

Don't Justify Yourself While Walking in Darkness

Tim Conway | illbehonest.com

1st John chapter 1. I'd like to begin reading in verse 5. "This is the message we have heard from Him (from Christ), from that which was from the beginning, the eternal life. This is the message we have heard from him, and proclaim to you." John got it from Christ and now he proclaims it to us. God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with this God of light, while we walk contrary to that light, while we walk in darkness, we lie, and do not practice the truth. But, on the other hand 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 us from all sin. If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we've not sinned, we make (this God of light), we make Him to be a liar. And His word is not in us."

Now, I want to read the first two verses of chapter 2. "My little children, I'm writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate." Sounds like legal terminology. It sounds like a lawyer. A representative. "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins. Not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Brethren, I want to tread very carefully through these verses 6 through 10, especially. I recognize, I opened up with 5 and ended with (chapter) 2:1-2. But the heart here of what I want to focus on is verses 6 through 10. I'm not going to get all the way through, just as I didn't last time. I'm not going to today either, but 6 through 10. These verses contain life and death. I think you can see it. Verse 6 is death; verse 8, death; verse 10 is death. There's life in verses 7 and 9.

But sometimes I think we just need to stop in our tracks and personalize. You know, sometimes it's easier to read Scripture at a distance. We're like, you know, the observer, the spectator in the stands at a sporting event. This is all kind of playing out in words ahead of us. And we're there and we're watching this thing acted out on this stage or on the playing field. But you know, we're on the playing field folks. This isn't a spectator sport when we read the Word of God. Because the Word of God has to do with us. My life or my death is described in these verses, as is yours.

You need to personalize this. Look, do some of you recall? I want to bring this up because this specifically has to do with 1st John. Paul Washer came here, you know, it's been over decade ago now, back when our church was new, and young, and meeting over at Hackberry. Just not too far from here. We had Paul come, and we couldn't hold the people inside the building over there so we put a tent up. It was probably around this time of the year. It was hot. Anyway, that's all side matters. The issue is that when he preached in that tent on Hackberry, he preached a message from 1st John. I think it's still on the Internet.

But the thing that was unique about that is that it was Paul's own wife who God spoke to out of 1st John. You know, here he comes to preach to us, and God saves his wife. And it was

1st John. I mean, it was for her this startling realization about 1st John. The character, the nature of 1st John. You know she says in her testimony - I think that James on I'll Be Honest has Charo Washer's testimony there. You know one of the things she said really occurred to her, she said every time her husband preached that message from 1st John, she squirmed in her seat. But you know how she put herself at ease? She just, you know, "I'm not perfect at this." She kind of looked at it like a high school exam. You don't have to 100 percent to pass. But you know what occurred to her? 1st John is not like that. 1 John is not like: well, you might barely get by, and you might barely pass with a "D". She recognized that 1st John was pass or fail.

Now this is my example, not hers, but it's more like a pregnancy test. You are, or you are not. You are in, or you are out. You meet these, or you don't meet these. Either you are, or you are not. Charo said that before God saved her. Yeah, she would squirm under these things. This is what a lot of people do. They look at God's Word, and they see what scripture says about what a Christian is, and they squirm. But you know where they find safety? They go over to the opposite: darkness. I mean, you know I'm not perfect, but that does not describe my life. Wicked. Well, I don't quite measure up, but I'm not that! I'm not so bad that God would throw me into hell. I'm not that bad.

So what we do is we make for middle ground. Even though we squirm. There are those that squirm under these tests. Yet, she would find this hiding place. She saw she fell short but, she reasoned that her personality was different than other peoples' personalities. "Well, I'm just not like those Christians that do that. My personality is different." So you know, you can just kind of justify yourself. She knew she had bitterness towards people. But, it wasn't hatred. She didn't love them much but it wasn't hatred. And see, so what you do is you squirm when you see what a true Christian ought to be. But even though that makes you unsettled, you look at the other and you say, "But surely I'm not that." So you just kind of hope. "Ah yeah well, what's being said there about being a Christian, I hope that... (incomplete thought)." "So what if I like to shop, that doesn't make me worldly." That is how people respond to these, and it's deadly. Just how she responded - you just justify.

