

# An Authentic Relationship with God - Part 1

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     better in some ways, so grateful for that. So keep hearing your prayers as well, if you would. Take out your Bibles and turn with me to 1 John chapter 1. 1 John 1, we're going to read verses 5 through 9. The next section, the next subject matter that kind of goes together is, starts in chapter 1 verse 5, goes through chapter 2 verse 6, but that's a long way, so there's a lot there trying to break it up. We have plenty to deal with in these five verses, and I hope you see why. So if you're able, please stand as I read from 1 John chapter 1, beginning of verse 5. This is the message we have heard from Him and proclaim to you that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. Excuse me. 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, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, is cleansing 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. So it reads, let's pray. Father, guide us today as we look at Your Word. May Your light shine. May we see Father John's clear message, and may we recognize all the implications of what this truth says. Father, we live in a world that redefines truth, relativizes truth. And so, Father, may we hear clearly what the truth is, which You alone can define. We ask in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated.

What is truth? I was thinking about that scene in the Gospel of John, chapter 18, when Jesus is standing before Pontius Pilate, right? And Pilate's questioning Him, trying to determine why these people want to crucify Him. And three times He says, I find no guilt in Him. I find no guilt in Him. And so, one of the things that interested Pilate was that Jesus was a king. And he asked Jesus, are you a king? And Jesus said, my kingdom is not of this world. If it were of this world, you'd be dust. Now, it's my translation. But if it were of this world, my angels would be fighting, and you would have no chance. But my kingdom is not of this world. I came to bear witness to the truth. As Pilate said, what's truth? What is truth?

It's truth. See, in His world, just like our world, truth had been relativized. Truth is, you know, my truth, your truth. There's no the truth. It's my truth. My truth is whatever makes me feel good. My truth is whatever, however I want to identify with this world. That's my truth. It's not the truth, but it's my truth. And that's what truth is. I define it. So, we rewrite history, don't we? To conform to our view of how it should be. Not how it was, but how it should be, how we want it to be. We redefine our sexuality so that I can feel okay, acceptable, what's true to my feelings. Now, if we believe in God, this becomes a problem. Because if I believe in God and I want to redefine truth, then I have to reshape who God is. He has to adapt, he or she, has to adapt to whatever suits me.

So, when I hear of a God that judges or says this or that, and I would say, no, that's not my God. My God wouldn't do that. Because I've defined Him in a way that I can feel okay.

[ 5 : 2 5 ]     So that I can pursue my pleasures. Because He's not God, I am. Now, John, in 1 John, defines truth quite differently. He measures truth differently.

Truth is not what we determine. Truth is what God determines. God defines truth. And so, he begins his message in verse 5. He starts with who God is. Who God is, is the message. This is the message. We have heard from Him and proclaimed to you that God is light. In Him, there's no darkness at all. Now, notice his message is two parts. There's an affirmation, what God is, and there's a denial, what God is not. God is light. He reveals what is. He illumines so that we can see what is real, what is true, what is light. Light shows truth. You turn a light on in a dark room, and all of a sudden, you see everything. You see what is. You see what's real. You see everything is revealed.

God is that light. He reveals what is, what's real, what's truth. So, we read in Psalms, thy word is a lamp unto my feet, a light unto my path. His word reveals the path. His word shows me where to go, how to walk in light. Jesus came and said, I am the light of the world. Whoever believes in me will no longer walk in darkness. Whoever follows me will not stumble because Jesus shows the way. He is the light. So, the second part of that, God is light. In Him, there's no darkness at all. So, it affirms what God is, and it denies what God is not. God has no darkness. No darkness in Him. He is pure. He is flawless perfection. He is unblemished. He is absolutely set apart holy. In fact, as the seraphim sing, holy, holy, holy.

So pure. As Isaiah had that vision of God and saw God in His holiness, saw the seraphim singing, holy, holy, holy, holy, holy. What did Isaiah the prophet say?

Woe is me. I am undone. I'm a man of unclean lips. I'm of a people of unclean lips.

[ 8 : 33 ] And yet, as He's in that light of God, God sends cleansing and healing. We're going to read about that in this passage today. His light exposes darkness. He reveals what is impure, what is not light, what is not holy. So, God is the standard. When John says God is light, He's the standard.

He's the measure of what is true, what is real, what is pure. Not us.

So, He starts with who God is. And who God is then defines who we are. Do you see that? He says in verse 5, God is light and Him is no darkness at all. So, verse 6, if we say we have fellowship with Him yet walk in darkness, conflict. He's light, we're walking in darkness, darkness. How can I have fellowship with Him? So, He's going to distinguish what's true and false.

