

SERMON: Walking with Jesus is Walking in the Light**GOOD Morning OIC & Welcome to Father's House**

Today, we start the First Letter of John the Apostle. As is the whole Bible, it was inspired by Holy Spirit. In my last Message we heard how Paul gave instructions to the Ephesians, therefore, to all Christians, for living the Christian Life “To The Glory of God's Grace-Walking with Jesus in Sweet Submission and with Power.” This week I titled the Message “Walking with Jesus is Walking in the Light.” I closed last week's Message with:

Paul's Greetings and Closing of his letters was the standard format of the 1st Century. But his eloquence and inspiration are obvious. After many calls to join God's War against Satan, he closes with **(Ephesians 6.23-24/KJ21)23** *Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 24* *Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.*

Now our reading jumps ahead in time by 25 years, when the Apostle John wrote this Letter to the churches in general, but from Ephesus. This was about 20 years after Paul had been martyred in Rome by Caesar Nero. So it is likely that the Church in Ephesus *kept the faith* as John made this city his workplace for a season.

John's Gospel on the life of Jesus, was written about the same time as this Letter. In both his Gospel and this Letter, John included an emphasis on his eyewitness accounts of Jesus' life on earth. John's writings declare that Jesus came to earth in the *flesh, with a human body just like all men but without an earthly father, and without sin.* The heresy of Gnosticism was becoming popular in society, especially the province of Asia. The 1st Century Gnostic's basic concept is that all material things are evil and only spiritual things are good, so because God is good He must be only spirit and cannot have a body. This gave some challenges to young Christians. Gnosticism also combined Greek philosophy, Oriental Religions, and Christianity: thus *syncretism*, or mixing TRUTH with LIES, to create a new religion. Hans Jonas in his book *The Gnostic Religion* points to the origins of Gnosticism. He says that Hellenic (Greek), Babylonian, Egyptian, and Iranian origins and every possible combination of these has been combined with Jewish and Christian elements to make Gnosticism a new 1st Century syncretistic religion. Remember that many oriental religions reject logic but demand only experience for their faith.

The Gospel of John is evangelistic and aimed especially at saving those without Christ as John closed it with **(John 20.30-31)** *30 Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.*

Whereas this Letter of John is aimed to encourage Christians' faith in their LORD, and to strengthen their *Blessed Assurance* of their salvation. There are obvious parallels between both manuscripts, Gospel and Letter, as there was one human author, John, and one Holy Spirit bringing the truth to his mind as he wrote. Jesus had promised this to the Apostles before they realized that they were writing the Holy Bible. In **(John 14.26)** Jesus said, *But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.*

NOW reading (1 John 1.1) *What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life.*

John starts off with a direct challenge to any Gnostic philosophy sneaking into the churches. The Gnostic must directly call John, a very respected aging Apostle, a liar as he claims his eyewitness account of Jesus' life on earth.

John, in his Gospel, has pointed to *the beginning*. This is the *the beginning* of Time, or, really, *the beginning before Time* as in **(John 1.1)** *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* However the Gnostic attack on *the faith* did not aim to question concepts of Time as much as against the Divinity of Jesus, or Christians' claim that He is God in the flesh.

Jesus is the Word *and the Word was God*. America, in 1931, the heresy of the *Jehovah Witnesses* began to grow. They had their own "Bible" saying that the original Greek New Testament as John wrote it said: "the Word was **like** God." The Greek New Testament (NTG) reads as John wrote it: *In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with the God, and God was the Word.* Thus the TRUE Bible leaves no room for argument against the Divinity of Jesus as equal with God, not just like God..

Now to confront the Gnostic heresy, we see John write in **(1John 1.1)** *we have looked at and touched with our hands { Jesus } the Word of Life.* Even as Jesus said to Thomas when he appeared a second time to the Disciples after His Resurrection from the dead in, **(Luke 24.39)**, *See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.*" Jesus was God in flesh, bones, and blood before His resurrection. Jesus was still God in His resurrected body with flesh and bones and no blood. The Bible thus tells us that even Jesus' resurrected body was flesh and bones, a human being who they touched and

felt, and not just a “spirit.” His resurrected body could still appear, and disappear, and travel through solid walls.