And I'll tell you this. You need to know this. Because this is critical for some of you here. One of the reasons that I want to just stay in these verses for a little while, let the percolate in the church. I want God to speak. And you know, I have watched, and so have a lot of you. You have watched God multiply our church numerically. My interest to be quite honest, that kind of growth can be superficial at best. I want the kind of growth that is in holiness. I want a depth in this church. I want a maturing in this church. I want there to be something. I want to see God do in the spiritual realm what He has done with regard to physical numbers.

And I recognize this, when a church grows as fast as ours has, we're getting people that are coming in here proclaiming to be Christians, and you're not. And I want to be faithful to your souls, and I'm hoping. Because I recognize, look, if we're going to have real spiritual depth here, one of the ways that's going to happen is if God saves some of the deceived! Because you are not going to start to grow until you actually are engrafted into Christ, until you're trusting in Him, until your faith is true! And you know what? Charo, there she was married to Paul Washer. I tell you, there are so many things in this life that can make us look good. But that day she sat under that tent. She never got saved until something happened. She never got saved until she

stopped justifying herself. Until she stopped running to a hiding place. When she was confronted by Scripture.

Oh yeah, when you're confronted by Scripture you want to run to a hiding place. But that hiding place is Christ alone. You don't want to hide where she was hiding. She was hiding behind her excuses, behind her justifying's. Some of you are sitting here, and you are comfortable, and in very short years, you are going to end up in hell because you are deceived, and Scripture speaks to you. But you squirm a little, and you run to your hiding place, and that hiding place is not Christ. That hiding place is a false profession. That hiding place is, "Well, I'm not that bad." That hiding place is justifying yourself. But when she came to the point she quit justifying herself, and she surrendered to what God's Word was saying. God had mercy on her and saved her.

Someone has said, "How cleverly men defend themselves against all that might do them good." And what I really want is for us to put away the defenses. Just put them away. I want us to put away the excuses, and put away our hiding places, if they're not Christ. And allow the Word to just blaze on us. And bring everything out into the light. And so today I want to start by just broadly looking at verses 6 through 10 again. And then spend the rest of the time looking at verses 6 and 7 in some greater amount of detail. But I think it's quite easy to recognize, as I said in starting: Verse 6, is death. Verse 7, is life. Verse 8, is death. Verse 9, is life. Verse 10, is death. You can see that 2 of these are opposed to 3 of these. And that way there's a dissimilarity between 2 of these verses, and 3 of these verses. But you know, they actually have some similarities. Notice what they start with.

Now I recognize that in our English translations verse 7 might start with "but." In the original, in the Greek, they all start with "if." All of them. "If" What is "if?" Now we need our grammar experts again. What is "if"? What part of language, what do we call it? It's actually a conjunction. Prepositions; Conjunctions. You've got to be up on that to distinguish them, sometimes that can be difficult. It is a conjunction. And it is the sort of conjunction that introduces a conditional clause. You say, "What's that?" Ok, back to english grammar. Condition: it's basically an "if-then" statement. We're familiar with those. If this is true, then this is true. Every one of these has that construction. Every one of these, produce or they throw on the table a truth. If that condition is met, then the other is always met. That's what you have here. That's exactly it.

Now look, the value of this is that John presents us with things that are basically observable. If this thing that is observable, is true in somebody or true in yourself. Then it necessarily forces us to this conclusion about something else that may not be so observable. That's what the value of this is. Now, the most important thing we can do with this portion of 1st John is believe it. It's God's word. Believe that men are the way God says they are, if the condition is met. If this, then this. What we want to believe, if this is true, God says this will always be true. We don't want to steer away from that. This is critical.

