does that, he lies, and he does not do the truth.

He doesn't put it into practice. In other words, he's sound in doctrine, but he's not sound in his living. He's trying to diverse what he says he believes from what he practices, you see.

And God says he's a liar. He's trying to deceive other people, and he's not doing the truth. He's not doing the truth.

Now, he's in bad shape. He knows right, but he don't do it. See? He's in bad shape.

He knows right, he knows wrong, but he don't practice it. And God says he doesn't know the truth. He doesn't, doesn't say he doesn't know it, says he doesn't do it.

He knows it, but he don't do it. He's unsafe. You can't divorce right belief from right practice.

A woman said to me not long ago in the choir room, said, I know I ought to do so-and-so, but I don't do it. I said, you and I may. She said, I don't want to do so-and-so, but I do.

I said, you're telling me a story people don't do. Just keep on doing what they don't want to do. It's one thing to be sound in doctrine.

It's another thing to be sound not only in what you believe, but in how you Now watch it now. This fellow is trying to deceive somebody else. And don't make the scripture say what it don't say.

It says he does not do the truth. It doesn't put it into practice. Now let's look at verse 8. We've got a different class of liar.

We've got three liars here, now. I don't call them liars. God says they're liars.

Here in verse 8, we've got a different class of liar. Here's a fellow, says that if we say that we have no sin, we're not trying to deceive anybody else. But we're deceiving ourselves.

You see, they're the fellows. He's trying to deceive the other fellows. He's saying one thing and doing another.

See? And he's deceiving the other fellow. And he's not putting into practice what he knows to be right. But here's this second liar.

And he's not trying to deceive anybody else. But he is deceiving himself. He says that he has no sin.

He says that he has got to the place that he doesn't have to battle with his old sinful nature. Now he's a devout person. Sometimes you hear him saying that he never sinned.

And he grabs the teaching that the old nature's done away with, and he says, I'm a boy, I can't sin. Now who's he deceiving? He's not trying to deceive you. He's deceiving himself.

And he's headed for Now let's see what the fellow that does that is guilty of. First he's guilty of deceiving himself. And then he's guilty of another thing.

Now notice the difference between verse 8 and 6. The fellow that claims to have fellowship with God at the same time walks in darkness, he does not the truth. He doesn't put what he believes and what he knows into practice. But this fellow in the 8th verse, it doesn't say he does not do the truth.

He says the truth is not in him. He doesn't know the truth. You see? And in the First Epistle of John, the word truth means gospel truth.

The first fellow knows to do right, but don't do it. He's not putting into practice what he'll be held accountable for. Because if you don't live up to what you know, you're in a bad shape, if you do not walk in the light that you have.

Why, you definitely walk in darkness, don't you? But here's a fellow that says, Glory! I don't have any sin. That's all done away with. I'm past that.

Now he's probably in his shape, in that first fellow. Brother, he's not only got the hood, but he's undone by it. He, he, why, you couldn't drag him to do anything that he knows to be wrong.

Brother, he'd be just like an old Puritan. They'd call him a fool. They'd say, He doesn't go and craze no religion.

Why, he just leans over backward. He'd rather lean over backward running from evil than to be broad-minded and wallow in a mud hole. But he deceives himself in that he does right, but he don't know right.

He's wrong in his doctrine, but he's not wrong in his conduct. The first fellow's solid, boy. He's an old Baptist, brother.

He'd stand on the street corner and spit tobacco and use an argyr doctrine until the cows come home. He's right. We're right.

We're right. We're better. This other fellow, he's wrong in his doctrine.

He doesn't understand that when we're redeemed, we're only partially redeemed to start with. This old body's still like it was. He doesn't understand that we yet wait for the time when our bodies shall be

redeemed and we shall be freed from the very presence of sin.

He's wrong in his doctrine. He doesn't understand the truth about sin and about the gospel. Brother, he'd rather be wrong in what I believe than right in what I practice, than to believe the truth and live like the devil.

