TITLE: WALKING IN THE LIGHT

TEXT: 1st John 1:5-7; 1st Co. 12:1-7, 18, 27; Ephe. 4:11-13; Mt. 5:14-16; 2nd Co. 5:20

INTRODUCTION: As we leave behind another year and get ready to enter a new one, I would like to share a scripture with you this morning that contains both a promise and a challenge. A promise that we can claim now as we get ready to leave a year behind and a challenge that we can all embrace in the New Year that lies ahead.

**1Joh 1:5 (NIV) 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.**

This starts out with an undeniable fact about God.

**God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.**

God is light!

The Greek word for light is:

 **phos {foce} (to shine or make manifest, especially by rays…**

**1) light, the light**

**1a2) a heavenly light such as surrounds angels when they appear on earth**

**1b1) the light of a star**

**2a) God is light because light has the extremely delicate, subtle, pure, brilliant quality**

**2b) Light as truth and its knowledge, together with**

**the spiritual purity associated with it.**

Pure light is just that,, It is pure.. In pure light there is no darkness at all.

 Our perception of what pure light is, is really pretty limited.

 None of us have ever seen pure light…

EXAMPLE: Light bulbs don’t emit pure light. Its light is always shaded by darkness. If it were not, we couldn’t look at it.

 You have a dark room with no windows and go to put a light in that room. You start out with a 25-watt bulb but it doesn’t emit enough light to displace all the darkness so we put in a 60 watt bulb and that still isn’t enough light to displace all the darkness that we want to displace so we put in a 75 watt bulb and then 100 watt bulb and maybe even move up to a 300 watt bulb…

 With a 300-watt bulb the room is a lot brighter than it is with a 25 watt bulb but it is still miles away from being a room filled with pure light.

 We can put 10-300 watt bulbs in a 10 X 10 room and it may seem like it is really well lit in there but it would still be light that is shaded by darkness Far from being pure light..

 The best example that we have of pure light in our universe is our sun. And even the sun is not light in its purest form.

 Yet what happens when we try to look directly into the sun on a bright day? It hurts our eyes! It can even damage our eyes, making us blind if we look directly into it for very long.

**God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.**

 God is light in its purest form...

This can bring understanding to what God said to Moses when Moses wanted to see the very face of God and God told him no…When He told Moses that no man may see My face and live!

 The light of the sun may blind us, but the pure light of God is so brilliant that it would literally destroy us…

 Even our sun has some degree of darkness mixed in with its light.

 Photos of the sun that I have seen show shades of reds and yellows.

 When a child colors a picture of the sun what color do they most often color it? What color would you color it? Yellow!

 Yellow is white mixed with black! The black, the darkness, as slight as it might be, lessons the purity of the suns light.

 Even so, the light of our sun can harm us if we look directly into it for very long….

 God told Moses that no man may see His face and live. Why?

Because **God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.** God is pure light! His brilliance is uninhibited by any darkness! He is light in its purest form!

 And no man can literally stand in the purity of His light, in the magnificence of His brilliance, His brightness and live..

**1Joh 1:5 (NIV) 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.**

 If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.

 Light and truth are synonymous here!

 Part of the definition of light, “foce” is:

**Light as truth and its knowledge, together with**

**the spiritual purity associated with it.**

 If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.

If we claim to have fellowship with Him….

The Greek for fellowship is:

**2842 koinonia {koy-nohn-ee'-ah}**

**1) fellowship, association, community, communion, joint participation,**

**1a) the share which one has in anything, a participation**

**1b) intercourse, intimacy**

**1c) a gift jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution, as exhibiting an embodiment and proof of fellowship**

If we claim to have fellowship with Him….

 If we claim to have joint participation, to be in association with, have intimate relationship with, be spiritually intimate with God, and yet walk in darkness, condone and practice sin, then we are living a lie and we are not living by the truth, living by the light.

 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.

The promise that we have here is that if we walk in the light as He is in the light then two things will happen…

 We will have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus, His son, will purifies us from all sin!

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, (and) we have fellowship with one another the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

 The key word here is fellowship!

**2842 {koy-nohn-ee'-ah}**

**1) fellowship, association, community, communion, joint participation, intimacy**

**a gift jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution, as exhibiting an embodiment and proof of fellowship.**

 First, we need to establish fellowship, an intimate relationship with God and then we need to establish fellowship, intimate relationship with one another!

 Actually, the proof of fellowship, an intimate relationship with God, is in having fellowship, an intimate relationship with one another.

**Koinonia: association, community, communion, joint participation, a gift jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution, as exhibiting an embodiment and proof of fellowship.**

 Folks, that is what the Church, the body of Christ is all about! It is all about fellowship! It is all about Koinonia!

 Joint participation, joint communion! A gift jointly contributed!

What is the gift that is to be jointly contributed that Scripture is talking about here?

 You are! I am!

If you are a Christian, if you have the Holy Spirit of Christ living within you then God has gifted you with gifts that are to be administered within His earthly body which is the Church.

 The question isn’t if we have been given gifts by God to be administered within the corporate body of Christ or not, but the question is what are the gifts that God has given us that He intends for us to administer within the corporate body of Christ?

 What are the specific elements of fellowship that I have been given by God to administer within the body of Christ to make the body of Christ complete?