So let's look more closely now. We see that two are dissimilar from three. Two are about life. Three are about death. We see that there is a similarity in construction, these are all verses that begin with "if," presenting us with a condition but, let's look more closely at these verses. Verse 6, "if we say that we have fellowship with Him while we walk in the darkness, then..." Now the "then" isn't there, I recognize that it's not in any of these. But it's implied. If we claim

fellowship, and we walk in darkness... then we can know this for certain. We're liars. We lie. We don't practice the truth. That's bad folks. That's really bad. That means you fall into this category, there is hell awaiting you. This is not a small mistake.

Now here's what I want to think about just a second. Walking in darkness - you know it strikes me this way. We've got people here that think they're Christians and they're not. And I recognize that when I come into a verse like this, and we say, well, you know if you claim, if you say you have some saving relationship with God, you have fellowship with Him. And you walk in darkness. Well, here's the problem. We've got a whole room of people that are saying this. Very observable. But you walk in darkness.

Now here's the thing, those who walk in darkness, Jesus said you'll know them by their fruit. This fruit is observable. And yet, men are primarily blind to it in themselves. How many do you think say, "Oh yeah, that's me, I walk in darkness." You see the problem here is that the deceived people don't believe it. I know they don't. By and large, as a measure. You know how I know that? Because God's word basically says that.

I mean, listen to this. Don't turn back there, I want you to stay camped right here in 1st John. But just listen to three Proverbs. Proverbs 16:2, "All the ways of a man are pure..." - in whose eyes? In his own eyes. All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes. How about this one, Proverbs 21:2, "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes." And then you have this, Proverbs 30:12: There are those who are clean in their own eyes. But are not washed of their filth. You know how verse 7 deals with cleansing. You see, this is the real issue.

Do you notice the two verses in 1st John that deal with life, they end with cleansing. Cleansing - the cleansing of the blood of Christ, and you see brethren, we can't see it. We can't see who's cleansed. Everybody wants to believe their sin is forgiven, it's cleansed. I'm right with God. But it's true of some people, and there are evidences in those of whom it's true. But here, here's the problem, you know people that say their Christians, but they walk in darkness, but the problem is they won't admit that they walk in darkness. Why? I mean, because they think their ways are clean, and right, and pure. That's what the proverb is saying. That's what Solomon looks out upon men and he recognizes. He was a very wise man, he may have done foolish things, but he had wisdom. Unlike any other man. Until Christ walked this earth. And you know what? He could look at men, and he can recognize they are wrong. They are in their filth. They walk around with their chins held high. They prance around, like they are... (incomplete thought). That's mankind. That's the problem.

You see, and I look at this, okay, I've got lost people here in front of my eyeballs, that are listening to my words go forth. How are they going to get found out? How are they going to get found out like Charo was found out? This is a mercy trying to find you out, and dig you out of that self-deception. I recognize this, it takes God to speak, but I also recognize this. The words of the preacher are not inconsequential. God uses them. And so I'm going to try to use my words to find you out. Men think that they do walk in the light, so how do we identify darkness? What does it mean? What are we going to look for in ourselves, if we're looking for this darkness? It's not like you open your eyes, and it's just dark. This isn't a physical thing.

So how do we identify it? Well, I think if you look at the verses here, I believe John helps us. I want you to get a feel for how this thing evolves. John is moving, and as he moves through these verses, watch this. In 5, he tells us about a God of light. Now remember what we're after

here. We're trying to figure out what is darkness all about. What is darkness, what is walking in darkness? How can we find you out? How can you find yourself out? Well remember, he introduces light. We have light and dark. God is light, and in him there is no darkness. So he introduces this, we looked at it last time. This is the nature of God. Now, "if we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness we lie."

Here's the thing that I want you to see. Darkness is put in the same camp with lies, and it is all the way through here. Notice, you do not practice the truth. Darkness is opposed to truth. Darkness fosters lies. Over against 7, if we walk in the light; there we are back to the light. These are people in the light, their sins are washed, and cleansed by the blood. You go to 8, If you say we have no sin, notice this; deception. You see the darkness is deception, the truth is not in us. And if you jump down to 10, If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar. His word is not in us. I want you to see the progression here. We go from light; we see the opposite, we see the darkness. We see this darkness in verse 6. We see him say in 8; The truth is not in us. We see him say in 10: His word is not in us. Make that connection in your minds. You see if we're going to look for darkness, we want to make a connection back to God's word. There's a connection there. His word. I take walking in darkness. You know what a lot of times we like to think about? "Well, walking in darkness; the prostitutes out there."