Now, he's not trying to deceive anybody else, but he is deceiving himself. Brother, he's living, he's trying his dead level best to live right. But he deceives himself when he thinks that there will ever come a time in this life when he won't trip if he doesn't watch.

That there will ever come a time when sin is not crouching at the door, and it'll devour you. If you open the door, just crack. You let one little sin come into your life, and pretty soon the door will come open.

It's little foxes that devour the biggest. You see? You give consent in your life to one thing that's at least questionable. And you open the door, cracking pretty soon, and that devil's furthest one will come in.

That's right. You've got two men now. One is sound in his doctrine.

He dead sure isn't in his practice. The other is sound in his life. Brother, he's striving to live for the Lord.

But he's headed for a fall, because he didn't realize the danger he's in. Now, let's read verse 10. Here's the third liar.

They're all different. Here's a fellow, and if we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar. Now, the first fellow deceiving other folks, the fellow in verse 8 deceiving himself, and the fellow in verse 10 trying to deceive God.

Each eye pulling a little over God's eye. First fellow's trying to deceive you. He wants you to believe that he's right.

You watch his life, and you see, but you, he says, I'm all right. He's trying to pull a little over your eyes. Second fellow's trying to deceive himself, and he's succeeding.

But the third fellow's trying to make a liar out of God. We'll see how he does it. This is a fellow that says, I never have sinned.

I'm all right. I don't need to be saved. I've never been ruined by sin.

I don't need God to save me. I don't need the blood of Christ to redeem me. I don't need the Spirit of God to regenerate me.

I never have sinned. Never have. As far as I know, I never did anything in my life that was wrong.

Lots of people talk like that. You'll say now, I've never done anything I'm ashamed of. I have lots of people look at me like I'm crazy.

I repeat text, oh, they're saying, they just frankly want to say that's not true. I've never done anything wrong. I never have.

I'm all right. Now who is it they're trying to deceive? They're making a liar out of God, and they do something else, the last phrase. They've proved that the spiritual ignoramus, they've proved that his word

is not in them.

Not a bit of it. It's all just passed off of them like water off a duck's back. His word has not taken any root whatsoever in them.

They don't believe a word of it. It's just as a blank wall to them. And there's no hope for this fellow if he stays in that shape.

Nobody will ever seek the Savior until he's convinced and convicted that he has sinned, and that his sins separate him from God, and that he cannot undo his sins, and that he's in such a roaring condition that unless the Lord does for him what he cannot do himself, he'll never make it. Now, you have three classes of liars. I'd rather be the middle one.

This middle fellow is saying it. He's fixing to go by heaven if you don't watch out. And he's wrong in his head.

He's teaching. He doesn't realize the deceitfulness of sin. But bless God, he is trying to live right.

And there's hope for him. Well, you get him straightened out a little bit on the truth, and he'll regulate his living by the truth, you see. There's some hope for the first fellow.

He's a church member. He's sound in doctrine. He's wrong in practice.

And if you can show him that belief must be translated into conduct, and that the only evidence that a man's a child of God is that his conduct grows more and more pleasing under the Lord. I see lots of people like that. They say, oh, my, I've been deceived.

I've been taught to believe some things, and I believed them up here, but they never got in here. For if they get in there, it's with the heart that man believe is under righteousness. If a man believes the truth in his heart, that's the whole man, not just in his head and his intellect.

why it'll affect the way he lives. So there's hope for him. There's hope for him.

But there's no hope for this last fellow, who never has sin. Here God wants a liar. By saying, I've never sinned, he seeks to make God a liar.

And he proves that the word of God has never taken root at all in his soul. His word is not in us. Now I want us to notice quickly verses seven and nine.

And here's what I want you to get this morning, and it'll lead us back to my opening remarks. All week we've been plowing as deeply as we know how. And this week we're hoping to see God bless.

