

NO BONDAGE

Walking in the light is simply walking with Jesus. Therefore there need be no bondage about it. We have not necessarily got to tell everybody everything about ourselves. The fundamental thing is our *attitude* of walking in the light, rather than the *act*. Are we willing to be in the open with our brother – and be so in word when God tells us to? That is the “armor of light” – true transparency.

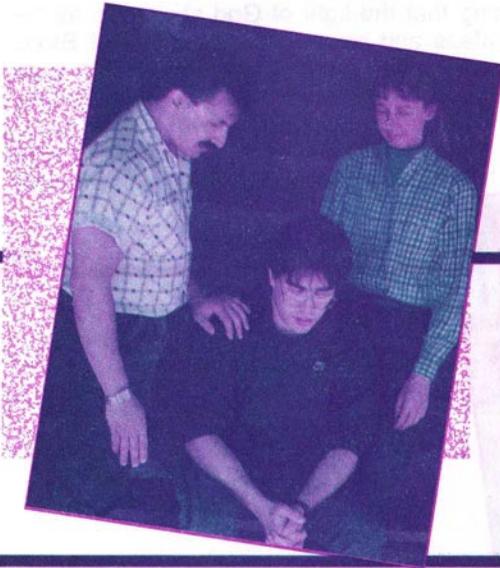
This may sometimes be humbling, but it will help us to a new reality with Christ, and to a new self-knowledge. We have become so used to the fact that God knows all about us that it does not seem to register with us, and we inevitably end by not knowing the truth about ourselves.

But let a man begin to be absolutely honest about himself with but one other, as God guides him, and he will come to a knowledge of himself and his sins that he never had before, and he will begin to see more clearly than ever before where the redemption of Christ has got to be applied progressively to his life. This is the reason why James tells us to put ourselves under the discipline of “*confessing our faults one to another.*”

In 1 John 1:7, of course, the purpose of “*walking in the light*” is that we might “*have fellowship one with another.*” And what fellowship it is when we walk this way together! Obviously, love will flow from one to another when each is prepared to be known as the repentant sinner he is at the Cross of Jesus. When the barriers are down and the masks are off, God has a chance of making us really one. But there is also the added joy of knowing that in such a fellowship we are “safe.”

No fear now that others may be thinking thoughts about us or having reactions toward us

THE BLOOD OF
JESUS CHRIST HIS
SON CLEANSETH
US FROM ALL SIN.



which they are hiding from us. In a fellowship which is committed to walk in the light beneath the Cross, we know that if there is any thought about us it will quickly be brought into the light, either in brokenness and confession (where there has been wrong and unlove) or else as a loving challenge, as something that we ought to know about ourselves.

It must not, however, be forgotten that our walk in the light is first and foremost with the Lord Jesus. It is with Him first that we must get things settled and it is His cleansing and victory that must first be obtained. Then when God guides us to open our hearts with others, we come to them with far more of a testimony than a confession (except where that is specifically due) and we praise God together.

TEAMS OF TWO FOR REVIVAL

Jesus wants you to begin walking in the light with Him in a new way today. Join with one other – your Christian friend, the person you live with, your wife, your husband. Drop the mask. God has doubtless convicted you of one thing more than another that you have got to be honest with them about. Start there.

Be a team of two to work for revival within your circle. As others are broken at the Cross they will

be added to your fellowship, as God leads. Get together from time to time for fellowship and to share your spiritual experience with real openness. In complete oneness pray together for others, and go out as a team with fresh testimony.

God through such a fellowship will begin to work wondrously. As He saves and blesses others in this vital way, they can start to live and work as a fellowship too. As one billiard ball will move another billiard ball, so one group will set off another group, until the whole of our land is covered with new life from the risen Lord Jesus.

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All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise noted.

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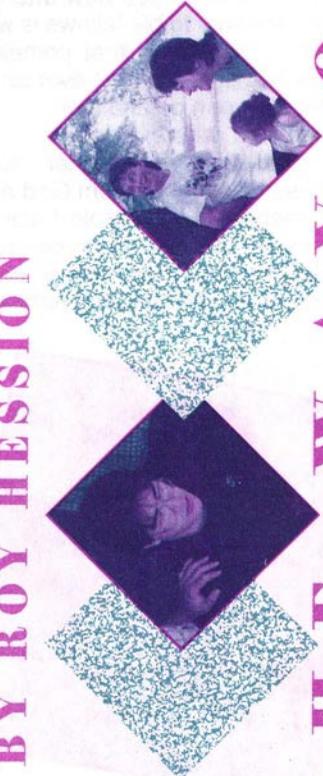
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BY ROY HESSION



When man fell and chose to make himself, rather than God, the center of his life, the effect was not only to put man out of fellowship with God, but also out of fellowship with his fellow man. The story of man's first quarrel with God in the third chapter of Genesis is closely followed, in the fourth chapter, by the story of man's first quarrel with his fellow – Cain's murder of Abel.