That's what Charo thought right? Beforehand. When finally God exposed her, she looked at the prostitute walking up and down Hackberry, and she said, "I'm just like her." So you see darkness. (Incomplete thought) We don't see it in ourselves, we think our ways are really pure. But you know one thing, we tend to spot darkness in other people. We readily acknowledge it, and observe it in others. A lot more difficulty recognizing it in self. But a lot of times we think about; "Oh yeah Hitler, was dark." If you just think darkness. Oh yeah, all sorts of sexual sin, and carousing and murder, and people that are drug dealers. You have darkness, there in the Mexican Mafia; that's darkness. The beheadings, that's darkness.

Ah, but darkness is far more subtle. Those things are darkness, truly they are. But, it's not just what we think as these scandalous sins. That's how we like to think of darkness, and we look at our own lives. Oh, you know we compare ourselves with others. "Well we don't do that!" But listen, this isn't just about scandalous sins. To live in the dark, means you don't practice the truth. You don't abide in the truth. God's word does not abide in you. Now you think about that. God's word, does not. It just means: You live your life, doing what you want to do. That's all that means. Look, you could say; "I don't murder; God's word says not to murder. See I'm keeping his word." When that is not even the reason you don't murder. You don't murder, because your just not naturally inclined to that. You don't murder because, you don't like the consequences of what would happen if you did. But that doesn't mean that you are embracing God, and embracing the light of His word.

You know, you can take a blind man, and let him walk around out there. Once in a while, he might actually make it on to the road. And even be pointed into the direction of that could take him in a good direction. But it's random. It's not because he sees something and he's in the light, and he has a direction in mind. You see, there are a lot of people. Morality suites you. But don't take that as; "Oh yeah, I've got God's word abiding in me." Some of you have morality. You cart a Bible around. But don't mistake that, for God's word abiding in you. Look, the thing to ask is not just: "Do I happen to apparently be in line with Scripture sometimes?" Is God's word in

me? Now that's huge. Do you know how it is as a lost man? God's word is not in me. God's Word comes at me like the Ten Commandments written in stone. It's an external code that is saying, "Do me or die," and I don't like it. To some degree I try to conform to it, so that I can merit something with God. I recognize this displeases Him. It's an external code. That my heart does not love, it does not like. It does not spring from inside. It doesn't spring from a desire to do the will of God. It is an external code that thunders at me. I don't like it. I fear hell, and so I try to force myself to do it. But I find myself pulling against the reins. Pulling against the yoke; chafing under the yoke.

God says that His people, Christ's commandments are not burdensome to us. His commandments are not burdensome as a Christian. But when you're lost, they're burdensome. They're burdensome anytime you're told what to do. You know, a child can sit there and be relatively at peace. He can be sitting there on the sofa reading a book; not having a tantrum, not creating problems, not smashing glasses in the kitchen. Anyone could say, "What a well behaved child." But if I say, "Would you please bring that book to me?" That child was doing what he wanted to do before. But right now it's going to be the test. He digs his heels in, and he throws that book on the floor, and he walks off in a huff.

You see, that's how men are. And they deceive themselves into thinking that while they're sitting there, they're well behaved, and God is well pleased with them. You see the issue is inside. Does the word of God. Is your life regulated by the word of God? I mean look, that's what happens in Christians. Suddenly our world view is not: "What do I want?" It's: "What does God want?" And you know, we want to want what He wants, when we've truly been converted. That's what happens.