Last night a man came to me with a light of heaven in his countenance. He'd been greatly disturbed and distressed during the meeting. And he stayed here the other night a while, and then he came to see me the next day.

And last night he came, and there was a different look and a different expression. Then he said the thing settled. I don't know where it is now.

I take his word for it. Listen. Am I speaking to anybody this morning that the Spirit of God gives the truth and has put his finger on something in your life that's wrong? God helped you this morning.

You get rid of that. Don't you block the power of God. Don't you grieve the Spirit of God.

Don't you do it. I want to show you the gracious provision God's made for his people. Let's look at verse 7, then verse 9, and I want you to get this now.

If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another. That's not exactly what the Lord is saying here. What he's actually saying is, this another is not a fellow Christian, but this another is the Lord.

And the way to have fellowship with him, and the only way to have fellowship with him, you get this now, is to walk in the light as he's in the light. Now watch it. And the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us.

Now watch it. Cleanses us. Who are the us? People who are walking in the light as he's in the light.

They have fellowship with the Lord, and yet they need the power of the blood to cleanse them. Now how can that be, Brother Barney? Now get me carefully. Here is the gracious provision of the Lord God Almighty where you can have fellowship with God every day.

How? By walking perfectly? No, none of us have made that yet. But by walking in all of the light that you've got. Will that be perfect? No.

It'll be imperfect. But a man can do what he doesn't know to do. And God Almighty, listen to me, God Almighty doesn't hold you responsible for what you can't know unless you willfully do it.

See the point? But even the fellow who's walking in the light, living up to all that he knows that God requires of him, doing that which he knows God wants him to do, and refusing to do that which he knows God does not want him to do, even he needs the cleansing. And he has to be cleansed every day so he can have fellowship with the Lord. And that cleansing takes care, listen to me boys and girls, that cleansing takes care, watch it now! Not for the fellow that's doing the cleansing, oh no.

But this cleansing takes care of the sins that people are not conscious of. But they are the sins of the people who are doing what they know to be right. You see? In other words, if Ralph Barnett wants to have any fellowship with God at all, he can't have it with a brother.

If you're walking in anything you know to be wrong. If you're doing anything that God would claim that teaches the sinful, that's right. And the blood of Jesus don't cleanse you daily.

It don't do it. But this cleansing, daily of the precious blood of Christ, washes the fellow clean, because you've got to be perfectly clean to have any fellowship with God. And it takes care of that which you do not do, of which you're not conscious.

That which you do do that's wrong, but you don't know it. Because you can't have any fellowship with God unless you're perfectly clean. You see that? But now wait just a minute.

Wait just a minute. Let's look at verse 9. Now here's poor Ralph Barnett. I've been trying to serve the Lord quite a while.

Wait a minute now. Today, today, things that 15 years ago seemed to me to be all right, they seem to me today to be all wrong. All wrong.

How can you explain that, Brother Martin? Well here it is in verse 9. If the blood of Jesus Christ kept cleansing me every day, that I consciously and positively and willfully sought with all of my heart to please him, and to do nothing that would displease him, and all that while I didn't do a perfect job of it. In spite of the motive of my heart, in spite of the strivings of my soul and body, I couldn't stand up and say that I did what only my Lord could say. He said I do all the ways of things which please him.

I never did even say that. But Brother Barnett, didn't you have any, couldn't you have any fellowship with the Lord? If you're living up to all the light you had, you could. For the blood of Jesus Christ took care of that which was displeasing that you were not conscious of.

But wait a minute now, Brother Asa. Wait a minute. You're walking along here indulging in something that's sinful, and you don't know it.

You're walking along here and you're not doing something that's right. And not to do right is sin. And one day, by the Spirit, some preacher, some Christian, maybe he doesn't use any human history, maybe you're reading the Bible some day, and the Spirit of God takes a truth and puts it, that's sin.

But you say, God, I didn't know it! I know, but you do now. You do now. You do now.

Now that's where verse 9 comes in. There's not a great deal of use for people to come to me. Many people do.

