

1 John Week 2

Scripture: 1 John 1:5-2:6

Doctrine: Justification

Key Question: How does accepting Jesus as the atoning sacrifice for our sins allow us to shake off the dust of sin and walk with God in the light?

1 John 1:5-2:6 NIV

Light and Darkness, Sin and Forgiveness

⁵This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. ⁷But 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, purifies us from all sin.

⁸If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

2:1 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. ²He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Love and Hatred for Fellow Believers

³We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. ⁴Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. ⁵But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: ⁶Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.

Notes:

In this passage, **John is using the “if we claim” statements to counter false teachers** who have been leading believers astray. Some of the false claims circulating in the network of churches which John pastored include: idolatry, the idea Christ was divine but not completely human, that Jesus had “a” spirit of God but was not the true Christ, and that it was not possible to sin regardless of anyone’s actions. *(source: Cultural Background Study Bible)*

John uses “light” to describe God as being utterly perfect and Holy, without fault, sin, darkness, or blemish. In our modern world we often spend entire days under harsh, cold LED or fluorescent lighting. **But in Biblical times, the sources of light were oil lamps, what we would call campfires, and of course, the sun.** These light sources were warm, literally protecting life when it was cold. They revealed beauty and encouraged growth. They meant safety and gave direction in a world without streetlights. They drew people in, towards each other, and brought hope on dark nights.

To “walk in the light” means that we turn towards God, repenting from sin and accepting forgiveness. **It means not just reflecting God’s holiness but allowing the Holy Spirit to shine God’s love through us, out into the world in the form of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.**

Notes from WordGo:

John draws a stark contrast to illuminate the truth; darkness (or sinfulness) is the complete opposite of truth and light. Darkness is present in every believer’s heart and life, but God’s children do not delight in sin or gladly make it their way of life. The believer grieves sin and runs towards God’s light!

Walking in God’s light means repenting from our old ways and turning to Christ in faith. Walking with God means longing to be with Him in His light because we love Him. Believers can come to know God better through the Bible, which reveals His truth and the reality of our sin.

John teaches us that assurance of salvation begins with right thinking about God and sin. We are powerless to defeat sin without the power of Almighty God, but Christ’s Person and work is the Christian’s confidence. The essence of Christ’s work on earth was to reveal to us the life of God so we might participate in it through faith. If you believe Jesus Christ died in your place and took the punishment you deserve, you are free to live in light of this glorious truth: **Your sins are removed from you in God’s sight because the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanses completely.**

Notes from ESV Study Bible:

God’s forgiveness is given as soon as we admit our need of it, not on the basis of any acts we have done to earn it, but solely because of His grace. The free gift of forgiveness carries with it purification from unrighteousness. God accepts us as righteous because He imputes to us the righteousness of Christ. That is, the very righteousness of Christ our sin-bearer is reckoned to our account.

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

1. What message did the apostle receive from Jesus and declare in verse 5? Why is this message worth proclaiming? (See also John 8:12.) *WordGo*

2. Circle every instance of “if we say” or “if we claim”.

3. Name some modern-day examples of what it means to be “walking in darkness”:

4. Think of someone who has been a clear example of “walking in light”. What outward signs of their inward love for God were evident? (extra hint: [Eph 5:8-14](#) and [1 Peter 1:13-21](#))

5. What is the difference between someone who “does the right thing” because of a moral code, and someone who is walking in the light because of Jesus?

Since we know that everyone makes mistakes and sins, what happens when a person with a secular moral code stumbles and sins?

What happens when a Jesus-follower sins?

6. Read the BSF booklet: “Am I sure”. In your own words, explain how to become a Christian: (Similar to WordGo Week 1 Day 5 Question)

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7. Look up the definition of “Justification” and summarize it in your own words:

[Justification - Easton's Bible Dictionary \(blueletterbible.org\)](http://blueletterbible.org)

[Justification - Bridgeway Bible Dictionary - \(studylight.org\)](http://studylight.org)

Skim through the BSF information about Justification and Sanctification. What is the difference between the two terms?

8. A key part of walking in fellowship with God is repentance.

Use this prayer of repentance from the Book of Common Prayer:

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against You
in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved You with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of Your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in Your will, and walk in Your ways, to the glory of Your Name.
Amen.

Write 1 John 1:9 here, and read it as an assurance of pardon.