(1John 1.2) — *and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—*. John now teaches simple yet powerful knowledge, or theology, about God the Son. Seeing Jesus was seeing *eternal life*. John had recorded this in **(John 14.6)**, *Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and **the life**; no one comes to the Father but through Me.* It is critical to know Jesus is the “way” to the Father; but Jesus is not just the way to Life, **Jesus Is the LIFE!** When they, the Apostles, *testified and proclaimed* what they saw, Jesus, and proclaim the Gospel, they preached *the eternal life*. And anytime we preach Jesus Christ and Him Crucified today, we are preaching **Eternal Life**. Believing the Gospel today is the same as seeing Jesus when He was on earth in the flesh. The result is *the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—* and is now *manifested* in every Believer!

(1John 1.3) *what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.* **Fellowship** – the Greek in **(1 John 1.3/NTG)** means: fellowship, the close association between persons. Note that this **fellowship** is conditional to only be with Christians, or possibly, with sinners seeking and willing to hear the Gospel or Good News of Jesus *proclaimed*. It is very important for Christians to limit this “close association between persons” to these conditions. All the times when we “hang out” with sinners must be either our work requirement or for “personal” evangelism.

with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. What glorious privilege we Christians have, we can really “hang out” or have “close association,” or **fellowship** with *the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ*. Yes, it is not a lack of Reverence for the Father and His Son that we realize how personal they both want to be with all of us Children of God.

(1John 1.4) *These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.* As I stated above, John's Gospel was evangelistic in its purpose and focus; but this letter, is to encourage and give fullness of joy to all who Believe in Jesus. Notice that *our joy*, means that if those who became believers don't have **joy**, the **joy of the ministers is not complete**. These are the missionaries who led these believers to Christ, that is John and his co-workers. John's fullness of joy depended on the Sheep given into his care to also have the **joy of Blessed Assurance, Jesus is mine, Oh what a foretaste of Glory Divine**. The words written in this famous hymn are by Fanny Cosby. Or, more clear in **(1 John 1.4/AMP)** *We are writing these things to you so that our joy [in seeing you included] may be made complete [by having you share in the joy of salvation], which is Blessed Assurance.*

Blessed Assurance - The joy of becoming a forgiven sinner, a holy saint , by faith in the Blood Sacrifice of Jesus. As Jesus described in **(Matthew 13.44)** *“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field that a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.* This means when a sinner realizes that He has found in Jesus forgiveness and eternal life, and what he had before was acting alive but being dead inside, he gladly surrenders his old life for the **joy of Jesus** deep in his heart. Every Born Again Christian feels this “gift” is worth selling everything he has to keep it. It is priceless! As the Psalmist said in **(Psalm 107.9)**, *For He has satisfied the thirsty soul, And the hungry soul He has filled with what is good.*

This morning Jesus led Dorothy and I to sing the old hymn *Satisfied, All My Life I Had Panted* for it paints the picture of normal Christian life, staying thankful that we found *that treasure, Jesus.* A young in the faith Christian recently asked a sincere and good question. 'Pastor Bruce, “What does it mean to be content?”’ The Apostle Paul answered being content in regard to material provisions as promised by our Father in Heaven. These are given to us Believers through His Son Jesus. But, what is Paul's reason **behind his answer to this question in (Philippians 4.11-12)** *11 Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. 12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.* The reason behind the Apostle Paul's answer was that he found Jesus, and of course, as for all of us Christians, really Jesus found him.