And I would be helpful if I could. And I would even go backwards of being old Puritan in my ignorance. But Brother, you better listen to me.

You better buy you a Bible, honey, or cut out claiming to be a Christian. Because you can't have any fellowship with God unless there's a daily cleansing. As you're walking in all the light you've got, and as sure as you do that, the further you'll walk, God Almighty will say, well, old Ross, grown enough now, he's awful dumb, but I believe he's got sense enough now.

I'm going to go down there and say, look here, boy, that thing's wrong. And when he does that, you'll do one of two things. You'll Only God knows how much trouble it is because God Almighty has to chasten one of his children who, when he comes to see truth, won't walk in it.

When he comes to see a thing to descend with God. Now, that word, confess, means to agree with. It doesn't mean, it doesn't say if we confess our sins.

That's our accent. If we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us of our sins. Sins is something we do, isn't it? It doesn't say now, if we just say, Lord, forgive us of our sins.

No, it doesn't say that. But it says if we confess them. The Lord said this is sinful.

How do you confess it? Say, Lord, you're right. You're right. It's sinful.

It's sinful. Watch out. Watch out.

You can say, Lord, forgive us of our sins till you're blue in the face and it's blasphemy. And he wasn't talking about here. He doesn't say if you want your sins forgiven, to pray and ask him to do that.

You're not get your sins forgiven by praying. You get your sins forgiven by confessing they're sinful and turning from them. That's the Christian life.

See it? And Brother Barnard can't show you those things. But if you know the Lord, and if you walk with him in all the light you've got, he'll keep on showing you. And when he shows you, then the way to get forgiveness is to confess and say, Lord, this is right.

I think bald-headed Sanny, there's some things in your life, Brother Sanny, the Lord has not pleased you. I don't believe it's wrong. God says this is wrong.

Sanny said this is right. God said this is wrong. Sanny said, no, you're wrong.

I'm right, you're wrong. I'm right, you're wrong. That's where God starts going one way, and you start going another, and you have absolutely no fellowship with God.

Absolutely not. Not a bit. It's when you say, you're right, Lord.

You're right. You're right. I chase a jackrabbit every once in a while.

I want people to understand that if there isn't any questionable thing, that I would willfully refrain from shooting that once in a while. And I know that a man who's not saved, he'll just say, well, that fellow's a radical fool. And I know that a person who's saved, it may be for a while, he'll refuse to look at something.

But if he's saved, if he's saved, he can't go on that way there long. Because when the light is turned on, and the saved man will not walk in it. There's a darkness out there.

He don't even know whether there's a God or not. He doesn't have any assurance of peace, of power, of victory. God doesn't pay any attention to him when he prays.

If he's God's child, he can't stand it. And that's the reason I'm always shooting at things. Because that's the way God wants me to show people how to fix stuff.

You keep on defending something that's wrong in your life, and you prove that you're not a child of God. For old Ralph Barnhart, as he walks in the light, is he's doing it. Not perfectly, but sincerely.

The blood of Jesus Christ keeps on cleansing. And I can be conscious of the fellowship of God. Fellowship of God.

And then when the Lord says, Ralph, that's sin. That's sin. Then I'm in trouble.

Unless I say, that's right, Lord. And I turn from it. How is it with you? Are you one of these liars? You're trying to deceive the fellow.

You're trying to deceive yourself. You're trying to pull the wool over God's eye. You young people, you don't bring your Bible.

What is it, a habit you've got into? I wish I could correct you of that. How is the Lord going to show you anything, except through his book? How is it? Now, honest to God, Ralph Barnhart can't do it. You just say, ah, he's an old, he's an old fogie.

Nobody but him can do it. And he uses his word. Well, you say, I'll just leave my Bible at home.

I'll do like that with the rest of the Christians. Never look at it. Never look at the Bible.

Before the preacher comes, they go brush it off. I'm getting by fine. Yeah, you're getting by fine.