DEEPER UNDERSTANDING:

1. In verses 1:6, 8, 10 and 2:4, fill in this chart with the sets of:

False Claim

Consequence

Remedy

(hint: look for “if we say” or “if we claim” statements)

***answers can be found on Week 1 Day 4 of WordGo

2. Prepare for the **Character Study** on the apostle John which we will do together on Zoom:
(if you answered similar questions from last week’s lesson, look back to those to answer this CS)

[John the Apostle - Bridgeway Bible Dictionary - \(studylight.org\)](http://studylight.org)

[John the son of Zebedee \(John\) \(blueletterbible.org\)](http://blueletterbible.org)

[John - Whyte's Dictionary of Bible Characters - \(studylight.org\)](http://studylight.org)

- a. John’s family background

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- b. His job and life before he became a disciple

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- c. His relationship with Jesus & Jesus’ nickname for him

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- d. Some events involving John from his Gospel

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- e. Some of Jesus’ teachings he recorded in his Gospel

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- f. Your favorite verse(s) from his Gospel

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- g. Something you learned or is important to you from reading his Gospel
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3. Look up the definition of the word “propitiation” and write down some other verses where the word or concept is found:

[Propitiation - Bridgeway Bible Dictionary - \(studylight.org\)](http://studylight.org)

[Dictionaries - Propitiation \(blueletterbible.org\)](http://blueletterbible.org)

What is a synonym for Propitiation which we have sometimes heard during our Bible Studies:

(hint: 9 letters, starts with A)

A _ _ _ _ _

4. Look up the definition of the greek word for “light” (phos in Greek):

[G5457 - phōs - Strong's Greek Lexicon \(kjv\) \(blueletterbible.org\)](#)

Read some examples of other places John has used this word. Do the other passages use “light” in the same way or is it different? Is there a part of the definition that brings greater clarity to the passages? (Lifeway)

- [1 John 1:5,7 ESV](#)
[1 john 2:8-10 ESV](#)
[John 1:4-5 ESV](#)
[John 1:8-9 ESV -](#)
Times when Jesus used “phos” --
[John 3:19-21 ESV](#)
[John 5:35 ESV](#)
[John 8:12; ESV](#)
[John 11:9-10 ESV](#)
[John 12:35-36, 46 ESV](#)

WALKING IN FAITH:

1. Spend some time this week noticing needs in your neighborhood and in the world.

If there is one that is especially heavy on your heart, look up organizations which are working to meet that need (ie: Coalition for the Homeless, Salvation Army, Samaritan’s Purse, etc).

Try to find answers to the following questions:

- a. Name of Organization and local office location:

- b. When was the organization founded?

- c. What are the main goals, and/or do they have a few big events or a continuous outreach through the year?

- d. How do they measure the success of their efforts (ie: in number of people reached or amount of money distributed, etc)

- e. Do they have any local needs – money, awareness, donations, volunteers?

2. While walking through your week, at each interaction with people (at the store, within family, etc), pause before responding to reflect on whether there is a way to be light to that person. If there is an encounter that especially touched your heart, write about it here:

(note: this does not mean the same thing as allowing someone to be disrespectful or hurtful to you or to others. If you are in a situation which is not safe, it is okay to leave and to get help.)

3. Arrange a time with a pastor to receive communion by yourself (either at your house or at a quiet location at the church). Spend the time in prayer and contemplation of the Light of Christ and what it means to Walk in the Light.
4. If your church or denomination has a creed or teaching that talks about confessing – in the sense that we can confess/witness to who God is, and to what Jesus has done for us, write it here: (example Nicene Creed, Apostle's Creed, Catechism... if you are not sure, ask a pastor!)

CREATION AND WORSHIP:

1. Suggested Songs:
[Shine Jesus Shine | Maranatha! Music](#)
[We The Kingdom - Light of the World \(Sing Hallelujah\)](#)
[Walk in the Light \(youtube.com\)](#)
[Christ Our Hope in Life and Death \(Official Lyric Video\) -](#)
[The Love of God \(Live\) | The Worship Initiative](#)
[Is He Worthy - Laudate Mennonite Ensemble \(youtube.com\)](#)
[The Light of the World is Jesus- Congregational Singing \(youtube.com\)](#)

2. Create a light painting with a long-exposure camera or use these steps for an iPhone.
[How to capture a long exposure on iPhone | Tom's Guide \(tomsguide.com\)](#)
** sparklers work great with this activity
3. Visit the lighting section of a home improvement store or look through pictures of light fixtures online. Jot down any words you can think of to describe the light you see (warm/cool, iridescent, soft, vibrant, revealing, etc)

4. Poetry:
Listen to this poem as an act of worship. What types of statements about God and faith is she making?

What emotions does it bring up?