The Fall is simply, “We have turned every one to his own way.” (Isaiah 53:6)

THE WAY OF
FELLOWSHIP

If I want my own way rather than God's, it is quite obvious that I shall want my own way rather than the other man's. A man does not assert his independence of God to surrender it to a fellow man, if he can help it. But a world in which each man wants his own way cannot but be a world full of tensions, barriers, suspicions, misunderstandings, clashes, and conflicts.

Now the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross was not only to bring men back into fellowship with God, but also into fellowship with their fellow men. Indeed it cannot do one without the other. As the spokes get nearer the center of the wheel, they get nearer to one another.

But if we have not been brought into vital fellowship with our brother, it is a proof that to that extent we have not been brought into vital fellowship with God. The First Epistle of John insists on testing the depth and reality of a man's fellowship with God by the depth and reality of his fellowship with his brethren (1 John 2:9; 3:14-15; 4:20).

Some of us have come to see how utterly connected a man's relationship to his fellows is with his relationship to God. Everything that comes as a barrier between us and another, be it ever so small, comes as a barrier between us and God.

We have found that where these barriers are not put right immediately, they get thicker and thicker until we find ourselves shut off from God and our brother by what seem to be veritable brick walls. Quite obviously, if we allow new life to come to us, it will have to manifest itself by a walk of oneness with God and our brother, with nothing between.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS

On what basis can we have real fellowship with God and our brother? Here 1 John 1:7 has come afresh to us. *"If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."* What is meant by light and darkness is that light reveals, darkness hides.

When anything reproveth us, shows us up as we really are – that is light. *"Whatsoever doth make manifest is light."* (Eph. 5:13) But whenever we do anything or say anything (or don't say anything) to hide what we are or what we've done – that is darkness.

Now the first effect of sin in our lives is always to make us try to hide what we are. Sin made our first parents hide behind the trees of the garden and it has had the same effect on us ever since. Sin always involves us in being unreal, pretending, duplicity, window dressing, excusing ourselves and blaming others – and we can do all that as much by our silence as by saying or doing something.

This is what the previous verse calls "walking in darkness." With some of us, the sin in question may be nothing more than self-consciousness and the hiding, nothing more than an assumed heartiness to cover that self-consciousness; but it is walking in darkness nonetheless.

In contrast to all this in us, verse 5 of this chapter of 1 John tells us that *"God is light,"* that is, God is the All-revealing One, who shows up every man as he really is. And it goes on to say, *"In Him is no darkness at all,"* that is, there is absolutely nothing in God which can be one with the tiniest bit of darkness or hiding in us.

Quite obviously, then, it is utterly impossible for us to be walking in any degree of darkness and have fellowship with God. While we are in that condition of darkness, we cannot have true fellowship with our brother either – for we are not real with him, and no one can have fellowship with an unreal person. A wall of reserve separates him and us.

THE ONLY BASIS FOR FELLOWSHIP

The only basis for real fellowship with God and man is to live out in the open with both. *"But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another."* To walk in the light is the opposite of walking in darkness. Spurgeon defines it in one of his sermons as "the willingness to know and be known." As far as God is concerned, this means that we are willing to know the whole truth about ourselves, we are open to conviction.

We will bend the neck to the first twinges of conscience. Everything He shows us to be sin, we will deal with as sin – we will hide or excuse nothing. Such a walk in the light cannot but disclose sin increasingly in our lives, and we shall see things to be sin which we never thought to be such before. For that reason we might shrink from this walk, and be tempted to make for cover. But the verse goes on with the precious words, *"and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."*

Everything that the light of God shows up as sin we can confess and carry to the Fountain of Blood and it is gone, gone from God's sight and gone from our hearts. By the power of the precious Blood we can be made more stainless than the driven snow; and thus continually abiding in the light

and cleansed by the Blood, we have fellowship with God.

But the fellowship promised us here is not only with God, but *"one with another"*; and that involves us in walking in the light with our brother too. In any case, we cannot be "in the open" with God and "in the dark" with him. This means that we must be as willing to know the truth about ourselves from our brother as to know it from God. We must be prepared for him to hold the light to us (and we must be willing to do the same service for him) and challenge us in love about anything he sees in our lives which is not the highest.

We must be willing not only to know, but to be known by him for what we really are. That means we are not going to hide our inner selves from those with whom we ought to be in fellowship; we are not going to window dress and put on appearances; nor are we going to whitewash and excuse ourselves. We are going to be honest about ourselves with them. We are willing to give up our spiritual privacy, pocket our pride, and risk our reputations for the sake of being open and transparent with our brethren in Christ.

It means, too, that we are not going to cherish any wrong feeling in our hearts about another, but we are first going to claim deliverance from it from God and put it right with the one concerned. As we walk this way, we shall find that we shall have fellowship with one another at an altogether new level, and we shall not love one another less, but infinitely more.



WE HAVE TURNED EVERY ONE TO HIS OWN WAY.



GOD IS LIGHT... IF WE WALK IN THE LIGHT, WE HAVE FELLOWSHIP ONE WITH ANOTHER.

