

July 7, 2019

Walking in the Light

"...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." I John 1:7

"Anyone who claims to be in the light, but hates his brother is still in the darkness. Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness..." I John 2:9-11

*"Love is patient,
Love is kind,
It does not envy,
It does not boast,
It is not proud.
It is not rude,
It is not self-seeking,
It is not easily angered,
It keeps no record of wrongs,
Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth.
It always protects,
Always trusts,
Always hopes,
Always persevered.
Love never fails."*
I Corinthians 13:4-7



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As believers I am afraid we have often misapplied the Apostle John's teachings about "walking in the light". We have, often taken many of our own ideas about important doctrinal positions and added them to John's description of this walk. But the Apostle does not teach that going to church, reading our Bibles, and praying, are part of the light walk. He does not tell us that our positions on singing, or the Lord's supper, or whatever are a part of "walking in the light".

Now don't misunderstand me, those things are important, but John is very clear about what it means to "walk in the light".

He writes, *"Anyone who claims to be in the light, but hates his brother is still in the darkness. Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble."*

John wants us to understand that the proof of our walk is not found in all of those important doctrinal positions, but instead, it is found in the nature of our relationships with others. The Apostle remembers well the final words of the Master when he says, *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."* (John 13:34-35)

To "...walk in the light, as he is in the light..." demands that we love others and there are no exceptions to this command. Above all else that we might need to do to be true disciples this one commandment must be obeyed. We must love others. How can we know we are loving others as Jesus would want us to?

First, we must understand and accept that for us hate is not now, nor will it ever be, an option. As those who follow Jesus we have no right to hate anyone at any time for any reason. Instead we must choose to live Paul's words to the Corinthian believers. While those in the world may choose to hate others you and I must choose to love others, just as Jesus has chosen to love us. We can make no other choice.

We must choose patience and we must choose kindness. We must choose to give up envy, and boasting and pride. We cannot be rude, we cannot be selfseeking, we cannot be easily angered, we can keep no record of wrongs.

As those who follow Jesus we cannot delight in anything that is evil, but we must always hold to the truth. We must choose to protect, choose to trust, choose to hope, choose to persevere. Our love cannot fail. Then, and only then, can we be called disciples.

