

Fact Sheet for **“Light and Darkness”**  
**1 John 1:5-10**

Pastor Bob Singer  
08/25/2019

We live as Christians in a non-Christian world. We hold the Bible to be the inspired word of God. But the vast majority of people on this planet do not. We aspire to live by it, and sometimes this puts us at odds with our culture.

Today the politically correct sexual morality is LGBTQ. This is not biblical morality! The laws and rules of our society are progressing beyond such things as equality in housing and employment for all, and are instead more and more requiring people to embrace this politically correct morality. There are Christians who have not knuckled under and have lost their jobs or their businesses. Teachers in Cottage Grove are required to refer to students by the pronouns reflecting their preferred gender. What would you do? Would you choose to be fired?

We hear of churches which have become friendly with this new morality, and have changed their doctrine. We hear Christian celebrities weakly deferring to our culture instead of standing for the truth. How should we as Christians respond?

I'm going to be preaching six sermons in this series, but I'm going to focus on good theology rather than on detailing what is out there in our world. We really need to focus on a sound biblical foundation. This first sermon is on the character of God from 1 John 1:5-10.

**ESV<sup>5</sup> This is the message we have heard from him (Jesus) and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.**

I don't think John could have said this any stronger. Let me show you what I mean by literally translating the last words of this verse.

**“...and darkness in him not is ‘not even one’.”**

Our English words ‘not even one’ translate one word in the original text. And by placing that word last in the sentence John emphasized it. Notice also that there is a double negative here. In the original text those two negatives don't cancel one another out. Instead they strengthen the negativity of the statement. John was saying that there was not even one miniscule measure of darkness in God!

And John wasn't referring to physical light or its absence. He was referring to holiness and righteousness (light) and evil (darkness). The God we worship is absolutely and entirely righteous. There is no evil in him. Jesus, God the Son, showed forth that light. Here are several verses from John's gospel (John 1:4-5, 7-9; 8:12; 9:5; 12:35-36; 12:46). And these are some of Jesus' comments to Nicodemus.

**ESV John 3:19-21** And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. <sup>20</sup> For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. <sup>21</sup> But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."

You get an idea of just how righteous God is from several other passages in the Bible. Here are three examples. The first is from the book of Isaiah. *Read Isaiah 6:1-4.* You might think that Isaiah's reaction would have been one of awe, but you would be mistaken. *Now read Isaiah 6:5-7.* When Isaiah saw the Lord he immediately was struck not by the greatness of what he saw, but by his own sinfulness. Isaiah would later pen those famous words...

<sup>KJV</sup> **Isaiah 64:6a** But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags

Our idea of righteousness pales in the face of the righteousness of God.

Here's a second example from the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28). These statements and several like them gives you the idea that God's standard of absolute righteousness goes far beyond our thoughts about what is righteous.

Here's a third example from the Mosaic Law. In the English Standard Version the word "unintentionally" occurs 14 times in the Mosaic Law in connection with sin. This is one of those occurrences (Leviticus 5:15). You see, unintentional sin is still sin that required a remedy. Here is a similar New Testament reference (Hebrews 9:6-7). Now go back to what John wrote.

<sup>ESV</sup> <sup>5</sup> **This is the message we have heard from him (*Jesus*) and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.**

Let that be a thought you meditate on for a while. Let your mind run with it. Then you will get a sense of that statement.

<sup>6</sup> **If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.** <sup>7</sup> **But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses (*present tense*) us from all sin.**

While we do our best to walk in the light we will sometimes fail, but don't give up. Keep on going. Keep short accounts with God.

<sup>8</sup> **If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.** <sup>9</sup> **If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

This forgiveness is not referring to the forgiveness that is ours the moment we place our faith in Christ and are saved (Ephesians 2:8-9). It is referring to the forgiveness from our daily sinful failings.

<sup>10</sup> **If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.**

As we seek to live as Christians in a non-Christian world never lose sight of this first fact that God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. This is an immensely important part of the theological bedrock on which we stand. It is also a critical part of our thinking in knowing how to respond to our culture.

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