Peter describes this, he says in 1st Peter 4:2 (don't turn there, stay in 1st John) He says; live for the rest of the time in the flesh (and he is just saying in the body). Live for the rest of the time in (your body) no longer for human passions but for the will of God. Do you see, he sees two types of lifestyles here? One that's driven by human passions, and one that's driven by the will of God. This is why Jesus says; it's not everybody that inherits the kingdom, it's those that do the will of My Father. Brethren, all you have to ask is this. Not: Is there morality in my life at times? Not: Are you running roughshod through the bars and the strip joints on the weekend? It's not the issue. The issue is, is your life regulated by the Word? Not: Are you always starting, by what you want to do? And then coming to the word and saying. "I hope it lines up." And when it doesn't, you just kinda justify it away. Are you starting there? Are you living the kind of life where it's like I'm not my own. I've been bought with a price. Do you remember what Jesus said? He said if you follow Him, "You will not walk in the darkness." You will walk in the light.

Following Him. How do we follow Him? What was His life like? I mean, brethren. As He walked through this world. Jesus said; "My food is to do the will of my Father." "The will of Him who sent me, and to accomplish His work." In John 6:38 "I've come down from heaven, not to do my own will. But the will of Him who sent me." You see true Christians are in this place. I see them in the church. I'll have a brother come to me and say; "You know the thing that I did over there, I'm sorry." I felt like, "Why are you?... I didn't even notice." Why would he do that? Why, when nobody knew what he did, is he going to come and apologize to me? You know why? Because when a man like that gets up in the morning, and his eyes go Godward. "Lord, I want to live this day the way you want me to live it."

I hear of situations where those who profess Christ, are confronted about their sin in this church, and they just bristle. Boy, that's bad. A regular lifestyle of that, is going to hell. You walk in darkness, if God's Word is not constantly that light, lighting you. Lighting you into a practice of truth. Leading you, leading you in that path. Listen, you know. You can have a wife, you see this. You know a wife who she lives in harmony with her husband, and you look at that and say; "Wow!" She's a good wife. But it's only because of those points that line up with her will. Just like the husband goes somewhere, where her will does not want to go. And she will pout, she will cry, she will dig her heels in.

Look, a deep sense of respect and submission, are seen when there's a disagreement. Brethren, I'll tell you this. If you're a true child of God, He is going to come to you over, and over, and over. And He is going to test your complete surrender to Him. And He will put His finger on things in your life, and say: I want that. How are you reacting? He is going to come, and have somebody, some preacher, or some brother or sister come and say; "You know I see that this is happening in your life, but here's what's said in God's word." What's your practice when that happens? I mean, what's your starting point? Do you get up in the morning and say, "What do I want to do? Well, I want to do this, and I hope it fits over here." Somebody comes along; "Well, what's wrong with that?" That is always the starting point for people like that. "What's wrong with that?" Rather than starting with a clean slate, and saying; "I want to live a life surrendered to God, and that's my starting point. Okay Lord, what do you want me to do?" And as you're going through His word, you read His word for that purpose. To conform your life to it. "Oh, I see; this is what God wants me to do." And I am going to strive to do it.

Listen, if your life is about going to movies and then justifying how you have Christian liberties to do that. And I'm not, look, I'm not saying right here, anything about rather a movie is right or wrong. But if that's what your life is all about. If that's the righteousness of your life? "Well, there's nothing wrong with it." Rather than actually, from the starting point saying, "God wants me to love the brethren. Lord, how do I love the brethren?" See that, I'm going to make that what my life is about. His Word abides. His Word is the starting point. My life is regulated by the Word.

If that's not the case? Your life may be no better off than that woman who just happens, 80 percent of the time to agree with her husband. You agree morality is good, you agree not murdering is good. You agree it's in your best interest not to go get drunk, or go get high. You agree it's in your best interest not to cheat on your spouse or not to kill your child, you just think that's... But that does not mean that it is well. The real issue is, God's word. God's word is all about the light here. If God's Word is not regulating, you're in the dark. You're in the dark. You measure your life by God's Word. Or do you want to just; "I want to do it my way?" "I just want to do it my way." "I want to do what I want to do."

