

# Light, Life, and Love - Part 2

by Roy Hession

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of walking in the light through confession and obedience to experience true holiness and assurance of salvation.*

**Duration:** 48:03

**Scripture:** 1 John 2:1

**Topics:** "Love", "Walking in the Light", "Love and Obedience"

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## Description

Roy Hession emphasizes the importance of walking in the light of God, which involves confessing our sins and allowing the light to reveal hidden faults. He explains that true knowledge of God is demonstrated through obedience to His commandments, particularly the command to love one another. Hession warns against false professions of faith, highlighting that love for our brothers is a crucial evidence of our relationship with God. He encourages believers to seek genuine repentance and to allow God's love to flow through them, thus maintaining a vibrant connection with both God and others. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a life characterized by love, holiness, and a commitment to walking in the light.

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## Transcript

Will you turn to the first epistle of John and to the second chapter. The theme of the first chapter really runs over, as we saw yesterday, to verse two of chapter two. But we will read from verse one again.

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole but world.

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected.

Hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith, he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment, which ye had from the beginning.

The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true

light already shineth. Those are alterations from the revised version.

He that saith he's in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

Yesterday we looked at the theme of the first chapter, and after the preliminary introduction of himself as an eyewitness, earwitness, and handwitness of eternal life, John tells us which is what exactly, what is the essence of the message which he has heard of God. And it is simply that God is light, and that in him is no darkness at all. Well now I'm not going to, of course, summarize what we had last morning, there's no need to.

But I do want to, in a sense, finish off a little bit of that theme before going on to the next. The first word of this morning which we read, and which was included yesterday, was these things write I unto you that ye sin not. We saw yesterday that to walk in the light, as God is in the light, was to be willing to say yes to all that the light revealed at any given moment as sin, and take it to the Lord Jesus, to confess it, that he might cleanse.

And may I say, don't ask for forgiveness of God, don't ask for cleansing. You can even ask for it, the condition is, we're to confess. You can even ask for forgiveness and cleansing, and we are not concentrating on the one condition which is to confess.

Don't worry about the forgiveness and cleansing, concern ourselves with the confessing, get right to the bottom, spend time, and if we confess, God does the rest, he forgives, he cleanses from all sin through the blood of Jesus. And this we saw is a walk, it's something that is often reiterated, we walk, a walk is a reiterated step in the light, and in that light things are seen to be sin which we never saw to be sin when we were in the dark. We get back into the dark if we don't say yes, very easily.

But if we say yes, the light goes on shining, and the blood of the Lord Jesus goes on cleansing. Now this is the point I'm coming to. It might be said that that would appear to give license to sin.

Well it doesn't matter too much about sin, we can sin, but we can always repent. And who, I suppose, hasn't had that terrible thought in our hearts? When there's been some temptation to indulge in something, well you say, well I can always repent, the blood is always there. And at first sight, it would seem that this wonderful healing message could give license to sin.

Indeed, in East Africa, where God has poured out his Spirit and taught multitudes to walk with the Lord Jesus in the light, and repent and be cleansed, there have been those who have been bitterly critical of that revival movement. And I heard of a group who used to criticize it, and they used to call it the Sin and Tell It Club. What a terrible thing, and yet, that says that they saw it.

Now John says, the result of walking in the light with God is going to be actually the very reverse. I'm telling you these things, not that you might have a way in which you could indulge and then get back again. I'm telling you these things, that you might not sin at all.

That's his end, that's his purpose. There's a truth, of course, he himself says, if a man says he has not sinned, he makes God alive. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.

That's the raw material with which God begins. But as a man takes this simple way revealed here, it'll be the way of holiness for him. I write these things unto you that ye sin not.

It is the way not to sin. Because if a man is letting that light reveal the first beginnings of bitterness or unlove or impurity, and saying, yes, God, you're right, I'm wrong, and confessing it to Jesus and being cleansed from it, you're quite sure that those incipient things are not going to spring forth into those larger transgressions. When a man is confessing the beginnings of jealousy, you know that's not going to issue to, in hard words, the divisions in the church.

If you will turn to Psalm 19, verse 12, you will see there's something very relevant to this. Psalm 19, verse 12, Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Well, now, the revised version says, cleanse thou me from hidden faults.

And that, quite obviously, is the meaning. Not secret faults. If you're keeping a thing secret, not even God can cleanse it.

But there are hidden faults, hidden from ourselves. We don't see them. We haven't got enough light.