So, the message is light and darkness. The meaning applied to us becomes about truth and lies. Are we, do we walk in His light and do we see what is true? Or do we walk in darkness and hide and deceive ourselves? So, He's going to distinguish. And I want you to notice verse 7. He's, or excuse me, verse 6, if we say something. Verse 8, if we say something. Verse 10, if we say something. So, He's going to talk about people that make claims, people that say things. Do you say you believe in God? Do you say you are in fellowship with God? How's your walk? So, you talk about God, does your walk match your talk. All right? So, He's going to talk about if you say this.

It's one thing to say something, but your life will either prove it or deny it. So, He's going to talk about truth and falseness. What's true and false? Distinguishing. So, authentic Christianity, which I think this is really what captures what John is doing in this whole letter. Authentic Christianity. In other words, knowing that I really have true eternal life. How do I know I have true eternal life? It's if I'm an authentic Christian. So, authentic Christianity is enabled by a relationship with God. It's about relationship. I walk with Him. I walk in His light. I fellowship with Him.

[ 11 : 21 ] But authentic Christianity enabled by relationship with God is distinctive, John says. It is distinctive. It stands out. It is provable. It has evidence. It's consistent. It has a pattern. So, we're going to look at two of those distinctives today. In verses 6 and 7, if you say or if you walk. So, walk versus talk.

Verses 8 and 9, He gives a second distinctive. Whether you deny your sin or whether you confess your sin. So, you got talk and walk and you have denial or confession. So, that's where we're going today. So, first distinction. Fellowship with God means walking in His cleansing light with one another.

That's a longer statement. That's a longer statement than I usually like to make, but I had to get everything in there. Trying to be accurate. Think about this. Fellowship with God, real fellowship, relationship with God, authentic Christianity means walking in His light. It's not just His light, but it's His light that cleanses us. Walking in His cleansing light with one another. Because that's what John says. For walking in light, we have fellowship with one another.

And He cleanses us. That's what fellowship with God is for one thing. So, he begins with the claim in verse 6. So, if we say, we have fellowship with Him, God, who is light, while we walk in darkness, then we're lying. We do not practice the truth. We're simply doing the opposite of what we say.

He begins with the lie here. A claim to have fellowship with God. Now, what does fellowship mean? Remember what fellowship means? It means commonness. It means partnership. It means participating together. So, anyone in this world, believer or unbeliever, can have fellowship by eating together. You're sharing a meal. That's common. You can go to something event together. Went to Red Rocks to see Sister Lauren and Brother David this last Tuesday night. It was awesome. Yeah.

[ 14 : 02 ] So, we were all there. 9,000 some-thought people who climbed the 18 miles to get up to Red Rocks Theater. Right? Yeah. And had plastic shoes on and those socks. I don't know. I didn't ever been there before. But we had fellowship. We had a common experience. And believers who were there had an even greater commonness in the words that she sang and what David's saying.

That's fellowship. Fellowship is commonness. Sharing in common. What you have in common. So, unbelievers have a commonness in the world. Believers have another level of commonness.

Because we share God's light. We share God's spirit. We share God's word. We share God's truth. We share our relationship together. We bear one another's burdens. We love one another. We serve one another. Et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. I mean, it's bigger fellowship. Okay? So, fellowship. So, the lie is saying, I have commonness with God. I share partnership with God, yet I walk in darkness.

God is light. I'm in darkness. I am not sharing anything in common with God. I am not partnering with Him in any way. I'm not participating. It's a lie. It's a sham.

And if I'm living in the darkness, I keep... And all of these words, all these verbs here are present tense. So, we keep walking in the darkness. It's not just that I temporarily am in the dark. It's that that's where I live. That's where I walk. That's my pattern of life. I keep walking in the darkness.

[ 15 : 49 ] I keep avoiding God's light. Then, if I'm in darkness, if the lights are off, what do we see? Nothing. We're blind. We don't know where we're going. We stumble.

So, it's a lie. He says, you're lying. If we say this, we lie. We claim something we're not. We're pretenders. We're posers. It's all talk. Nothing in reality. We are inauthentic, practicing a lie, phonies, and a sham. That's our lie. We say, but we don't walk in His light. So, that's the lie.

So, then what's the truth? So, verse 7. Here's the contrast. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light. So, again, He's defining the light. Not, I'm walking in my light. I'm walking in my light, my truth. No, we're walking in the light as He is in the light. Then, we have benefits.