Well, think about this, look at the terminology at the end of verse 6. Let's jump from walking in darkness, to practicing the truth. I love this. John makes the correlation between walking in darkness, and not practicing the truth. Which would mean, the inverse. I mean, if walking in darkness; correlates to; not practicing the truth. Walking in light correlates to? Pretty easy test here. Practicing the truth. Brethren, we don't talk that way. Do we; did anybody come in here today and say; "How ya doing brother, are you practicing the truth?" I don't think you did.

We don't talk that way, because we don't think that way. Brethren, maybe we need to start thinking that way.

But did you see what's being emphasized when we talk that way? I mean; Are you practicing the truth? If we try to grasp this, it may reveal some helpful things about it. Our practice; Think right there, practicing the truth. What is our practice? This is not like baseball practice. The practice here means, what? Lifestyle; that which we habitually do. The practice. The question is, do we have lifestyle that corresponds to truth? Do we do the truth? We don't think like that, we think about speaking truth. But think about; Doing the truth. John takes our minds to doing the truth. That tells us; behind everything that you do, there is what? Everything, every motive, every desire, every action, every thing behind it there is what? There is either a truth, or a lie. You can measure everything in your life by truth and deception.

There are so many things, like I have, you know. You'll hear me once in a while go after sports. Well, I make comments about sports. Because, that's an area of weakness for me. It takes, I mean I have to have lots of self-discipline. I could love football and watch it all the time. I rarely ever do. It is a real challenge for me when the Spurs do well. I can just tell you this. I'm an avid Tigers fan, Lions fan, Wolverines fan. This all comes from my lost days. And I have had to put the knife to the neck of this thing. But here's the thing.

You say, "What's he saying? Sports is evil." No. But I'll say this, in and of itself, there might be neutrality. But what everyone of us has to ask, rather it's that or any other thing. Am I buying into some deception with my involvement with this. Everything can be measured, by the truth or the deception. Is there deception in this desire? Is there deception in this lifestyle? Are there deceptions behind the choices I make? And you can see, these are lethal deceptions that are being spoken about here. Practicing the Word; practicing the truth is practicing the Word; the Word is truth. Thy Word is truth. It means that my practice is that. There is this body of truth, that's my practice, that's my lifestyle, that's what regulates me, that's where I go. I am bought with a price. I have a Master. He's given me a body of truth. He says that you need to govern your life. And if it's not. If desires, sensual desires, just desires for the party, and desires for the fun.

Brethren, lets move to verse 7, and speedily. "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 us from all sin." It's like John loves to surprise us, we're going to see this throughout 1st John. It's like when you're reading along, and if you just read something he says, and you try to anticipate what he's going to say next. You're almost always wrong. Because he likes to set; the thing you expect, he substitutes something else in there. Which a lot of times is the same way of saying the thing that you expected him to say, but he says it in different terminology. It's like right here. He gives us the unexpected. When we read verse 6, and we transition to 7. We expect something else.

Right? This is what we expect: You read verse 6. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But, if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, what would you expect? We have fellowship with God. That's what I would expect. But instead he says; we have fellowship with one another. He hits us with the fellowship of fellow walkers in light.

Now that's interesting, that's incredibly interesting. Which, it's not what we expected, but it's exactly what you see in the Church. You don't want just to swiftly pass over this without

taking notice. Look, there is not fellowship between everybody in this church, and there shouldn't be. Because we have some people in the church, who are not genuinely converted. Those of you that I'm trying to smell out here. If you wonder why it constantly seems that you just don't connect well with the most godly people in the church. This is the reason. There's a reason.

I'll tell you what. You know this, many of you have expressed this. Far away there I was in the Amsterdam airport, and here is a woman from Africa, with her Bible open. And I sat down with her, and we talked for I forget how long. I had like a 9 hour layover or something. And I talked to her, and it was like we were old friends. We began to speak about Christ, and we both just lit up. Look, when I'm in the light, and you're in the light. There is going to be fellowship in the things of light.

