

All or None
June 30, 2013

When you were a child, did you ever lie in bed at night and start getting afraid. There were strange looking shadows in the room. You cried out for mom or dad and someone came in the room, turned on the light, and comforted you. You explained about what you saw, and the two of you turned the lights off and then on again. The light showed you the truth of what you were seeing. A jacket slung over a chair made a new and different shadow. But it wasn't a monster. It was just a jacket. The light revealed the truth. The light made plain what was really in your room.

That is what light does. **Light reveals truth**. Whatever is there, good or bad, is revealed by light.

That is why thieves do their thing at night. They hide their activity in the dark. Sinners too do not like light. Sinners prefer darkness, so they can hide their sin. Light reveals the truth of sin.

This use of light and dark for truth and falsehood, or good and bad, is used often in the Bible writings. Different writers use them to urge us to live in the truth of the Good news of Jesus. The apostle John is one of those writers. John was a leader in the early church of Christianity. He wrote a letter to encourage Christians to live in the truth and avoid the darkness of lies and sin.

We're going to look at the beginning of his letter this morning.

1 John 1:1-7 (NIV) That which was from the beginning (of the church), which we (the apostles of Jesus) have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched- (Their knowledge of Jesus was not theoretical, but personally experienced. John was one of those who walked with Jesus, talked with Jesus, saw Him die, and then saw Him after He was raised to resurrection life. John is sharing his personal experience of Jesus.) -this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. (He is using the word life as a symbol for Jesus, since it is through Jesus that we can receive eternal life.)

The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.

We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete.

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. (Here, the words light and darkness are used symbolically. Light represents truth and goodness. Darkness represents lies and sin. People in darkness are like the blind, stumbling around. They don't know what is true, so they adopt any sinful way to live that appeals to them. But God shows us the right-with-Him way to live.)

If we claim to have fellowship with him (with God) yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. (If we claim to have fellowship with God and yet continue to sin, intentionally, habitually, with little thought to how God wants us to live, we are not

really in fellowship with God.) But if we walk in the light (if we live the truth) , as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

This is our focus this morning, on this most significant truth. "The blood of Jesus purifies us from all sin." This truth is significant because of what it means for our sins.

I have many regrets in my life. One type of regret are regrets over missed opportunities. For instance, I once had a job offer to become a computer operator. I've always regretted turning down that job.

Another kind of regret is regret over sins. I have regret over sins in my past.

We all have such regrets. All of us said something we wish we had never said. We spoke something that was untrue, or unkind. We said something that hurt someone deeply. We wish we could take back those words.

We have all behaved in some way we later regretted. We did something we wish we had never done. We acted selfishly. We wish we could go back and undo that action and change the outcome of that behavior.

I have good news for you today. The blood of Jesus purifies us of all sin. While we can't go back and undo our words or actions, the blood of Jesus can purify you from all sin. While you can't change how your words or behavior affected others, the blood of Jesus can purify you from all sin. You can be forgiven of all sins today. The blood of Jesus purifies us from all sin.

This is what John testifies to. This is what he learned from Jesus and experienced with Jesus. John had learned that Jesus' blood, when He died on the cross, satisfied the justice of God for John's sin. The blood of Jesus purified John from all sin.

God is communicating this truth to us through John's letter. He wants us to know, understand, believe, and act on this truth, that the blood of Jesus purifies us from all sin. This is a promise from God. If you will believe in and act on this promise, your sins, too, can all be forgiven. Believe it and act upon it.

When we believe a promise, we act on it. If a friend promises to meet us at a certain restaurant, and we believe the friend, then we act upon their promise. We go to the restaurant at the appointed time. We do so because we believe their promise.

So it is with God. If you believe God's promise, then act upon it. **Bring your sins to God, confess them, give Him your life to live in obedience to His truth, and trust only in the blood of Jesus to purify you from all sin.** Bring your Don't trust in the size or amount of your sins.

Don't trust in the size or amount of your sins.

