

5/6/23

Ignoring The Light

A daily devotion for May 2nd

From your friends at RayStedman.org

Read: 1 John 1:3-7

If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. 1 John 1:6

What is the problem presented in this verse? Here are Christians who have established a relationship with God; they have come into the family of God by faith in Christ. That means that they are experiencing the full flow of the life in the Spirit. But there is no sign of it in their lives. They lie. They do not live according to the truth. Their lives are harsh, perhaps, and loveless, critical, and demanding of others.

Well, what is wrong? Nothing is wrong with the relationship. It is no good talking to these people about becoming Christians; they are Christians. The problem is that they are walking in darkness. Most of us mentally read this as though it refers to having fallen into sin, what was once called a backslidden condition. It is the opposite of walking in the light. But if we view this phrase that way, we are confusing cause with results. The fact is, we sin

because we are walking in darkness! Walking in darkness is not a synonym for sinning. We are sinning because we walk in darkness.

What is darkness? We must answer that first on the physical level. How would you go about making the room you are in dark? It is now filled with light. Would you somehow have to scoop out the light and shovel in the darkness? Of course not—we need only to turn off the light. Darkness is simply the absence of light. That is precisely what John means here. To walk in darkness means to walk as though there were no God, for God is light. It is to be a practical atheist. We believe there is a God, we know He exists, but we live as though there were none. That is walking in darkness.

It is possible to be a Christian and yet walk in darkness by turning God off. John starts with this problem because it is one of the most widespread and commonplace of problems. You can miss the benefits of God's presence in your heart and life by ignoring the light.

How then do people actually do this—turn off the light and walk in darkness? There are some very obvious ways in which they do this. Some people stop coming to church. The Word of God is a channel of God's light. The Word itself is light. It penetrates and searches, it seeks out our inner life and exposes it to our view. If we stop coming to church, we escape the light that way. We are no longer made uncomfortable by the Word. Another way is to stop reading the Scriptures. An amazing number of Christians have simply turned off the light by ceasing to read the Scriptures. Underneath all the excuses that are given for this—no time, lots of pressures—there is really a desire to escape the light.

Another way is they never examine themselves. This is an almost certain way of walking in the darkness. We seldom stop to examine ourselves. We never ask ourselves searching questions as to where we are in the Christian life. The apostle Paul

says, Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith (2 Corinthians 13:5). Ask yourself, Where am I?

Father, grant to me the faith and the grace to come to the light, exposing myself to Your word and being willing to examine myself.