You don't even know whether there's a God or not. You absolutely haven't the slightest idea of whether there is a God. Talking about fellowship with him, you don't know what on God's earth the preacher's talking about.

You cannot have any fellowship with him, if there's the slightest bit of knowing and wrongness. The Bible calls it darkness in your life. You see it? And the way he's prescribed.

But that way is outlined in the book. Some of you young folks have a chemistry book. You take it to class with you.

You'll be through with the chemistry book in a year or so. But the issues of this book are eternal. In the book of chemistry, they'll teach you how to take different formulas and mix them up and make something out of. But in this book of the way of eternal life, I've seen hundreds of people quit sinful habits, because the preacher said they ought to.

They always go back to them. The only fellow of the people that this thing does any good is the fellow that's down to business. And every once in a while, the Lord puts his finger on this and he says, this is wrong.

This is wrong. See? See? In other words, brother, you're headed for eternity. And the only person I know doing things for you is the Lord.

And he does it to take in the truths and show them to you. And then when he shows it to you, he doesn't do it so you can argue about it, but he does it so you can walk with him. So you can say this is wrong.

Thank you, Lord, for showing him to me. You have fellowship with him as long as you didn't know it was wrong. But the instant that changes, your fellowship is gone unless you turn from it.

The scriptures say, he that covereth his sin shall not prosper. But he that confesseth, that's agreeing with God, see? And forsaketh his sin. Thank God.

That's the fellow that shall find mercy. Now, this little church, not many of you, but a side of the road, listen to me. Listen to me.

We're in a death struggle now. Our churches are in a struggle now of people who claim to believe right, but whose hearts are not open to the daily ministry of the Spirit of God. He alone can show you truth.

He alone can turn the light on. And if you want any fellowship with God, looks like you'd want it. God won't hear you when you pray unless you have it.

God won't give you church souls unless you have it. God won't even save your children unless you have it. If there's anything, sister, this side of heaven, that's worth seeking for, it's the company and the smile and the fellowship of Almighty God.

And if we walk in the light, he'll show us some more, you see. And then the next day, you're a little stronger and he'll give you a little heavier load to carry. And the next mountain will be a little higher.

And the next valley will be a little wider. When I meet you people at the judgment, I hope not a person who's heard me this morning will say, God, I will not walk with you. You say this is wrong.

I'm not going to take what you say about it. And you'll be a stumbling block. And you don't want to be that, do you? Souls are in the balance, your soul and the souls of others.

Let us stand. Now, my friends, this is a very practical message this morning. Have I helped anybody? Have I? This will help you if you look at it, if you walk in it.

You won't talk to anybody. You need it. You need it.

It won't do to just say, well, the preachers this, that and the other. No, no, no. What I've talked about this morning, that's what we've got to come to.

And not to do it, just keep on or brand yourself as one of these folks, God says a liar. I will make you this proposition. I'm speaking to people here this morning.

You say, I don't know whether you're living up to the light you've got or not. That's pretty terrible. Just have to leave that between you and the Lord.

Nobody else can take care of it, can they? I don't know what the Lord's able to show you. I don't know whether you want him to show you. That's between you and the Lord.

And I'm not God. But I have to answer to God for whether as faithful as I know how. In the spirit of love, I want to love people.

And I want my heart to weep as I rebuke people. Shall I? But my God, don't let anything under God's shining sun, I don't care how little a fox it is, rob you of fellowship with God. It ain't worth it, brother.

It ain't worth it. Our Father, we've done our dead-level best to help these people, and now the Word's been sown. Many of them have loved ones that they can't reach for Christ.

My God. Lord, don't let the devil just snatch away the truth that we've tried to plant in the pile of the Holy Spirit in hearts. Tonight as we shell out the woods for souls, longer and weak.

Lord God. I've tried to get this group here now clear that they'll be on God's side, walking with the Lord. And so we thank you for this time together in Jesus' dear name.

Amen.

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