Let's look at this part first. Who God is defines who we are. So, we're walking in the light as He is in the light. So, if we have fellowship with God, then we are in His light. We are sharing His light.

We are walking in that light. We're following that light. As Jesus said, I am the light. Follow me. If you follow me, walk in my light, you will not stumble. Right? So, walking in the light as He is in the light, where He is. If I'm walking in the light and God is light, then I have fellowship with God.

[ 17 : 40 ] Now, He doesn't say that. He says we have, He surprises us by saying we have fellowship with one another. But the reason we have fellowship with one another first is because we're walking in the light of God and we're sharing His light. We're in fellowship with God. We're walking in commonness with God. We're participating with God. We're partnering with God.

God. It's not the natural thing to do, by the way. It's a faith step to walk in light. And if you're walking, whereas the person walking in darkness is blind, right, cannot see what's real. As we walk in the light, we are visible. We are seen by Him and we can see ourselves.

We see ourselves as we really are. Now, that might be why some people don't want to walk in the light. I don't really want to see what I really am.

But then they miss the blessing. Then they miss the cleansing. Then they miss the healing. We were talking in class now below about David. Remember, David sinned tragically.

And he covered it up and he lied about it. And then for a long time, he kept silent about it. So why would a believer do that, right? Why? It's like, why? And we do that too, don't we?

[ 19 : 19 ] When we get into darkness, we might stay there a while. Why don't we just? Because if we come out and we confess, as we're going to see the next verse, we're clean. It's, why do we hedge at that?

Right? Why do we do that? And why would an unbeliever, if they know that they could come into the light and be healed, why do they not come? Why? Right? And yet we do it as Christians too.

When we fall, we might... Pride? Maybe we still love the darkness a little bit. Maybe, you know.

But it's not rational, what we do. It's not rational. Just food for thought. So we become visible. We see who we really are. We grasp what's real.

And so as we keep walking in his light, he shows us who we are. He shows us where to go. We become more alert to sin because we see all of our own flaws too. He shows us our flaws.

[ 20 : 41 ] He shows us our weaknesses. So walking in light, we're able to see better. Not just where we're going, but who we are. And we can see the temptations clearer. Right? The lights are on. I can see.

If I hide in the shadows, I can't see that. Interesting that Peter, right, in the light of Jesus, I'll never fail you. I'll never forsake you. I'll never deny you. I'll never do it.

I'm so committed. There's no way. And then in the darkness of the campfire, a little tap on the back with the little slave girl, servant girl.

That's when he falls. Can't see. Yeah, just interesting. Not about really physical darkness. So what are the results?

So if we walk in the light as he's in the light, what does John say? There's a double result in the second part of verse 7. If we walk in the light as he is in the light, so we're all visible, we're all exposed to the light, then what's the result?

[ 21 : 52 ] We have fellowship with one another. And the blood of Jesus, his son, cleanses us. So two results. One, we have fellowship with one another. And two, we have cleansing. But that's a surprise, isn't it?

Because he'd already talked about if we say we have fellowship with God, but walk in darkness, we lie. So we would expect him to say the reverse of that. But if we walk in the light, then we have fellowship with God.

But he skips that. He said if we walk in the light, we have fellowship with one another. Why does he go there? The other one wasn't about if we say we have fellowship with one another, but we walk in...

The other one was if we say we have fellowship with God and walk in darkness, then we're lying. Why does he jump from walking in the light to fellowship with one another? Because it's two sides of the same coin.

These are indivisible things. Walking, having fellowship with God is part and parcel. I don't know if I'm using that phrase right. It just came to my head.

[ 23 : 02 ] It is the same thing. Not the exact same thing, but it's part of the same package. If we walk in fellowship with God, if we have relationship with God, we by implication and reality have fellowship with other believers.

Because remember he said, if we walk. He didn't say if I walk or if you walk. John's not thinking about individuality.

He's thinking about body, life. If we walk in light. By walking in light, I have fellowship with God. I'm sharing fellowship with God.

I have a relationship with God. I'm walking in his light. And when I walk in fellowship with God, I have fellowship with his body. With his community. With his children.

With his people. Automatically. But remember what fellowship means. Not just commonness, but participation. Partnership.

[ 24 : 03 ] Engagement. Community. So what's the implication of this? If you avoid fellowship with God's people, you don't have fellowship with God.

Let me say it again. If you avoid fellowship with God's people, with the one another's, you don't have fellowship with God.

Because if you have fellowship with God, you're walking in his light. And so are other believers. Walking in his light. That brings us together. Part of being, walking in his light is to be together.