But there are two strains of fellowship in the church. There is the strain of fellowship, that is the fellowship of light. And there is that strain of fellowship, which is fellowship in darkness. I mean look. If you're in the light, your eyes are open. You behold the light of God, you behold the glory of God. You behold the glory of Christ. You love that. There's something that draws people that have a love for that together. They see in the light, they see their sin. There's a battle together for sin. There's a battle together, to groan together, and to fight together. They're serious about holiness. The reason some of you don't find fellowship with others in the church is when they begin to talk about holiness, you want to yawn. They begin to talk about the precious things of Christ, you look at some people and it's like their eyes are glazed over. But you know what? You start to talk about careers, handsome men, and beautiful women. You talk about money. You start to set forth some things like that, the stuff of this world. You start to talk about the latest music put out by that band or the movie that played. And it's like "vroom", they light right up.

I just say beware. There is a true fellowship that takes place between God's people. That you - you are not in that privileged circle. You hang with God's people here and now. But your very desires, they are a give away. You know, those that are in the light, because they are in the light. And because they do have the Christ likeness being worked out in their lives. And because they're following Christ, and they walk, they imitate Him. There is a charitableness. There does tend to be a kindness in not wanting to be overly judgmental of those. And so, I know that a lot of you are given the benefit of the doubt.

But look, be honest with yourself. Look, what I'm trying to do is give you light from the word. To help you not perish. Do you know what it says about those who are in the darkness? They don't know where they're going. Those of us in the light, know where you're going. We want to try to stop you. We want to try to shine that light on that cliff that's up ahead, and say, "You're going to go over." "Don't go over." If you know it, in the depths of your heart: "I just do not get excited about Christ like these other people do." "I really have very little excitement about holiness." "I can spend my life..." I mean think about it. If somebody came along and said; if God himself came along and said, "Hey, I have good news for you, there is no hell and you can live here forever. You can just live in sin." If that thought delights you, it speaks volumes. It tells me what you really want. (Incomplete thought).

The Jehovah's Witnesses idea of paradise is not to me. I want to be where Christ is, and I want to be where righteousness dwells. And I want to be where I'm not going to sin, ever

again. And I long for it. I want it, and if you came along and told me, "Hey good news, there's no hell." "You can just stay here, and you can enjoy sin to the full." That is hell for the person whose heart has been brought into the light.

Well, I would just end with this. Because this is undoubtedly the hope, it's the blood. 1 John 1:7 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 us from all sin. Look, you don't want to take this verse to mean that we need to walk in the light first; and that's how we get the blood of Jesus his Son, to cleanse us from all sin. You don't want to do that. I mean, this verse is not dealing with which comes first. John is constantly talking about those things which you find together. Remember, this is an "if-then" clause. He's saying if this is true, then this is true. What he's doing is he's telling you that you have part in the cleansing blood, if the pattern of your life is light. Those go together. That's what he's saying.

What is meant to teach is that there is a way of life that corresponds to being washed in the blood. And there is a way of life that does not correspond to being washed in the blood. This is meant to spell out for us plainly, that you and I should take no assurance of salvation. We should not assume the blood has not done anything for us, in the way of forgiveness, and pardon, and ransom, and redemption, and washing away of the guilt of sin. We should not assume that. If our life is characterized by disobedience to the word of God. Listen, if you can know that God says something in His word, and just as long as the rest of the Christians, or the elders or whatever don't find out; You're good. You are not good, you are bad. And you are hell bound. If you can just know what God says, and turn your back on it. That smells of the fires of the pit. (Incomplete thought).

Clearly we see, "My little children," in verse one of chapter two. "I'm writing these things to you so that you may not sin, but if anyone does sin." We know that sin is going to be there, and we know that we have falls. But what I am saying is this. If you can look, and you can see that God says this, and you can just say, "Uh-Uh!" What he's saying is you have no part in the Blood. You have no part. To walk in the light is to walk in the truth. To walk in the truth is to have that truth abide in you, it's to have The Word abide in you. You see, you can see this. If what can be seen is this way, then it always leads us to a conclusion about what's true, about your part in the blood of Christ. Or your lack of a part in that blood of Christ. The blood of Christ, we don't want to miss it for what it says. It does cleanse, but you have to recognize this. This is essential. That where there is cleansing, and where there is pardon. Which we can't see and it's not stamped on our forehead. It's a legal declaration. We can't see it. But what I can see is I can see lifestyle, and I can see fruit.