Maybe you have an especially big regret. There is that one big sin. You figure that one big sin is the one that will keep you out of heaven. You are afraid that that one really big

sin was so bad that God will not forgive. You haven't forgiven yourself. Why believe that God will forgive you?

I'll tell you why? Because the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from ALL sin. Forgiveness doesn't rest on how large or small your sins are. Forgiveness doesn't rest on how many or few your sins are. Forgiveness does not rest on the size or amount of your sins. Forgiveness rests on the blood of Jesus.

Don't trust in the size or amount of your sins. Trust that the blood of Jesus purifies us from all sin.

Don't trust in your feelings of guilt.

Maybe it was some time in the past that you received Jesus as your Savior and Lord, but you still wonder if you are saved. You wonder if you are saved because you still feel guilty over your sins. Since you continue to feel so much guilt, you think you are not yet forgiven.

Don't listen to your feelings. Guilt is not erased by forgiveness. The reason you continue to feel guilty is because you ARE guilty. Your guilt does not change with God's forgiveness. You will always be guilty. The blood of Jesus doesn't change your guilt, only your condition before God. Faith in Jesus doesn't mean you are declared not-guilty. Instead you are found guilty, but then you are pardoned because of the death of Jesus on your behalf.

Forgiveness does not rid you of guilt or guilty feelings. Just like courage is not the absence of fear, so faith is not the absence of guilt. If you are relying on not feeling guilty for sins as confirmation of your salvation, you are trusting in the wrong thing. Instead of trusting in our feelings (lack of guilt) trust in the blood of Jesus.

Don't trust in your feelings of guilt. Trust that the blood of Jesus purifies us from all sin.

Don't trust in not sinning.

If you trust in the blood of Jesus, your soul has been saved, but your heart is still being changed. You are an infant Christian and must grow up into spiritual maturity. As you do so you will experience increasing victory over temptation and sin. But you will still fail sometimes. You will still sin.

You are not perfect. You never will be perfect. Your faith hasn't produced perfection in you. But you can be forgiven and cleansed of your sin. Your sin will not change your standing before God. It will only mar your fellowship with God. Your new sin doesn't change the fact that you are saved and forgiven. That will not change. What changes is your good fellowship with God.

For example, my wife and I are happily married. Now, if I sin against her by saying something without thinking, we are still happily married. That hasn't changed. But our good fellowship with each other is marred by my sin against her. Our good fellowship isn't so good now. And it won't be until I come to her, admit I said something wrong, apologize, and receive her forgiveness.

My sin did not change the standing of our good marriage, only the fellowship. So your new sin does not change your standing before God in Jesus Christ. Your sin has only marred your good fellowship with God. When you do sin, come to God and confess it and be purified once more.

1 John 1:9 (NIV) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

When you sin, bring it to God and be cleansed in order to restore your fellowship. Whatever that sin is, the blood of Jesus can purify you of it.

Don't trust in not sinning. Trust that the blood of Jesus purifies us from all sin.

There are only two possibilities when it comes to sin. Jesus either died for all our sins, or none of our sins. Those are the only options. If Jesus had only died for some sins, we would still be hopelessly lost. If Jesus only died for some of our sins, then John is a liar. If Jesus only died for some of our sins, God is a liar.

But I'll tell you, God is no liar. God sent Jesus for the very purpose of paying the price for ALL of our sins. God doesn't fail in His purposes. God accomplishes what He sets out to do. God set out to provide a remedy for ALL sin in the death of Jesus. And that is exactly what God accomplished. The blood of Jesus purifies us from all sin.

Jesus died for all sin, not just some sin. Jesus' death provides for complete forgiveness, not partial. Believe it. Act on it. Live it. Celebrate today because the blood of Jesus purifies us from all sin.

Today, won't you pray to Jesus, confessing your sinfulness, and asking Him to forgive you? If you receive Him as your Savior from sin and turn your life over to Him as Lord, trusting only in His blood, then you will be saved. He will forgive your sin. Pray now.