Because when Jesus came, he said, I choose you. I set you apart. Now you are a body. Now you're my body. You're my hands and feet on this earth. Our whole purpose for being saved is that we might be then his light together.

I say it strong enough? If you're not fellowshiping with God's people, you're not fellowshiping with God.

[ 25 : 11 ] Because God is with his people. Now that's not to say if you are by some extreme circumstance prohibited from being with God's people, that doesn't mean God has abandoned you and you don't have fellowship with God.

But that's an extreme. I've been thinking, this just seems to keep coming up. So I'm guessing God wants me to talk about it.

But I'm thinking, you know, two years ago, COVID happened and we changed some things. And we recognize, you know, we're trying to do what's careful, what's right.

And we accepted that being together could be a health issue for some people. And then I was reading this last week or two about Christians in other countries who risk their lives every time they get together with other believers.

Talk about health danger. They risk their lives to be part of an underground church because being part of that church, participating, fellowshiping, partnering together with that church is absolutely crucial.

[ 26 : 27 ] And their enemy is more obvious than ours. So, I'm not going to judge people, but I'm going to say, if you are not fellowshiping with God's people, aside from God preventing you, you are not fellowshiping with God.

Period. I don't care if it's a risk to your health or not. That's between you and the Lord. But I look at the other situation, I think, who are we?

Might lose some viewers. That's all right. It's all right. So, what are the effects? The effects are, we have fellowship with one another, his body.

That's just in John's mind. God's light. I'm in God's light. I'm with his people. They all go together. And then, here's the other thing.

It's, if I'm walking in his light, not only do I have fellowship with one another, but I'm cleansed. Look at what he says. Verse 7. We fellowship with one another.

[ 27 : 35 ] And the blood of Jesus, his son, cleanses us from all sin. What did I do to get the cleansing? I'm just walking in his light. I'm just walking in his light.

It doesn't say, I get cleaned up before I walk in his light. It doesn't say, I get my life all together and fixed up before I walk in the light. When we started the men's group back in, let me say this, when God started the men's group, because I tried to start it before that.

When I was still in depression, and it was about 2012, somewhere in there, I started the men's group. And I'd already been burned a couple of times. I'd been betrayed by people that I consider close friends in this church who left.

Said, we're your friend, but we're leaving. I said, no, you're not my friend. So, to start another men's group that was about, and I claim this verse for the men's group, 1 John 1.7.

If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and there's cleansing. I believe there's power in the gathering of Christians together in the light, where we don't wear masks, where we don't pretend, where we are open and honest and real and transparent.

[ 29 : 04 ] We're in the light together. And so, that's risky. I'd already lost two friends that I'd opened up to. So, it's risky, and it's a step of faith to go into Christian fellowship where you're actually open with one another and talking about your hardships and talking about your failures, talking about your depression, whatever.

Because somebody can burn you. Right? But there was something in me that said, okay, part of the process of getting healed in this depression thing is trust my word.

My word says you need to be with the body. There's a cleansing that comes with openness in the body. I, to this day, believe that fellowship with your husband and other folks, this man over here, that brought healing and cleansing to me.

Okay? There's something unique and powerful about Christian fellowship. His blood is continually cleansing as we are transparent together.

It washes the stain of our guilt and shame because we're talking about it. We're open about it. And God does something special in that. As we together are in light.

[ 30 : 34 ] That doesn't mean I pick another Christian and start telling him everything. Granted, when we started this group, we talked about what this is.

We talked about the risk. We talked about trusting one another. We talked about building that. But it's healing.

So, Jesus clarifies the purpose of God's light in John chapter 3. Remember Nick at night? Remember John chapter 3? Nicodemus came to Jesus at night?

So, it's Nick at night. God thought of it first. And they have this discussion, right, with Jesus. They talk about being born again. They talk about how the spirit moves and some things.

So, Jesus quotes probably the most famous or spoke the most famous verse that's now quoted. It's the most famous. John 3.16. Listen to these verses. Jesus said, That's God's purpose.

[ 31 : 39 ] He sent his son into the world to give eternal life. For God did not send. Now, notice. There's an affirmation and then there's a denial. He's speaking what Jesus came to do, what Jesus did not come to do.

So, he came so that whoever believes in him might not perish but have eternal life. God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world. We need to follow that example.

We are not sent into the world to condemn the world. That's not why we are to follow Jesus. We don't want to give eternal life. We're there to give the message of hope.

We're not there to condemn. We don't carry signs. Pick on certain sinners. How'd you like if someone carries a sign around about Gaspers?