Oh, God, cleanse me from those hidden faults that I've got so used to. Then he goes on to say, keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, subtle sins of pride. Let them not have dominion over me, then shall I be upright and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

Do you see the three sorts of sins? There are, first of all, hidden sins that are hidden from us. Then there are the subtle presumptuous sins, sins of pride, and then there are the great transgression. And David says, oh, God, if you will be saving me from the least, I shall be saved from the greatest.

If you're saving me from those subtle things that I haven't seen, and those subtle incursions of pride, then shall I be innocent of great transgression. And if we're walking with Jesus, letting the light show up the first beginnings, and humble enough to say, yes, it's right, Lord, and I'm wrong, then shall I be innocent of great transgression. A man who's confessing impure thoughts and being washed from them, and hating them and turning from them as they come, isn't likely to commit adultery or fornication, is he? The man who's repenting of coveting what belongs to somebody and putting it in the light, isn't likely to go and steal it, is he? God is saving him much earlier on.

As it says in one of the old hymns, God is healing the tide at its beginning. And I don't know any other way of practical holiness than this way. Those that know how to walk in the light with God, not those who adhere to a formula and turn on the tap, but those in real honesty who know what it is to face God momentarily about the things that come, they are the ones who know what real holiness is.

This is the way of holiness. And the amazing thing is it's available to poor people. It's the way of gospel holiness.

It isn't coming up to a standard which only makes you despair. This is gospel holiness. On the level where you live, the light shows you, but grace offers the remedy.

And the amazing thing is, as you repent of the negative, God pours in the positive. As you repent of worry, God brings in faith. As we repent of unlove for a brother, God pours in love.

Christ in that place is made to us all we need. Be assured this is the way of holiness. And I believe what I've just said may throw some light on a difficult verse later on, chapter three, verse nine.

Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin. Now that would appear to be a difficult verse, because those that are born of God are often repenting and confessing sin. And yet here it says they do not commit it.

Well, I believe the word commit means practice. They don't practice sin, but they repent of it. And I believe the answer is in this that we've tried to say, that this is the way in which we are set free from the dominion of things that otherwise would grow into larger transgressions and spoil our fellowship with God and divide us from brethren.

I can only tell you that in my experience of deep fellowship with men who've gone so much further than I have, and who know so much more of practical holiness than I do, I've noticed this. The further they are on with God and the more of holiness and sweetness one sees in them when you get close enough to them, the quicker they are to see sin and repent of it. They're not the ones who are repenting less, but they're the ones who repent more.

And yet they're the ones upon whom the grace of God is so manifest and whom he's using. And in fellowship with such, as I've traveled with such in other parts, it's been like living with somebody in a greenhouse. You know exactly what's going on, and the blood of Christ is doing this continuous work in them.

And sometimes I'm so challenged, and a brother says, well, God showed me this and showed me that today, and he's got a testimony as to grace reaching him there. Well, I said, well, I don't know. I'm sure I've had all that, but I never saw it.

I was oblivious. I thought I was quite impervious to those things. Here's a man of God, so close that the light shows him things that perhaps doesn't always show me because I may not always be as much in the light as I should be.

So this is the way. I want to tell you this simple way produces those positive results of love and sweetness, holiness, and power for service and everything else. This is the way.

Now we turn to verse three, and here we find John saying, Hereby we do know that we know him if we keep his commandments. Now I believe now we're really approaching the main message that John has. There are two sets of key words that run through this epistle.

I can bring you six very similar ones. Look at chapter one, verse six. If we say, chapter one, verse eight, if we say, chapter one, verse ten, if we say, chapter two, verse four, he that saith.

Chapter two, verse six, he that saith. Chapter two, verse nine, he that saith. John's great burden is with those that say they have fellowship with God and are walking in darkness.

His concern is that of a false profession. I don't mean to say a man says he's converted when he isn't converted. He may well be converted, but he may appear and give the impression of being a certain type of Christian and may even think so himself when in reality he isn't.

Now very often as you read the epistles in the New Testament carefully, you can gather what was the need of the people to whom they were first written. And there's no doubt at all in that early church there was great need. Let's not go on talking about the early church and the Pentecostal church and the church of the Acts as the ideal church.

It was far from ideal. Nearly every one of the epistles written to that church were corrective epistles, and certainly John's was. You've only got to read the second epistle of Peter and the epistle of Jude to realise there was a state of things in that excitable early church that we don't have today.

Of course I readily agree, as Martin Lloyd-Jones once said, the errors were the errors of revival. There was life, and the life went off in all sorts of directions. Today of course there isn't so much life, there's not so much movement and there may not be so many excesses.

