



Daily Devotionals

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1 JOHN 1:5-7 THERE IS LIGHT

⁵ *This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.* ⁶ *If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.* ⁷ *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, purifies us from all sin.*

Light penetrates, reveals and dispels. On a dark country road the light from our headlights cut through the darkness in front of us, exposes the objects and dangers before us, while it eliminates the darkness itself where ever it shines. Light then is the perfect metaphor for God's nature whether we look at righteousness, holiness, Truth or his dealing with sin in the world. Even when God introduces himself in the first chapter of Genesis the first physical association is with light – ³ *And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light* (Genesis 1:3). We know from our experience in the world that without life there can be nothing that lives and nothing that can be perceived. So as the character of the painter is reveal through his painting, the nature of God is made known through his creation. God is light – penetrating, revealing and dispelling.

If his creatures are to live in the presence of God, they cannot but exist in the light. It is not possible to stand next to a fire on a moonless night and remain hidden in the darkness. It is equally impossible to remove yourself far enough away from the fire to hide in the darkness and still claim to be in relationship with the fire.

The Apostle takes this physical truth and applies it to our spiritual lives. Through sin we attempt to eclipse the Light. Rather than proclaim God to be the Light of our lives we try to replace him with ourselves. But any light we know is reflected from God as the source of light, and so as we retreat further and further away from God, the darkness of our own nature increasingly is manifested in our lives. The truth of that phenomenon is that as we focus and depend more and more on ourselves we become increasing estranged from those around us. In C.S. Lewis' novel about heaven and hell, *The Great Divorce*, he characterizes hell as a dark place that is ever expanding because the people who live there are always moving further out into the country in order to increase the distance they are away from the next nearest person. In such isolation, where each man is his own god, there is no penetration of the light, no revelation of the Truth and no dispelling of sin.

St. John is writing to those who would be enticed to think that God would have them separate themselves from their neighbors, especially those in the Church, in order to establish or maintain the fiction of spiritual purity. For St. John such an action or attitude is not one that comes from God, nor brings one closer to God. Rather, it is the work of darkness. The simple truth is that light and darkness cannot coexist, and therefore, it is impossible for us to live in both at the same time. To love Jesus is to obey Jesus (John 14:15), to obey Jesus is to love your neighbor (John 15:17) and the divine consequence is to live in the Light (John 14:23).

You are the Branch, Lord Jesus, who came into the world to save sinners. Clothe me with your righteousness so that I might dwell forever in the presence of God and in peace among my neighbors. Make me what I am not, so that I might be what you would have me to be. Amen.