Oh, Gaspers are going to hell. Because they're on the same list as other people. Right? I'm just saying. Jesus is standing at the back of the door.

[ 32 : 46 ] Where am I? God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned.

Whoever does not believe is condemned already. Why? Because he's not believed in the name of the only son of God. It's not our job to condemn people. They condemn themselves. By rejecting truth.

So, two kinds of people. There's those that believe and those that do not believe. Then Jesus talks about the light. This is the true judgment. Light has come into the world and people love the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.

For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed or convicted. But whoever does what is true comes to the light.

Whoever does what is true comes to the light. Whoever is living in reality, whoever comes to the light.

[ 33 : 55 ] Why? So that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God. When he comes to the light, he's experiencing fellowship with God. He's experienced the washing of God.

He's experiencing seeing who he really is and being cleansed by God. So, Jesus says there's two kinds of people. There's the true believer who does the truth, comes to the light, sees clearly that God's working in his life.

Then there is the other person who is not a believer, who loves the darkness, is hiding from the light because the light exposes me. I don't want to be convicted by God.

So, I hide in darkness. And they hate the light because it convicts and exposes me and reveals who I really am. I don't want to see that. Two kinds of people.

Which are you? For John, it's that simple. There's just two kinds. There's no middle ground. You're in the light or you're out of the light. You're either a believer or you're not a believer.

[ 35 : 00 ] How you live shows who you are. That doesn't mean as believers that we don't fall. Of course, we fall. Or temporarily hide in the dark. We hide in the dark sometimes. For whatever reason.

So, authentic Christianity is distinctive. First of all, fellowship with God means walking in his cleansing light with one another. So, there's a second distinctive.

Now, he comes to a different claim in verse 8 and 9. Or say, if we say. So, another saying. If we say, if we claim we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

So, here's the second distinctive. Whereas, on the other hand, verse 9, if we confess our sins. So, we say we have no sins. That's one thing. If we say we do have sin, that's another thing. So, two kinds. Again, two kinds of people.

The distinction about an authentic Christian is that fellowship or relationship, true fellowship and relationship with God includes confession to cleanse our sins.

[ 36 : 09 ] Now, you already talked about walking in the light as a cleansing experience already. But, if we're walking in the light, it's going to expose and show our sin.

And so, we would then either deny it or confess it. So, it begins with the false claim first. What he calls self-deception.

If we say you have no sin, deny our sinfulness. Some people say it as I don't need a savior. Don't try to save me. I don't need saving. I don't need forgiveness.

I'm fine. Whether they're reinterpreting sin to be something, you know, they think of sin as not just the little failures, but the major stuff.

They think of sin as the big bad stuff. The iniquity and the transgression. I don't do that. But, actually, John is using a word that simply means to miss the mark.

[ 37 : 13 ] There's three different kinds of sin described in the Bible. There's the word sin, which means to fall short, miss the mark, you know, imperfection.

We fail. The next one is transgression, where there is a line that God has drawn and we cross it. We transgress. Right? We trespass.

We cross the line. That's open rebellion. And then there's a third kind that God calls iniquity, which means twistedness, perversity.

Right? David claims all three. He's done them all. And so have we. But some people think, oh, you know, I'm not as bad as others, so therefore I'm okay.

I don't know if that's what this is. This sounds like saying, I deny sinfulness, period. I had a professor in college that claimed that he hadn't sinned in years.

[ 38 : 20 ] I was like, I was like, really? Now, I was pretty young then. I didn't, you know, I didn't have a response. I got a lot of responses now.

I wish I could have them now. And like when he said, I haven't sinned in years. I'm like, I think you just did. Anyway, I don't know.

To deny, to say, you know, I don't need to say, to say I'm without guilt. I don't have guilt. Or to say, like we like to hear in our culture today, sin is a made up construct by others who want to control you.

Yeah, that's what it is. Because as if the church made it up. Church didn't make it. Oh, those who wrote the Bible in the later centuries, you know, because it's all myths.

Anyway, we learned a couple weeks ago this. First John is first century. Not made up. So to deny sin, John says, is self-deceptive.

[ 39 : 24 ] He doesn't say we're lying. He says you're self-deceived. We deceive ourselves. You're twisting the truth for yourself. You're hurting yourself. You're avoiding truth.

You're suppressing truth. We don't define sin. God does. Romans 1 says all know.



You know, Romans 1 says everyone knows there's a God. Everyone knows that they are accountable to that God. Everyone knows that wrong will be punished.