Blessed Assurance in our walk with Jesus to Glory depends on Him, not ourselves as Jude put it in **(Jude 1.24):** *Now to the one who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in his glorious presence without blame and with great joy—*

Hallelujah I have found Him , whom my soul so long had craved. Jesus satisfies my longings, and through His Blood I now am saved

Next we read in **(1 John 1.5):** *This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.* This parallels John's Gospel, the Words of Jesus to the Pharisee Nicodemus, from **(John 3.18-20):** *18 He who believes in Him {Jesus} is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.* **Next,** John further paints the picture of Light and Darkness **by the behavior** of those who call themselves “Christians.” In **(1John 1.6)** *If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;*

walk in the darkness - As the Apostle Paul taught the Ephesian Christians in **(Ephesians 5.11)**: *Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them;* We must let the Holy Bible, not the world, define **darkness**. Quoting from my recent sermon titled “**To The Glory of God's Grace - More for a Closer Walk with Jesus**” on September 9th: **(Ephesians 5.11-12)** says, *Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness (Greek New Testament - σκότος , skotos), but rather expose them. 12 It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. Skotos refers to the spiritual realm of dark (Satan) against the realm of Light (God). As in the Lord Jesus' entrance into the world in (John 1.4-5) 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 5 The light shines in the darkness (skotos), and the darkness (skotos) has not overcome it.*

Now, in **(1 John 1.6)**, we can be sure that the Apostle John's definition of darkness was the same as that of the Apostle Paul! In fact, we can go back full circle to John's writing in his Gospel **(John 1.4-5)**: *4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 5 The light shines in the darkness (skotos), and the darkness (skotos) has not overcome it.* Therefore, here in John's First Letter, he is teaching that Christians cannot live in a supposed “walk with Jesus” that obviously has them practicing the “deeds of darkness” (Greek, σκότος , skotos).

we lie and do not practice the truth - Thus, such a “supposed Christian” is a liar, for **(1John 1.6)** says: *If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;* such a Christian is walking and practicing **the darkness**.

practice the truth- which means to **do the truth of Jesus** in your everyday life, not just at church. You might ask, “Pastor Bruce, is a Christians who goes back to walk in the darkness lost forever?” **I believe, NO!** Not at once! But they must repent and turn back to the Light, Jesus, and plead for forgiveness, for they have wounded His heart and grieved the Holy Spirit. Deciding to continue **willfully** to walk in the deeds of darkness, is testing God's patience to the **LIMIT!**

(1 John 1.7) says: *7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.* **Those who choose to walk in the Light walk arm and arm with Jesus.**

we have fellowship with one another, - Fellowship is a close association between persons, is one of the most joyful experiences we Christians can have on Earth. Only our special times in fellowship with Jesus alone can be more full of joy than those times *with one another* .

and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. - We must make a clear line or distinction between “*yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;*” from **(1 John 1.7)** and “needing cleansing from sin by Jesus' Blood.” I preached in the Book of Romans, **sinner are enemies of God.** Sinners are walking in the darkness; but they are not claiming to be Christians. We pray for sinners to be brought into the Light. Christians who sin are not

enemies of God, but are still Christians and holy in God's sight. They walk as best they can with their human weaknesses and willing heart to love Jesus, then, *the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us{them} from all sin.*

Also, Christians walking in the Light **are not choosing sin**, yet it sometimes seems to chose them before they know it! I call this Romans 7 sin as I describe in the next paragraph.....God is quick to forgive and, the power of Jesus' Blood will keep them walking in the Light. This is truly another JOY of our salvation. **Hallelujah I have found Him , whom my soul so long had craved.**

Jesus satisfies my longings, and through His Blood I now am saved

(1 John 1.8) *If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.*

What did Paul mean by *say that we have no sin*. “To bring out or exegete the meaning of this verse, I will go back to Paul's frustration with himself, but also, the glorious joy of forgiveness, as recorded in Chapters 7 and 8 of the Book of Romans. **(Romans 7.15-18):** *15 For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. 16 But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good. 17 So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. 18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.*

