

Walking In The Light

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[0 : 0 0] Let's turn in our Bibles to the passage of God's Word which we read in the first letter of John chapter 1 and as God would help me, I would like to concentrate on verses 7 to 9. The Gospel, the first epistle of John chapter 1 verses 7 to 9. 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. 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. John wrote his Gospel so that people would believe it. John wrote his letter, his epistle, to those who had already believed it. So he is writing to Christians, essentially to Christians who lacked assurance. In chapter 5 verse 13 he says categorically, I write these things to you who believe in the name of the

Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. He is writing to believers who weren't sure of their salvation. Isn't it interesting, way back in the first century there were people who had this problem. Isn't that interesting? And it says if the Holy Spirit jogged the Apostle John's arm when he had his pen and said now John put that down in writing.

There will be Christians a way down in the third millennium and they will have the same problem so put it down in writing. Give them assurance that if they believe they may know they have eternal life. Now a question I always had when I discovered that was why does John not simply say quote Mark chapter 13, sorry Mark 16 verses 17 and 18 that these signs would follow those that believe. Listen to this say, Mark 16 verse 17 and these signs will accompany those who believe. In my name they will cast out devils, demons they will speak in your tongues, they will pick up serpents with their hands and if they drink any deadly poison it will not hurt them. Then they will lay their hands on the sick and they will recover.

So in response to that issue how if we're believers do we know eternal life? Why doesn't John just simply say but you know what Jesus said Mark 16 you'll be able to do all these things. That's how you'll know. Well why doesn't he say that? Because by the time John was writing this letter and either AD 70 or AD 90 whenever it was these signs were already beginning to fade away and that's why the question arose. These signs and miracles that were able to perform were obviously an initial blessing on the church when this as it were the New Testament the Gospel was being established this new religion of Christianity as it were.

Now it's emphasised in chapter 2 that he is he has confidence that his hearers, his readers are genuine Christians. In chapter 12 sorry verse 12 it is I'm writing to you little children because your sins are forgiven you. Next verse he says I'm writing to you because you know him. Later on in verse 13 chapter 2 verse 13 I am writing to you because you've overcome the wicked one and again in verse 14 he says I'm writing to you because you're strong and the word of God abides in you. Well now if all these things are true what's

[5 : 53] John writing about? What does he need to write to them about? Think about it he says I know you sins are forgiven you. You know him you have overcome the wicked one you are strong and the word of God abides in you. Well well well don't you wish you could say that about you? So what does he need to write about? What's the problem? If he's so confident that their sins are forgiven they've overcome the wicked one they're strong in the Lord and the word of God abides in them why is he writing to them? Well we continue reading in chapter 2 we'll find one reason because in verse 26 because there are some trying to deceive you. That was true of them that were strong the word of God was in them the word of God was in them they've overcome the evil and yet there were still some trying to deceive them. You know there's one huge lesson that we should learn from this. If you're a Christian if you truly believe in Christ Satan can do nothing to destroy your security in heaven but oh what damage he can do to you on earth. He can do nothing about your eternal security if you're in Christ if you believe in Christ Satan can't do anything about your soul salvation but he can still deceive you he can still raise up people to tempt you and to lead you away he can create much havoc on earth he can make you make a mess of your life he can't alter your security in heaven because that is safely in Christ's hands but he can make you mess up on earth so this letter is teaching us how to be careful that we're not deceived but there's also something else what he wants to establish very clearly to these people and that's the words of our text of these verses that we read the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin. We often miss exactly because that verse is very familiar to us we seldom study it and we can often miss what's very obvious as I can see it this focus here is not on the forgiveness of sin it's on the cleansing of sin the moment you believe in Christ all your sins past present and future are forgiven the moment you believe in Christ but look at verse 8 if we say now who are the we it's the people he's been writing to the people he knows whose sins are forgiven it's the people whose overcome the wicked one it's the people who are strong and the word of God abides in them and he's saying if we who are truly converted truly in Christ truly our sins are forgiven if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in it because your sins are forgiven does not mean to say you'll never commit another sin and John is saying I'm concerned about that and I want you to think of the cleansing of your sin sin when we sin we Christians sin we leave a stain that stain has to be removed that stain has to be cleansed you've heard the Bible speaking about the unspotted righteousness of Christ and you know the illustration is given that you get a garment of Christ's righteousness but you and I put a spot on that garment of righteousness unspotted righteousness of Christ yes but who puts a spot on it you and I put the spot on it when we get it from Christ it's pure but we spot it with our behaviour with our continued sinning and John is addressing that issue here and he says the blood of Jesus Christ does not simply forgive your sin past present and future the blood cleanses away the spots and the stains which we leave on that righteous garment that Christ gives to us James tells us the same what to keep ourselves unspotted or unstained from the world Peter also be diligent to be found by him without spot or stain or blemish so what's being focused on here is the cleansing away of the stain which sin leaves a verse 9 puts it very well if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness sinners receive judicial forgiveness from the penalty of our sins once through believing in Christ through faith in Christ by believing in Christ truly the first time we do it all our sins past present and future are forgiven but now that we're believers tragically sadly we still commit sin and believers receive cleansing from the defilement of sin by continuous continual confession of sin continually confessing our sins because we are continually sinning as verse 8 is telling us we're forgiven once and for all through faith we are cleansed

