

1 John 1:6-10
Walking in the Light

“People today minimize and redefine sin, often alleging that the ‘failures’ of their lives and certain ‘disorders’ exist because of how others have treated them. The victim mentality reigns supreme as popular culture comforts itself in affirming that people are basically good and whatever maybe be wrong is not really wrong, but merely a preference of personal freedom. Instead of accepting responsibility for their behavior people demand to be accepted as they are. They reclassify serious and heart issues ‘illnesses’ and ‘addictions’ and try to ‘cure’ them with prescription drugs and psychotherapy. But because that fails to deal with sin, the actual root cause of the problem, society goes from bad to worse. In contrast to all that delusion, Jesus taught that every person is sinful at the very core of his or her being... Yet, many in the church today seem to be reluctant to make the diagnosis Jesus did, for fear they might offend someone or be deemed ‘unloving.’ Thus, sin is explained away in culturally acceptable terms.” MacArthur

Mark 7:20-23 *He went on: “What comes out of a person is what defiles them. 21 For it is from within, out of a person’s heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, 22 adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. 23 All these evils come from inside and defile a person.”*

1:5 The biblical principle stating that we must have victory over sin and our struggle with it starts with understanding that there is no darkness in God’s nature, He is completely and perfectly holy. Therefore, as His children, we have been called to live a holy life. The reason we are being held to such a high standard is because we have been made holy upon salvation. It is a reality, not a notion or idea, but an actuality. His holiness became our holiness; it has been imputed/credited to us and cannot and will not be taken away.

Romans 3:21-22 *But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. 22 This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile,*

Hebrews 10:14 *For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.*

1 Cor. 6:11 *But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

1:6 As John lays down his argument against living a habitually sinful lifestyle, he does so in response to the Gnostics who considered moral purity unnecessary.

“These men claimed to have entered into a higher fellowship with God than was unknown by most Christians. They professed great things, but there was a flaw in their profession. They claimed to know God, but even as they made their claims, they showed by their actions that they failed to take sin, which is opposed to the nature of God, seriously. Their religion consisted from the ethical standpoint of what Dietrich Bonhoeffer called ‘easy grace.’ They separated religions and ethics. Consequently, they claimed to the highest privilege while living precisely as they pleased.” Boice

- **“If we claim” “If we say”** means making an outward profession of having believed the gospel. The question is, is it an intellectual assent or a true heartfelt conviction and response to the need for a Savior?
- It is impossible to have fellowship with God while walking in **habitual** darkness. To walk in darkness means to habitually slog along in sin without any desire, self-control or sorrow to repent of whatever it might be, be it *sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice (hatred), deceit (dishonesty), lewdness (rudeness, profanity), envy (jealousy), slander (defamation), arrogance (pride, conceit) and folly (stupidity) (Mk. 7:20-23).*

“Therefore, if there is a problem with our fellowship with God, it is our fault. It is not the fault of God because there is no sin or darkness in Him at all. Any approach to relationship with God that assumes, or even implies, that God might be wrong, and perhaps must be forgiven by us, is at its root blasphemous and directly contradicts what John clearly states here.” Guzik

- The verb **“to walk”** is in the *present, active tense* meaning that living in sin is ongoing and habitual.

περιπατέω peripatéō, *to tread all around, i.e. walk at large (especially as proof of ability); figuratively, to live, deport oneself, follow (as a companion or votary):—go, be occupied with, walk (about).* Vine’s

2 Cor. 7:10 *Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.*

- John calls anyone who claims to be in fellowship with Christ yet walks in habitual sin, **a liar**. They are either self-deceived, feel that their sin is no big deal, or accept it because they can’t seem to get victory over it.
- It’s not a matter of salvation but of Christian fellowship with the Lord that John is writing about.

“If John said “That is a lie,” it means he thinks in terms of things being true or being lies. John sees things much more clearly than our sophisticated age does, which doesn’t want to see anything in black or white, but everything in a pale shade of gray. The modern world often thinks in terms of “my truth” in an individualistic sense. John focused on the idea of God’s truth, ultimate truth.” Guzik

1:7 To walk in the light means to habitually walk in openness before God. It means to walk in His holiness. Darkness hides sin, light exposes it. No one likes their sin to be exposed, yet it must be exposed before God and not hidden. *“We are warned not to attempt any coverup.”* God is not an enabler; He will move us out of our comfort zone to bring us to repentance. Our part is to act upon the conviction the Holy Spirit brings to us.

- Walking in the light helps keep the body of Christ spiritually healthy in its fellowship with one another.