The key to highlight this verse we are looking at, **(1 John 1.8)**, is seen in Romans 7, and in particular, the detail in **(Romans 7.15)** *So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.* The Apostle Paul makes it clear to all that *sin dwells in {him}*. The Apostle John knows that any true Christian soon discovers after a short time after rebirth into Sainthood, that *sin dwells in him*. Therefore, John's test for a person professing Christ is admitting that *sin dwells in him*. So,

(1 John 1.8) *If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.*

Means that a true Christian does not claim he has no **sin in himself**. A false Christian might claim this, a clear self-deception. But, the Good News, dear OIC Saints from our gracious God in **(1 John 1.9):** *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

You may ask, Pastor Bruce, why have you spent so much time and space in many sermons , including this one, to repeat the teaching of Romans Chapter 7? Pastor's answer: there are five important truths, that young Christians, or poorly taught Christians, may still have in their walk with Jesus:

1) And wrongly say: **“I sinned, so I am not really a Christian at all.”** But, only willful sinning as a life style, shows either a false Christian, *walking in darkness*, or a Christian backsliding away from Jesus. Many young Christians, including your pastor, struggled with self-

condemnation after having sinned, until this teaching of “sin within me” truth in Romans 7 became clear. Especially **(Romans 7.15)** *So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.*

2) Also wrongly say: **“I have the Blood of Jesus always ready to cleanse me from sin, so I need not work or try hard not to sin.”** Every sin, unplanned or willful, sent Jesus to the Cross. We must **not** take that lightly! When we sin we hurt His feelings, *He who became sin for us*, as in **(2 Corinthians 5.21)** *He {God} made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

3) Also wrongly say: **“Forgiven SIN has no consequences.”** King David's sin of adultery and murder cost him his first born child since crowned King of both Judah and Israel, as well as a healthy peace in his family. These family feuds or wars would create instability and also cost his lineage half his kingdom. We read the prophet Nathan's judgment of David's sin from the LORD on King David in **(2 Samuel 12.9-14)** *9 Why have you despised the word of the LORD by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. 10 Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. 11 Thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. 12 Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.’ 13 Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.” And Nathan said to David, **“The LORD also has taken away your sin; you shall not die. 14 However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die.”***

King David's sin, started with lust of the eye for Bathsheba, and then trying to cover his sin, required detailed planning to affect the murder of her husband, Uriah the Hittite. Remember, the LORD was merciful before Jesus' Cross, but since God poured out His Spirit on the Church, this is called the Age of Grace for a reason. It is defending our merciful God to assume that if David had asked forgiveness after his willful sin of adultery, that God **may have** given a much lighter judgment. But hiding his sin from men clearly led to the King's strategy of the willful sin of murder. God's judgment of *I will raise up evil against you from your own household.* David's family life had incest, murder, and rebellion to overthrow the King. This warlike activity led clearly to King David's Family suffering turmoil for years. Also, his children did not submit to his example to worship and serve only the LORD. This included the next king, David's son Solomon. Solomon's idolatry and his son's arrogance, led to the Kingdom's division into Israel and Judah after

David's death. Because God forgives us for Jesus' sake, we cannot assume there will be no consequences for our sin, especially willful sin.

4) Also wrongly say: **Only Willful Sin is Important!** No. In this age of Grace a Christian who committed sin has the WORD to show him un-willful sin as in **(Romans 7.15) *So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.*** And we have the SPIRIT, to convince us of sin and also make it clear deep in our heart that our sin was either willful or not willful. Christians must confess all **known** sins, willful or **unwillful**, as soon as the Spirit convinces them. For un-willful sins, “Romans 7 sins,” I suggest to prevent self-condemnation and an opportunity for the Devil, praying to God as you confess at least some part of these Bible verses from **Romans 7, verse 24: *Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?.....*** while you imagine a dead rotting body, sin, tied on your back! **AND verse 25: *Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!*** What God wants to hear is your true confession and hatred of sin, not hatred of self. Also, thank God for the conclusion from Romans 7 in, **(Romans 8.1) *Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Jesus is offended if we don't accept His promise of forgiveness for confessed sins, willful or un-willful.***

