

1 John 1:1 - 2:2

When you were a child, were you ever afraid of the **dark**? It's a pretty **common** childhood **fear**. Of course, our parents would always try to find out **what** it **was** about the dark which was **frightening** us, and would explain that there was no **reason** for us to be afraid. Usually all it would take to **remove** our fears was a smile and a pat on the head, or perhaps a night light, or the simple reassurance that **Jesus** is always **with** us to **guard** and **protect** us from all danger. It is that **light** which **Jesus** brings into our lives - light which **removes** all our **fears** - which accounts for today's sermon theme: **Walking In The Light Of The LORD**. As we move through our text, we will first of all take a look at our Lord's **credentials**. Then we will examine the **difference** between darkness and light. And finally, we will consider our **status** in regard to them, and John's **encouragement** to us.

As our text begins, we find that the author of this letter has **omitted** his name. One explanation is that the writer is showing his **humility**. Another is that he omits **his** name, in order to direct our attention **entirely** to the name of our **Savior**. The early church held that it was **John**, the disciple whom Jesus loved, who had written this letter - and when we compare the opening words of John's **Gospel** to the words which we have before us **today**, it becomes very evident that they were written by the **same** person. **Jesus** is the focal point in **both** - He is the foundation and the object of our faith and hope - He is the **bond** and **cement** which unites us with God. We need to know Jesus **well**, and John helps us to do **just that**.

Our text begins, "*That which was from the beginning, which we have **heard**, which we have **seen** with our eyes, which we have **looked at** and our hands have **touched** - this we **proclaim** concerning the **Word of life**.*" The account which we have here is definitely that of an **eyewitness**. In John's **Gospel**, he begins by talking about the **Word** of God - the Word who was **with** God - the Word who **made** all things - the Word who was **light** - the Word who was **introduced** by John the Baptist - the Word who **was** God, and who came to live **among us** here on the earth. During His lifetime, **Jesus** presented His **credentials** to show that **He** was this Word of **God**. John had **heard** Jesus with his ears - he had **seen** Jesus with his eyes - and he had **touched** Jesus with his hands. John was an **eyewitness** - and he was **fully convinced** that Jesus was the Son of God, the long-awaited Savior from sin, the **Word** made **flesh**.

It was this total **confidence** which enabled John to **preach the Gospel** to others, **regardless** of the dangers which he would have to face. Just as an example, when Peter and John had been called before the Sanhedrin, and were **commanded** not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus, they replied, “*Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God’s sight to obey **you** rather than **God**. For we **cannot help** speaking about what we have seen and heard.*” The Lord’s credentials were indeed **impressive**. And what was the **purpose** of John’s preaching? He goes on to tell us, “*We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you **also** may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the **Father**, and with His Son, **Jesus Christ**. We write this to make our joy **complete**.*” The end result of sharing God’s Word with others, is that they will share eternity in **heaven** with us. **Nothing** could make us **happier**.

All we have to do is keep the message **straight**, and actually, that’s **easy** to do. Again, John shows us **why**. He writes, “*This is the message we have heard from **Him** and declare to **you**: God is **light**; in Him there is **no darkness** at all. If we claim to have **fellowship** with Him, yet walk in the **darkness**, we **lie** and do not live by 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, **purifies** us from all sin.*” Light and darkness are complete **opposites**. You can’t **mix** the two - you can’t **confuse** the two. Dark is dark, and light is light. And when it comes to **God**, He is **light**. There is **no darkness** in Him at all. However, you and I can’t claim the same thing. In fact, perhaps more often than not, we walk in **darkness** rather than in the **light**. That’s **not** what we **want** - and it’s not what **God** wants **either**. John explains that whenever we walk in **darkness** (that is, whenever we **sin**), we are actually living a **lie**. Because of the suffering, death, and resurrection of **Jesus**, you and I have fellowship with **God**, who is **light**. Yet, when we **sin**, we walk in **darkness** - and remember, darkness and light have **nothing** in **common** - they are complete **opposites**. How can we **resolve** this conundrum? What **is** our **status** with God?

The **reality** is, that because of **Jesus**, we are **children** of God - children who are in the **light**. That’s where we **belong**, and that’s where our new man strives to **remain**. But **sin** is a reality **too**. John tells us, “*If we claim to be **without sin**, we **deceive** ourselves and the truth is not **in** us. If we **confess** our sins, He is faithful and just and will **forgive** us our sins, and **purify** us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have **not sinned**, we make Him out to be a **liar**, and **His Word** has no place in our lives.*” As human beings, **sin** is a **part** of us - a part which we don’t

like - and a part which we would rather not **admit**. Yet, God says that if we claim to be **without** sin, we are **liars** - and worse yet, we make **God** look like a liar, because **He** says, “*Every inclination of (man’s) heart is evil from childhood,*” and, “*All have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God.*”

There is no **denying** or **excusing** sin. And as much as we hate to be **confronted** with our sins, it is **necessary**. In fact, the more we **see** our sins, the more we will value the **forgiveness** which can only come from **God**. Even though our sins put us right down there on the same level with filthy **pond scum**, God sent His **Son** to be the **light** of the **world** - including **us** - and He simply asks us to **confess** our sins, so they can be **washed clean** in the blood of Jesus, and we can **Walk In The Light Of The LORD**. The life of a **Christian** is a life where we **continually** go around in **circles**. We **sin**, we **confess** our sin, and we receive **forgiveness** for our sin - and then we do it over again **countless times** each and every day of our lives.

As our text for this morning comes to a **close**, John gives us some **encouragement** to try and **break** that cycle. He writes, “*My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense - Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for the sins of the whole world.*” I have always thought that these are among the most **beautiful** and **touching** words in the entire Bible. Just **think** about it. John was the disciple whom Jesus **loved**. John had lived **his** life **Walking In The Light Of The LORD**. And when John wrote **these** words, his life here on the earth was drawing to its **end**, and he was close to 100 years old! All those years of Christian **experience** and **wisdom** were being poured out for the benefit of **others**. And who **were** those others? When we hear John writing to his little **children**, we immediately think of **young** people. But as a man who was nearing the **century** mark, he could just as easily have been talking to people who were right on up into their 70's and 80's too! John was writing to **everybody**.

And what did he **tell** us? John said, “*I write this to you so that you will not sin,*” but then almost as if to say, “I know that’s **impossible** for you,” he goes on to write, “*But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense - Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.*” As John nears the day of his **death**, and writes to the people whom he **loves**, his thoughts come right back to the **Gospel** - the **Good News** of Jesus - and he **shares** that Gospel with **anyone** who

will listen. The entire **remainder** of this letter simply elaborates on that **Savior**, and on how each of us should strive to **Walk In The Light Of The LORD**. Dear friends, may we take these words of encouragement to **heart**, and truly **thank** our God for **forgiving** our sins, and providing us with eternal life in **heaven** - by turning **away** from the darkness of sin, and **Walking In The Light Of The LORD**. Amen.