“As regenerated people of God, we are to live in the light of truth: “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth)” (Ephesians 5:8–9). Secretive behaviors and hidden sins should not exist within the fellowship of Christian believers: “So stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth, for we are all parts of the same body” (Ephesians 4:25, NLT). To live as children of light, we must be honest with ourselves and others about who we are, including our shortcomings, failures, and struggles with sin. James 5:16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. He is not suggesting that we confess our sins carelessly to just anyone, but to mature believers who will provide spiritual and practical support. Of course, we should also confess our sins to those we have sinned against, as we seek forgiveness and restoration.” gotquestions.org

Prov. 28:13 *Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.*

Matt. 5:23-24 *23 “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.*

“Why do we confess our sins to one another? Because a continual relationship of confession and forgiveness among brothers and sisters in Christ cultivates honesty and purity and reflects the unity the church is meant to embody: “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you” (Ephesians 4:32).” gotquestions.org

- The reason we can and should walk in the light, is because of the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus Christ. The word for cleanse (**katharízō**) means that His blood purifies us from sins defilement and frees us from its guilt. It is what we all have in common.

“... because the blood of Jesus Christ continually cleanses away every impurity, sin can never change a believer’s standing before God.” MacArthur

Rom. 8:33-39 *33 Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. 34 Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? 36 As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

1:8 *We keep ourselves from deceiving ourselves by staying in the truth. It is the light source God uses to expose darkness in our hearts. To avoid its exposure puts a believer in danger of becoming ignorant and callous toward sin in their lives.*

Hebrews 4:12 *For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

1:9 The tense of the verb “**to confess**” means that it is to be an ongoing part of our lives. The word means *to say the same thing as another, i.e. to agree with*. It means that we openly call sin in our lives the way God sees it.

- The aorist tense of the verb “**forgive**” (*to send away, disregard*) “*carries a past connotation and further demonstrates that God’s forgiveness derives from an historical event, the atonement, which has lasting benefits for all who believe.*” MacArthur.
- **He is faithful** in that He promises to forgive. **He is just**, meaning that in His perfect Justice he determines the act of repentance worthy of forgiveness. In other words, it is the just thing to do in God’s court of law because His judgement is based on the cleansing power of the blood of Christ.
- Satan is quick to tell us that we can’t go back, that our relationship with the Lord has changed and is tarnished. But that’s not true. God is a God of grace and mercy. He loves to restore the wayward back into a sincere walk with Him and His righteous ways.

“Confession, while an essential part of the Christian life, does not require a priest or any other church-appointed human mediator. There is only One who can absolve us of sin, and that is God (see Psalm 130); there is only one Mediator between us and God, and that is Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5). We confess our sins to one another in order to solicit prayer, exhortation, and strength along the way.”
gotquestions.org

Ps. 130:1-4 *Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord; Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy. If you, Lord, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, so that we can, with reverence, serve you.*

Ps. 32:1 *Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.*

1:10 The Gnostics believed that they had reached a point of sinlessness. In fact, according to Boice, they felt that they had never sinned. To do so is to make God a liar!

“Who is right? The man who denies the reality of sin in general and in himself in particular, or God who declares that all have sinned? There is only one answer. ‘Let God be true, and every man a liar.’
Boice

Ps. 14:2-3 *The Lord looks down from heaven on all mankind to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. 3 All have turned away, all have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.*

2 Chron. 7:14 *if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*

Acts 3:19 *Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,*

What Is Progressive Christianity?

Progressive Christianity is, in a word, progressive. The use of the term progressive defines a way to look at faith, understand and interpret Scripture, and put faith into action. What is key to the Progressive Christianity movement is the fluidity of change. Looking at life as a journey of never arriving but of constant evolution, where there is a search for understanding without the requirements of absolutes. Here is a direct quote from the bethelbeaverton.org website on what progressive Christianity is:

In keeping with our “reformed and reforming” identity, we have embraced a movement that began in 2006 called Progressive Christianity. The movement was a part of a larger movement called “the emerging church.” At the heart of these movements was the desire to articulate a way of being Christian that was an alternative to the Christian faith portrayed in the public realm. The leaders of Progressive Christianity had grown weary of defining their Christian faith in negative terms: “We aren’t fundamentalists. We don’t believe the Bible is the inerrant or infallible Word of God. We don’t agree that Creationism should replace the science of evolution in public schools. We don’t believe that God hates gays. We don’t believe that people of other faiths are going to hell unless they convert to Christianity. We don’t deny the right of women to choose what happens to their bodies.”

The underlying message of the Progressive Christianity movement is one of acceptance and not exceptions. This means accepting all lifestyles, all faiths, and all genders while using a more fluid understanding of Scripture instead of a more rigid, traditional view. To the Progressive Christian, the Bible is one source of truth but is not the container of absolute truth.

Why Is Progressive Christianity Popular?

There are eight points of Progressive Christianity. They deal with societal issues such as social justice, gender equality, abortion rights, sexual orientation, gender identity, and issues with the environment. Yet they also address finding truth and the path to God, which according to Progressive Christian thought, is not limited to one path but can be found through many different paths. For this reason, various ideas are welcome, and truth is not just based on Scripture alone which is why this type of thinking is popular in our society today. When you consider many of the issues on the forefront in our country and around the world, and you give people the ability to discover “truth” that requires no true repentance, is there any wonder that this line of belief would become popular. When you add in the reality that many who profess to carry the name of Christ have not done a good job representing that name, it seems we have pushed many people right into their camp. christianity.com