There may be much more appearance of unity sometimes, only because we're frozen together. But that early church, it was an excitable church. Pentecost was new and continuing, and in that excitable church there were certain things that always happened when the saints get excitable.

Praise the Lord for being excited, we ought to be. But there are always some errors. And, you know, flesh can get in to an excitable church, into an excitable group, flesh can get in when there are the gifts of the Spirit and so on, and we can get wrapped up with excitement of things and the deep moral implications of the Gospel can be lost sight of.

You don't find the apostles ever writing to stir up excitement, you don't even find them greatly concerned that they should seek the more spectacular gifts of the Spirit. They don't deny them, and they're not concerned to encourage them, they're just one of those phenomena that happen in periods of great blessing and excitement in the church's history. No, no, they're concerned with the moral foundations, and it is possible when there's excitement to forget that fact, and it was apparently true.

Here, in fact, things in that church to which John wrote and Jude wrote and Peter wrote, there was fragrant immorality masquerading under superior spirituality. You can read it, it's extraordinary. Now apparently John, from his island home in Patmos, was concerned about the church, the Christians in their various assemblies scattered over Asia Minor, that there was an easy profession, a professing of great things, which wasn't based on, didn't have a real moral basis, they were those that said, but their actual actions didn't go there.

And so it is, this is one of the things that has occasioned, I believe, John's letter. And so he would challenge us about our profession, about what we think we are as Christians. Well, of course, that challenge can make you doubt.

Well, I say I'm a Christian, I say I'm walking with the Lord, but maybe things aren't right with me, and perhaps I'm not right at all. And so it is, along with that set of key words, you have another set of key words to balance them. Here by we know.

One set is, he that saith, but doesn't do, is a liar. He's not there at all, don't you believe it, says John. Well, how do you know where you are then? Here by we know.

And this comes again and again. Chapter 2, verse 3. Here by we know that we do know him, if we keep his commandments. Chapter 2, verse 5. Here by we know that we are in him.

Chapter 3, verse 14. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. Virtually the same phrase, here by we do know.

Chapter 3, verse 19. And here by we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him, when soever our hearts condemn us. Yes, if an honest, searching heart is subjected to these great challenges of John, he may not know where he is.

And his heart may condemn him, and he may begin to doubt. Here by we do know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him, when soever our hearts condemn us. Revised version.

Chapter 3, verse 24. And here by we know that he abideth in us by the spirit which he hath given us. Chapter 4, verse 13.

Here by we know that we dwell in him, and he in us. Chapter 5, verse 2. By this we know we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments. And so he would, on the one hand, challenge our profession, and test it as to whether we are really right with God and our brother.

And lead us to doubt our profession if we're not. On the other hand, he gives us evidences which, when discerned in the life of the child of God, assures his heart, when soever his heart would condemn him. Now that leads me to say that years ago I heard it helpfully set out that there are three forms of assurance of salvation.

Now I suppose we realize there is a difference between salvation and the assurance of salvation. I mean to say, on that Passover night, there were some who were under the blood, with the blood sprinkled outside, but they had no assurance that they were going to be all right. They were full of fears.

They were worried. The eldest son wouldn't go to bed that day. He was trembling what was going to happen to him at midnight.

There was another house where the blood was outside, and the boy went very peacefully to bed. He had no doubts as to his salvation, as to his safety. I've often asked children, I say, which of those two was safer? And so often they say, well, the one who was sure.

Oh no. They were equally safe, equally under the blood. But some, the first, hadn't got the assurance of salvation.

They were there, did they, but only realized it. Grace was protecting them. He would hover over them and not suffer the destroyer to come into them.

But they went in the joy of it because they went sure. And the others, they were saved, but they were also sure they were saved. Now there are three forms of assurance, it's been said, and I think this is so helpful.

There's first of all external assurance, at least the ground of our assurance is based on something external. It's based on the word and work of Christ to sinners. God has said it, it must stand.

Someone has put it this way. Jesus did it, God says it, I believe it, and that settles it. Jesus did it long ago.

The only thing that impedes my entrance into heaven is sin, and that's what Jesus put away by the sacrifice of himself as we heard, the sword of sheath. Jesus did it, God says it, and he says he's satisfied with that. If he's satisfied with that on your behalf, why can't you be? All right, then I believe it, and that

settles it.

You don't depend on your feelings. There was a time when I depended on my feelings. When I felt up, I thought, well, I really am a Christian.

When my feelings disappeared, I wasn't quite sure. I was casting the anchor inside the boat, and it didn't hold. You've got to cast it outside the boat on something gloriously external to yourself, the unbreakable promises of God.