And Paul and Romans 1 says everybody knows that. They either suppress it or deny it or twist it or redefine it like our culture did. And I think they were doing it in the first century already. We're just following the same pattern.

So what's the truth? So verse 9, the truth. So there's denial of sin. Verse 9, there's agreement of sin.

[ 40 : 30 ] There's confession of sin. If we confess our sins. So what's confession? Is that where, you know, you go into the back of the church. You go in this little booth.

And you sit in the dark. It's weird. Sit in the dark. And you talk through this window. Where you kind of see shadows. It's really weird.

But I'm not Catholic, so sorry. I'm sure it was well intended. Just not biblical. We confess to God, not...

We confess to our... We have a high priest that we go directly to to confess to. Which we get to in chapter 2. There are times we confess to one another, yeah.

That's part of walking in the light. But confessing to one of you doesn't give me forgiveness. Confessing to God gives me forgiveness.

[ 41 : 28 ] So... It's not in my notes. Why am I going there? Confess. So confess. Confess. Defess with. To say with.

To say the same. To say the same that God says. To agree with God. To acknowledge what God has said about who I am.

So I'm walking in the light. I see who I really am. I say... Yep. God agree with you, Lord. I'm sinful there.

He defines it. I agree with it. As I see it. So I say the same thing. I agree with God. I acknowledge. I recognize it.

And it's more than just admit, concede. It's not like, okay, confess. Confess. Okay, okay. All right. I give it up. I give it up. It's not that. Not conceding.

[ 42 : 29 ] It's... Profess. I fully agree. I see my sin now, Lord. Isaiah in God's prize.

Immediately aware. I'm a man of unclean lips. I can't speak here. David in Psalm 51.

I'm... My sin. My transgression. My iniquity. Please cleanse. I have nothing I can do.

That's confession. And it's laying each sin before God. Notice he says, confess our sins. He didn't say, confess our sinfulness. He didn't say, confess that, oh yeah, I'm an imperfect person.

No, he says, confess our sins specifically. Our specific sins. I confess my pride.

[ 43 : 33 ] I confess my gossip. I confess my lust. I confess my sloth. My prayerlessness. My avoiding people. My lack of love.

My lack of compassion. My... What's your list? If you don't know what your list is, do the Psalm...

Is it 139 or is it 39? I think it's 139. Search me, O God. 139. Search me, O God. See if there's any uncleanness.

He always answers that one. If you wait, you know. If you're okay. If you're serious. He'll show you. Okay. Let me show you. Oh yeah. That's how I'm walking in his light.

He's, show me, Lord. What am I not seeing? Am I self-deceived, Lord? Show me where I'm self-deceived about my own self.

[ 44 : 32 ] I know I taint how I look at myself because I want to see myself better than I am. Right? I kind of love myself that way and hate myself at the same time.

Okay. Okay. So not hiding, not covering it up. And so what are the effects? So if I do that, what happens? There's, again, there's a double result. If I can, if we confess our sins, he is, he's double.

He's faithful and just, which is, that's interesting. Talk about that in a moment. But he's faithful and just to do two things, to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Are those the same thing?

They're a little bit different. First, he forgives our sin. Forgiveness is a canceling of a debt. It's freeing from guilt.

But if I'm already a Christian and I'm walking in light, haven't I already been forgiven? Are, are I not? No, that's not.

[ 45 : 35 ] Am I not? I'm already justified, right? I'm already saved. I'm already a saint, right? My sins have been forgiven forever, right?

Why do I need to confess? Relationship. I'm not, I'm not getting re-saved. I'm walking in the light.

I'm doing the baby steps. I'm, you know, I'm doing the work. So, this is about relationship. When I walk in his light, I discover I still break fellowship with him.

I do things that, that I still sin, right? I still sin. And so, I'm healing the relationship.

I've broken fellowship with God. It's like, remember when Jesus washed the feet in the upper room? Remember that? And he said, he comes to Peter. It's always Peter, isn't it?

[ 46 : 37 ] Peter's like, no, no, no, no, no, no. No, no, no. You don't wash my feet. You're the master. I'm the slave. I should be washing your feet. Let's switch positions here, Jesus. Jesus says, no, if you don't, if I don't wash your feet, you have no part of me.

And Peter's like, oh, okay. Then what do all of it? I want full cleansing. And Jesus says, you're already clean. You're already clean. By the word I spoke to you, I already spoke your cleanness.

But I need to wash your feet. Why? Your daily sins. I'm clean.