The Apostle Paul talks about this very thing, this fellowship, this **koy-nohn-ee'-ah** in:

 **1Cor 12:1 (NIV) Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.**

**4 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit.**

**5 There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.**

**6 There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.**

**7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.**

18 But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

**27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.**

What Paul is talking about here is fellowship!

 Joint participation! Communion within the body of Christ!

 If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we (will) have fellowship with one another (and) the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

 The promise of having the blood of Christ purify us from all our sin is tied to our fellowshipping, not just with God but with the body of Christ as well.

 The fact is when we do the latter, when we fellowship with one another, we are fellow shipping with God.

 How so?

 When you accepted Christ Jesus as the Lord and Savior of your life His Holy Spirit came to live within you.

 When I accepted Jesus to be the Lord and Savior of my life His Holy Spirit came to live within me.

 If we have the Spirit of Christ living within in us then wherever we go, He goes with us.

 When I come into this place, I bring the Holy Spirit of God with me…When you come into this place you bring the Holy Spirit of God with you.

 So, when we gather together for fellowship guess who comes in with each of us? The Holy Spirit of God.

 When the body of Christ fellowships together they fellowship in the magnified presence of God.

 The more of us are here the more of God is here!

 God gifts His Church to bring wholeness and completeness to His Church.

 In speaking about why God gifts His Church the Apostle Paul says this….

**Ephe 4:11 (NIV) It was he (God) who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,**

**12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up**

**13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.**

In short, God has gifted you and I, the body of Christ, so that, you and I, the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

 The way that it works is that if I were to remove myself from fellowship then I would hinder the work that God wants to do through me within His earthly body..

 If you remove yourself from fellowship then you hinder the work that God wants to do through you within His earthly body.

18 But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

**27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.**

 **Example:** I have had the opportunity over the last several years to talk with people who have found their lives in the depths of despair… Some so down on life that they wanted to end their lives.. People who had hit the proverbial bottom…

 Many, if not most, had at one time or another in their life been in Church. Many have said that they were raised in Christian homes.

 And one thing that seems synonymous with all who have been in that place is that at some point they removed themselves from that fellowship with the body of Christ.

 In ministering to inmates through the jail ministry I often find men and women who have hit life’s proverbial bottom that can trace where things started to go wrong for them was when they stopped having any kind of fellowship with the body of Christ… Some I believe at one time in their life were sincere believers.. Or at least sincere seekers who were looking for God…

 I had a man one time who had fallen into drug use and a homosexual lifestyle that said that he knew that when he got out of jail that the first thing that he needed to do, his top priority, would need to be to get into a good Church fellowship. Not just go to Church on Sunday’s but actually become an active part of a Church body.

 He knew where his true help, the place that his only help really lay…. In intimate relationship and fellowship with God. He came to the understanding that when he entered fellowship with other believers, when he entered fellowship with the body of Christ, that he was entering fellowship with God Himself.

 For God is where His spirit is and His spirit lives within the individuals that comprise the body of Christ..

 **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 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.**

 Church, God is light and we, as His children, have been called to walk in His light.

 And not just walk in His light but to actually become a reflection of His light into the world in which we live.

**Matt 5:14 (NIV) "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.**

**15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.**

**16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.**

We have been called to be reflections of Gods light in our world, not dim candles that keep going out and have to be continually re-lit..

 That only way that we will ever reflect Gods light in our world is….

 **if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, (and) we have fellowship with one another!**

Show me a Christian that is struggling in their relationship with God, a Christian that is not growing, a Christian that’s light for Christ is at best dim, and I will show you a Christian that is having trouble with the concept of fellowship within the earthly body of Christ, the Church.

 You see, the Church, the earthly body of Christ, is the earthly manifestation of God-- Or that is what should be!

 That is what the Apostle Paul means when he says in…

 **2Cor 5:20 (NIV) We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us!**

 An ambassador is not one who represents himself but one who represents the one who sends him.

 We have been called to be ambassadors, be representatives of Jesus Christ, to the world in which we live.

 We have been called to be reflections of Him who called us, leading others not to ourselves, but leading others to the one we represent... Leading others to a lifesaving, life changing relationship with Jesus.

 That will only happen **if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, (and) we have fellowship with one another!**

I would like to close with a song by Scott Wesley Brown this morning… **Keep the Son in your eyes….**

 Are you keeping the Son in your eyes?

 Are you allowing His light to shine through you?

 Are you walking in the light as he is in the light?

Are you allowing Christ to illuminate your path by your allowing Him to live His life through you?…

 Have you come to the place that the Apostle Paul did that caused him to proclaim:

**Galatians 2:20 says, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me".**

**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 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.**

Keep the Son in your eyes
Keep His light shinin' through
Keep your eyes on Jesus
He keeps His eyes on you

All of the times we stumble
All of the times we fall
Like Peter upon the ocean
Frightened by what he saw
And just like the world around us
With all of the waves and the wind
We can fall captive of the storm
By taking our eyes off of Him

Keep the Son in your eyes
Keep His light shinin' through
Keep your eyes on Jesus
He keeps His eyes on you

Whenever the darkness
Tries to steal you away
Remember the Savior
Can light up the way

Keep the Son in your eyes
Keep His light shinin' through
Keep your eyes on Jesus
He keeps His eyes on you
He keeps His eyes on you
So you keep the Son in your eyes