5) And wrongly say: “ **I will inevitably sin.**” No! It is possible for a Christian from the moment of rebirth **to never commit a willful sin again for the rest of his life....** See **(1 John 2)**

TAKEAWAY #1

God is quick to forgive a Christian who sins but confesses. Although Jesus bought forgiveness for Christians, and, the power of Jesus' Blood will keep us walking in the Light; willful sin usually has a consequence in our lives. King David was a *man after my own heart* said the LORD, but sin cost him the life of his first born and half of his kingdom being removed from his lineage. God gave Christians His Spirit to not only give us confidence that we belong to Him, but also to help us know and confess all sin. He shows us if our sin was willful or un-wilful. Forgiveness for any sins is truly another JOY of our salvation. Hallelujah I have found Him , whom my soul so long had craved. Jesus satisfies my longings, and through His Blood I now am saved

(1 John 1.10) *If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.*

This is aimed at the sinners or false Christians who consider their being “good persons” is sufficient to claim they have never sinned. All true Christians had been convinced of their sins against a Holy God as they repented to receive Christ their Savior.

It is possible for a Born – Again Christian to never ever willfully sin for the rest of his life!

Reading:

(1 John 2.1-2) *1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; 2 and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.*

you may not sin.- Don't ask me why most translators have not shown this awesome power in the TRUTH for the original Greek (NTG) **for you may not sin** is - *hamartēte* | ἀμάρτητε | aor act subj 2 pl . The Greek aorist active subjunctive translates: **that you may never ever sin again!**

WOW. This means not just permission not to sin, but POWER to have and keep the freedom from sin and never ever willfully sin again! It is possible, dear OIC Saints. If it were not possible, Holy Spirit would not have said that **“It is!”** **The Apostle John's heart, filled with Jesus' Spirit and disciplined by Jesus in the flesh, knew that Jesus-followers tend to think too low off**

themselves, thus too low of their Lord Jesus' power to keep them from willful sin. He wanted all Christians to realize how great a position they have to defeat sin at every turn of life. So John wrote the Greek aorist active subjunctive for “that you may never ever sin again!”

Jesus did it His whole life and on the Cross for us so we can do it everyday through Him.

And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; now dovetails or flows by the Heavenly Dove into **(Romans 8.1)** *there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.* John gets us excited about living a walk with Jesus so close that we never commit a willful sin again, then, to prevent making that **hope into a Law, assures Christians of their Advocate in Heaven, at the right hand of Almighty Power, the Father. Jesus Himself guarantees our pardon for He is the**

the propitiation for our sins. That is, He appeased God's righteous demand for a Blood Sacrifice to take away sins by being that Lamb of God who took away the sins of the world. And yes, John the Apostle remembers that he wrote in **(John 1.29)** in his Gospel of Jesus where John the Baptist said:

*On the following day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Behold, the **Lamb of God, the one who takes away the sin of the world!** So John writes here, *He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.**

Hallelujah I have found Him , whom my soul so long had craved. Jesus satisfies my longings, and through His Blood I now am saved. Rejoice with Dorothy and I, oh OIC Believers in Jesus!

This is the joy of walking with Jesus in the Light! ...But wait. How can we keep this a secret as we see here that John wrote: *but also for those of the whole world.* Our joy is Holy Spirit power, unction, a burden of Love, not of Law, to tell the whole world Jesus died for their sin too! Let's Do It!

Let Us Pray...

REFERENCES

KJ21- 21st Century King James Version, Copyright © 1994 by Deuel Enterprises, Inc.

NASB1995 - New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. All rights reserved.

NTG – Novum Testamentum Graece/ Nestle-Aland, Printed in Germany 1898&1979

The Gnostic Religion – *The Message of the Alien God and the Beginnings of Christianity*, Hans Jonas, Beacon Street, Beacon Hill, Boston USA, 1958.