I am sanctified. I am justified. I walk in God's light, but I still get my feet dirty. I'm walking in this world. I still get my feet dirty. I need Jesus to wash my feet. I think that's a picture of this confession.

I am safe. I am saved. But I still fall. And I need to restore fully that relationship with God. That's, I think, what we're talking about here.

[ 47 : 40 ] So there's forgiveness, freedom from that guilt, that restoration of fellowship. And then he says, also cleanses you. His blood cleanses us from all unrighteousness.

That's interesting. From all. First, it's forgiving our sins that we've confessed. Then added to that is a cleansing from all unrighteousness.

Different word. Forgiveness and cleansing. Cleansing is purifying. So in one sense, in terms of my relationship to God, that's been healed.

That's forgiven. I've put up a block. God's taken that away by my confession. But then it says that he forgives or purifies from unrighteousness.

I think that maybe is about not just healing the relationship, but then there's a power of sin that's lessened. The power of sin that's overcome.

[ 48 : 51 ] Do you ever notice when you're fighting a sin, have you ever done this, where you're fighting a sin and you have a choice to either talk to God about it or give in to it?

If you're thinking about getting angry, maybe thinking about getting retribution, maybe thinking about, I don't know, whatever. And so there's a moment where you say, okay, Lord, this is what I want to do.

That would be confession. This is what I want to do. I haven't done it yet, but I'm thinking about it. And I'd really like to do it because it would feel good. And when I do that, some of its power is gone.

I'm not ready to say, help me not do this. But what I can do, right? Because I really want to do this. But I'm on the precipice, so I just say, okay, Lord, this is what I want to do.

In fact, this is what I'm going to do. And by saying that, I weaken it. Because then I'm able to say, okay, help me.

[ 50 : 04 ] You ever been in that position? You ever been there? Right where I'm... Or, you know, we beat sin by citing Scripture, right?

Jesus is tempted and he quotes Scripture, right? So we quote Scripture, right? Flee immorality.

It is written. When I'm tempted to lust, speak it out loud. No, it is written, flee immorality. Right?

There's power in those words, by the way. But when I know there's power in those words, and I want to lust.

I want to pursue that lust. And so I'm in that moment of, okay, I know I'm free if I say this. What do I do?

[ 51 : 07 ] So my human will is not strong enough to do that. Because I say, okay, Lord, this is what I'm going to do. Okay, now, it is written, flee.

You understand what I'm talking about? Is your relationship with God like that? Talk with him through this process? What I'm trying to say is there's power in this confession.

That not only forgives, but cleanses and purifies. Removes the power of sin as we speak truth to God in the midst of our...

We're walking in light. I can see what's right in front of me. I hope you can hear this. I hope this helps. Okay.

So he's faithful and just. He's faithful. How is he faithful? Because he promised to forgive. He is a God who forgives. And he's just. How is he just to forgive sins?

[ 52 : 12 ] He would be just to punish sins. How is he faithful and just to forgive my sin, to cleanse my sin? How is he just? Because it's already been paid for.

That's why. It's already been paid for. He... He... He... He... He... Not... Not has to. He's happy to.

Because his son is already paid... Debt. Debt. Cover. I want you to hear how David talks about this. David talks about... He knew the power of confession. After his...

After his experience of adultery. So... So Psalm 51 is his... Is his repentant prayer, right? Psalm 51 is where he's...

He's been... He's finally been convicted. He's finally been confronted. Now he comes and repents before the Lord. Ask for forgiveness. That's Psalm 51. Psalm 32 is actually after that. I know it doesn't seem like it's...

[ 53 : 09 ] Because 32 seems to come before 51. I don't know who put these together. But... But chronologically, Psalm 32 is written after he's been forgiven. Okay? So here's what he says.

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven. Forgiven. Lifted. Whose sin is covered. Concealed. Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity.

Notice he's used all three words there. Transgression, sin, and iniquity. And in whose spirit... Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity. And in whose spirit there is no deceit.

So in other words, I'm honest with God. I'm transparent. For when I kept silent... Listen to this. David says... When I kept silent... My bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.

For day by day, your hand was heavy upon me. And my strength was dried up by the heat of summer. Selah.

[ 54 : 10 ] I acknowledge my sin to you. And I did not cover my iniquity. I will confess. I will cast... My transgressions to the Lord.

And you... You... Forgave... The iniquity... Of my sin. You... Forgave... The twistedness... Of my failure. You... Forgave the perversity. The perversity. Of my error. Selah.

Therefore, let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found. Surely in the rush of great waters, they, those great waters, will not reach him. You are a hiding place for me.