continuously upon continually confessing our sins my definition of a Christian used to be someone who has repented of his sins I no longer say that because I now believe a Christian is someone who is repenting of his sins it's a continuous work continuous act because we're continually sinning we need to continually confess continually repent and be continuously cleansed from our sin and our Bible is telling us here the blood of Christ Jesus both forgives and cleanses us from all sins past present future but the sins we now commit having once believed in Christ they are forgiven through confession if we confess if we Christians confess our sins God's faithful to thank us in the sense of and cleanse us we still remain forgiven and cleansed justified as the idea of justification and sanctification were justified forever immediately our faith in Christ we were cleansed from pollution of sin as we confess and as we reprint now the cleansing of sin the removing of that spot we put on Christ's garment of righteousness that cleansing cannot commence until we're first forgiven we have to be forgiven first by trusting in Christ the cleansing of sin commences and the cleansing of sin is not once it is a continuous act work completed in time sorry never completed in time only completed at our death so it's a continual exercise which we Christians have you see there is a lot of confusion regarding the work of the gospel what does faith achieve it is wrong to think that the grace of the gospel only provides forgiveness we have to understand as our text is telling us the blood of Jesus his son not merely forgives our sins but it cleanses and it cleanses as we confess as we repent of our sins Christ died not simply to forgive us but Christ died to cleanse and deliver us from our sin now if you are here and you're a Christian there are two great powers working in your life two great powers are working within you one power is the power

of what we call remaining sin or maybe indwelling sin that power still remains and you will not be aware of that unless you're an exercised Christian you need to be spiritually exercised to realise that this remaining sin is still in me thankfully in every believer in every Christian there's also another power and that is the power of gospel grace and it's the only power in the universe that can overcome sin the power of the gospel grace which is in every believer so you might ask how do we employ that how do we use it well you see our text tells us here the blood of Jesus his son cleanses us from all sin now what does the term the blood of Jesus refer to what does it mean it's a symbolic term really we can't get the physical blood of Jesus that was shed and applied so it's really just the blood of Jesus really just means the death of Jesus Christ it's his death that delivers us and cleanses us from sin as well as forgives us or to put to spell it out even more it's the spiritual power which the death of Christ accomplished the death of Christ was not simple and straightforward do you remember the sermon the transfiguration do you remember when Moses and Elijah came and you remember Peter James and John fell asleep when they woke up they were amazed to find Jesus Elijah and Moses locked in conversation what was he locked in conversation about Luke chapter 9 puts it this way they were discussing the death that should be accomplished at Jerusalem in other words the death of Christ but the word is the death was accomplished the death of Christ was not straightforward Jesus is God