["Jesus" \(A Spoken Word\) | Davy Flowers \(youtube.com\)](#)

As a response, consider making a list of statements that glorify God:

List three things that God is bigger or greater than:

List three things that God has accomplished throughout history:

List three things that belong to God, which God has authority over:

List three things which seem overwhelming or awful, but which would tremble before God:

PRAYER PRACTICE:

Set several reminders to pray throughout the day, and pray at those times during the next week.

Suggestions:

- Set an alarm on your watch or phone

- Use a guided prayer app --

[Hallow - #1 App for Christian & Catholic Prayer, Meditation, Bible + Sleep](#)

[Daily Prayer App — Daily Prayer \(rethinkme.com\)](#)

[Daily Prayer at Crossroads Abbey | Crossroads Abby \(podbean.com\)](#)

[Every Moment Holy](#)

[Every Moment Holy \(@everymomentholly\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)

Write down the words you want to pray and the time you want to pray them here:

Justification and Sanctification (BSF John – page 143)

Our Refinement and Growth as Christians

The Doctrine of Sanctification

Through faith in Christ, believers are justified, or declared righteous before God, which sets them on a journey to walk with God. However, God's people do not have to figure out how to live for God on their own. God's Holy Spirit securely seals believers as God's children, lives within them, and illuminates Scripture so they can understand God's truth. Fellow believers are unified because the same Spirit also lives within them. **The Holy Spirit embeds a divine desire and power within believers to resist sin, obey God, and increasingly grow to be like Jesus.**

Sanctification is the process by which the Holy Spirit sets the believer apart to live for God rather than sin and self. This progressive and ongoing growth in holiness offers evidence of the transformative new life God plants within His children.¹ The Holy Spirit's sanctifying power draws a believer to pray, feed on God's Word, and thrive through fellowship with other believers. Serving God and others becomes not a duty but a delight. Seeking God and His glory permeates every aspect of life.²

The inevitable ups and downs in a believer's life seem random without understanding God's gracious process of sanctification. Without recognizing God's purposeful commitment to our spiritual growth, suffering appears only painful. The joys of life seem like brief, unplanned moments rather than God's gracious gifts to express His faithfulness. **The Holy Spirit helps believers realize God's purposefulness to orchestrate their lives and prepare them for heaven.**

The process of sanctification can be painful but is always profitable for the believer. When we recognize God's tender cultivation for our greater good, we cannot take credit for any blessings or spiritual growth we experience. A growing believer welcomes the Holy Spirit's conviction of sin and empowerment to obey. **God not only made a way for His children to enter heaven but sent His own Spirit to transform their hearts as they walk on earth.** Sanctification ushers God's presence and power into believers' lives to bring hope, help, and holiness. *1. Growing in Christ: Romans 6; 8:1-17; 12:1-2 2. Seeking God's glory: 1 Corinthians 10:31; Galatians 5:16-26; Ephesians 5:8; Colossians 3:1-17*

Jesus taught about two kinds of spiritual cleansing. The initial cleansing from sin's debt and guilt comes when someone puts their faith in Christ's atoning sacrifice. **Coming to Christ for salvation delivers a one-time, permanent cleansing from the penalty and weight of sin.** This is called justification. Believers receive a "bath" that renders their entire bodies clean. Those cleansed by Christ's sacrifice on their behalf do not require repeated justification. In God's sight, believers are pronounced righteous based on Christ's perfection, not their own.

Though saved by grace, God's people walk in a fallen world and continue to struggle with personal sin. Therefore, Jesus went on to explain that those who have been spiritually cleansed "need only to wash their feet." Believers thrive spiritually and are sanctified by regularly acknowledging and confessing their sins. This is the second type of spiritual cleansing. **Unconfessed sin does not threaten a believer's salvation but does hinder the sweetness of their fellowship with the Lord.**