And I know this, that wherever God's forgiveness is, He's also given a new heart. And that heart does not find His commandments burdensome. That doesn't mean that there isn't a time, that we can stumble, and we can chafe at it. That doesn't mean that there isn't a time when we say, "We don't want to do that." But God brings us to that place. And if you're a true Christian, you'll know that. The times you've dug your heels in. Oh, sometimes He melts you just by - you dig your heels in, and He comes and He wraps His arms around you, and He kisses you. That takes your heels right out. There's other times He lays that rod to your back, or He puts you in the fire. He brings out the rod, and He applies it to effect. Always.

Do you know why? He's under covenant promise to conform you to Christ. You know what conforming to Christ is? He was totally surrendered to the will of God. Totally. Even when confronted by the cross itself and the horrors that awaited him there. Your will, not mine. That's conformity.

Look, be honest. Is God working that in your life? If not, just look. He doesn't want you to construct your salvation. Just cry out to Him to rescue you from all the lostness, the darkness, the deception. Cry out to Him. (Incomplete thought). I mean His ears are not deaf, He can hear. And when that cry is sincere, He'll come and rescue you. No matter how long your profession's gone on. No matter how many people you've played the hypocrite in front of. No matter how long you've deceived yourself.

We're going to get to it. Verse 8: If we say certain things - here it's we have no sin. All this comes down to self deception. We deceive ourselves. If you feel like you've been deceived, don't just blow it off. Don't do what Charo did for all those years. God had mercy on her, and stopped her in her tracks. But He may not stop you. This may be your last time. Your conscience gets pricked, you know there is a last time. There is a time, when all of a sudden when God says to His servants tell them that their blood be on their own head, and the back is turned, and it's over.

Those that go to hell, I can tell you, nobody believes they're going. Nobody does; yeah on their deathbed. On their deathbed, they begin to sense the fire and the brimstone, oftentimes. But typically, when men are healthy nobody thinks they're going to hell. But if God - look, if God has pricked; if God has caused the little squirming, if that goad is stuck in your side, if you're uncomfortable, you know your fellowship with the godly is not there. You know that His word abiding in you and practicing truth. You know you're like that wife, that yeah, your life lines-up sometimes. But there are things that you just dig in your heels, you don't want God to tell you how you're going to live your life. You know that, you know there is something in you that just resists the Holiness of God. (Incomplete thought).

You know! That what I said before is true of you. This isn't springing up from His word abiding in you. The times you try to obey, you grit your teeth. Cause there's this law coming at you, telling you have to do it. But you would throw off those shackles in a second. And you would love it, if somebody came along and told you, there was no hell. And that you could just have the world, and have all there is in it. You know deep down, you know that's your desire. Don't. Don't. Don't dismiss that. Cry out. Say, you know. I'm not that affected. A little bit, then cry a little. Look, faith, the cry. There's nothing in scripture that says, big or small. It's trusting Christ. I mean if everyone of you that has some hesitancy, some concern about your soul. If you're crying; Lord have mercy on me. Please rescue me from this darkness. Please rescue me from; just the kind of christianity that I've had, That it. It's no good. Don't you want the kind of Christianity, where seeing God's will, seeing God, looking at that and saying: "It's beautiful, it's glorious." Righteousness is greatly to be desired. It is not a burden. Where you just can hang your head with tears, when you stray out of the path. You just long for that day, when you're going to be totally set free from the flesh. Be able to fly like an eagle, and freedom to do nothing forever more, but just perfectly serve Him. Perfectly obey Him.

Father, I pray that you would just, Lord, do in the hearts of men, what I can't do. Amen