God can't die see not straightforward that's why God Jesus the second person of the God had to take a soul and a body to himself so that a human body a real human body like you and me so that he could die that's what he did when he died on the cross and shouted with a loud voice it is finished it was accomplished the death of God was accomplished and that could do an amazing amount of work that's the second power that's working in you if you're a Christian and it's only that power that can overcome the power of sin now how do we employ it then how do we use it well by confessing our sin by repenting of our sin by believing Christ has delivered us and forgiven us our sin by doing it afresh by doing it again as it were we're forgiven once and for all forever but we have to continually be cleansed therefore we have to continually apply the blood of Christ to us the death of Christ remind sin and Satan Christ accomplished the conquering of sin at the cross we are to continually confess and repent not simply individual acts that we do because we could never remember them all how many sins have we committed since we came into this building we could number them so we have to confess our sinnership our sinfulness our fallen nature our inclination to go astray even though we might sometimes manage to stop it we have to confess our sinnership our sinfulness and believe that the blood of Christ cleanses the blood of Christ has forgiven and the blood of Christ will remove the stain and the blood of Christ will deliver us from the power of sin and that's the force of our text if we confess our sins he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and remember he's talking about people who are strong in the Lord or the word of God in dwells he's talking about people who overcome the evil one who know who sins are forgiven if we Christians confess our sins we are to believe we are forgiven and cleansed there's a story which RC Sproul a reformed international preacher died a couple of years ago he tells about a girl that came to visit him was very very troubled about this she professed she was a Christian and she had sinned with her boyfriend and she's very concerned very very upset and RC Sproul director to this verse if we confess our sins he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins so the girl went away but she came back very soon afterwards and said it doesn't work it's not working I haven't been forgiven I haven't been cleansed so he tells her well

[24 : 51] there's nothing else that's just what it says and the girl kept coming back and seeing the same thing and eventually RC Sproul grasped what was wrong all he said when I said you have to repent of this sin I wasn't talking about repenting of the sin you committed with your boyfriend I'm talking about you to confess this sin of not believing you're forgiven and cleansed when you confessed she said I've done it a hundred times it doesn't work but he said I'm talking about you confessing the sin of not believing you're forgiven and believing that she was released she was released to realise the truth of the verse we're looking at if you confess your sin the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin forgiven and cleansed but we have to keep on doing that a hundred times a day because a hundred times a day were sinful well just one other thing to say in conclusion I said the Christian has these two powers working in him the power of remaining sin and there's only one power in the universe that can overcome it and the Christian has that power in Dwelling the gospel grace of Christ that's the two powers within every believer but what about you that are here and you're not Christian there's only one power working in you and that one power is not the power of remaining sin it is the power of reigning sin the Christian has in Dwelling sin or remaining sin you un-saved people you've only got one power in you ruling sin reigning without opposition and there's nothing in you that can overcome it there's nothing in you that can stop it having complete control of your life that's why the gospel is believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved and the moment you be saved your sins are forgiven and all that's left is remaining or indwelling sin there'll be this grace within you this Holy Spirit this new heart within you that is able to overcome what you un-saved people known Christians need is the Spirit of Christ to be indwelling you and may every one of us know what that Spirit is may every one of us be blessed may we repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and know the indwelling of his Spirit may God the Holy Spirit bless his word and make it effectual to every one of us let's

bow our heads in prayer our gracious Father in heaven we pray that you would take the things of Christ and make them ours this day in this place keep us O Lord in your love and in your fear shores your Son in all his love and all his beauty keep us we ask for we pray only in Jesus name.

Amen. We'll conclude our service by singing from Psalm 89 verse 24 on the Scottish Salter page 346 and here is God speaking my mercy and my faithfulness with him yet still shall be and in my name his horn and power men shall exalted see down to verse 29 his seed I by my power will make forever to endure and as the days of heaven his throne shall stay be and in short Psalm 89 verses 24 to 29.

My mercy and my faithfulness with him yet still shall be and in my name his horn and power men shall exalted see his son shall reach out by my spirit in the sea.

And his right hand he's established shall in the rivers be.

[31 : 51] And his right hand he's established shall in the rivers be.

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[34 : 20] And his right hand he's established shall in the rivers be.