You are a covering for me. You preserve me from trouble. You surround me with shouts of deliverance. Selah. I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go.

[ 55 : 11 ] I will counsel you with all... With my eye upon you. So do not be like a horse or a mule. That doesn't sound sing-song. A little reality check here for David.

Don't be like a mule. Like I was. Don't keep silent about your sin. Don't be like a horse or a mule. Without understanding, which must be curbed with a bit and bridle, or it will not stay near you.

Don't be like a stupid mule. Many are the sorrows and pains of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord.

Who's the one who trusts in the Lord in Psalm 32? It's the one who doesn't cover his sin, doesn't hide his sin. It's the one who confesses and acknowledges his sin to the Lord.

And he's surrounded by love and he's covered by God. He's covered. David commits great sin.

[ 56 : 17 ] You remember the sin, right? Uriah's wife. He committed not one, but at least five broken commandments. He first coveted Bathsheba.

And then he stole her. He sent men to take her. To bring from her house to his house. And then he committed adultery with her.

And then he brought Uriah in under a sham, under a lie. Right? He lied to Uriah.

And then he sent Uriah to his death. Carry... Oh, by the way, Uriah, would you carry this message? Don't open it. Because it talks about how I want to kill you for being so faithful to me.

That's Dave. This is the man who has a heart after God's heart. This is a man who trusts God.

[ 57 : 25 ] How does he get so dark? How does he go down such a road so wicked? Shocking. Who is this man? Is he the same man?

Yeah. David represents the best of us and the worst of us. And God was faithful to send him a prophet to say, Yeah, you the man.

At which then David humbled himself and... Lived out Psalm 51. David tried to cover it up. Tried to hide it. God's hand was heavy upon him.

He felt it in his bones. No strength. No groaning. Do you feel that when you hide your sin? When you're silent about your sin? You feel that? You feel it in your bones. You're groaning.

Which makes it so remarkable. Why are we so hesitant to go for cleansing? Why are we like that? Why was David like that? Why does he just keep trying to cover it up?

[ 58 : 29 ] Until he didn't have a choice. And God says in the public square, You the man. God is so gracious to us, isn't he?

So he confessed it all. He confessed his sin, his transgression. And his iniquity didn't hide anything. He owned up to everything. And God forgives him and covers him. And doesn't count the iniquity against him.

And God himself became his hiding place. David walked in the light when he confessed his sin. As bad as his sins were. Wouldn't you think if you did what David did?

Okay, the last half of the Ten Commandments. He did all of those. He probably dishonored his father and mother too. I don't know. Somehow. Right? Bad boy. Right?

Right? And God forgave him. Do you think God won't forgive you for something you've done? Have you done worse than coveting?

[ 59 : 37 ] Yeah. You've done worse than adultery? Murder? Murder? Lying? God forgives.

Walking in his light is a cleansing light. Authentic Christianity is distinctive. Fellowship with God not only means walking in his cleansing light with one another, but it means it involves confessing our sins to cleanse our sins.

Is this how you relate to God? Do you accept this truth? Do you have a different truth or do you accept this truth? Because this is the truth. No matter what you say. Not my truth. It's the truth as God defines it.

And here's the hard question. Is your Christianity authentic? The measurement John gives is pretty exacting, isn't it?

But it's not perfection because he says, if you think you're without sin. He's not talking about perfection. He's talking about sinlessness. He's talking about real honesty because when we're in the light, we do see our sins and we do confess them.

[ 60 : 57 ] He's not talking about perfection. By any means. He's talking about a consistent lifestyle. That isn't about what I ought and ought not do.

It's about walking in light and a relationship with God that brings me into relationship with one another that cleanses me. That keeps me on the right road.

It's enabled by relationship with God. Okay. Am I still talking? I'm on our notes. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for this straightforward way that John brings the gospel, that God is light and in him is no darkness at all.

And that's not a, that's only a scary thought for those that want to stay in their sin. That's a scary thought. That's a hateful thought for those that want to love their sin and stay in their sin and their shame and their wickedness.

They love the darkness. But for those of us, oh, Father, that want freedom, want liberty. We want removal of shame and guilt.

[ 62 : 12 ] We want what you have. We want relationship with you. We want to know you and walk with you. For us, Lord, the light is not scary at all.

The light becomes our shelter. The light becomes our cleansing place. The light becomes our way of life. Because it's you, Father.

And it's your son. And then you've blessed us with your spirit to enable us to do this. So we thank you, Father, in Christ's name.

Amen. Amen.