My sheep are mine, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. And my friend, when you realize you became his before the foundation of the world, in the purpose of God, before you had done any good to deserve it, or any ill to forfeit it, oh, how secure is the man who's learned to find his peace in what Christ did and the promises of God external. And that, I would say, is the first and the most basic.

But then there's a second form of assurance, and that is internal. And we find that in Romans 8, verse 16. 8, 16, the Spirit himself beares witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs.

The Holy Spirit comes to whisper that you are indeed a child of God, that God is indeed your Father, that heaven is indeed your home, and oh, what blessed seasons of rejoicing in the Lord do not the children of God know when the Holy Spirit assures them by an internal witness of the love of God for them, of their security, of God being their Father. This isn't some advanced experience, the witness of the Spirit, it's the happy, blessed experience of the merest believer in Jesus. You ought to know it.

I don't want you to start hunting round for it and saying, well, if I haven't got that, I don't know where I am. Externally, you may know the promises of God, but as you take them at their face value, there's an internal witness within your heart. Yes, you don't trust on feelings, but you don't, you don't, God doesn't leave you without them.

My goodness, no. You have them all right. Beware, lest you depend on them, and if there's a variation, you think, well, everything's gone wrong.

Not necessarily. Maybe you've heard of the old illustration of someone looking down a well at night, and in the still waters down there, they could see a perfect reflection of the moon up above, and then someone drops a stone. Oh, they say, you say, the moon's all broken to pieces.

I know, the moon's still there. It's just the reflection of it that's being disturbed. Many things will disturb it.

Sin, of course, will disturb it, but even when that's so, your relationship to God hasn't been forfeited. You're still His, though the happy consciousness has been broken. Sometimes other things may disturb it.

Even a bad headache, you may not have quite so much of the joy of the Lord. Oh, where am I? No, no. Just a little disturbance of the water's surface, the moon's still there.

But oh, God wants us and does give us this witness of the Spirit within our hearts. Sometimes a light surprises the Christian while he sings, it is the Lord that rises with healing in his wings. Don't you get it? Sometimes when you sing, you almost feel ready to take off for glory.

You wouldn't take the archangel Gabriel to come and tell you that you were a child of God. You don't need him, you know it, not only externally but internally. But there is a third way of assurance, and that is not only external, not only internal, but evidential.

Please turn the cassette over now. Do not fast-wind it in either direction. This is the sort of assurance that John is speaking about.

Hereby we do know that we are in him and he in us, and then he points to certain evidence. You see, combating as he wants to, this looseness, this flippant, this excitableness that says one thing and does the other, it obviously isn't in his orbit at this particular moment to speak so much about the first two. He wants people to have evidence, and that is what John is talking about, the evidence.

And right the way through this epistle, there are mentioned the evidences that he is in us and we in him, and although it may shake us somewhat, he says if you can't see them, you may well wonder where you are. Well, there's a glorious dance in scripture, isn't there? Well now, the one we've just mentioned, the first one here, is hereby we know that we know him. How do you know that you know him? What evidences have we? And he says, if we keep his commandments.

Well now, as you read through this epistle, and we shall be doing that of course together, it's quite clear what his commandments is, or what they are. He talks about it's no new commandment, you've known it all along and yet it is new when it comes to you in living power. And of course, when he talks about the new commandment, we are reminded of what the Lord said in John 13, 34, a new commandment I give unto you, and yet it's an old, old one, it was there in the Old Testament as well as in the New, that ye love one another.

And summed up, that is the commandment, the word that we are to keep. And that keeping of his word is an evidence that we know him. I don't know that in these days we have such a struggle to get the assurance of salvation as our fathers did.

I don't know why it is, I believe there's a sense in which the truths of the gospel have been more elucidated in the early days of Bunyan and people like that. The gospel had only been recently recovered from the morass of the Middle Ages. Maybe we get it a bit too easily.

Those men weren't always sure, they had to be assured, and there were many times when their hearts condemned them. And so we read, and hereby we know that we are the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him whensoever our heart condemns. Maybe we ought to have some more healthy wondering.

Well, I expect we do. If not about our eternal salvation, we have many a wondrous to our present relationship with the Lord. How it is, I know I do.

And what a wonderful thing it is to whisper, hear him whisper. There's evidence enough, dear child. Just look back to where you were.

Just remember the troubles, and look how grace has led you on. Is that not evidence that you indeed have become an object of that grace, that grace is working, working in you, and you shall pass from death into life? Of course, it isn't the only ground of assurance it needs, the three. There is a very, very important one.

Well, now, love, and that becomes, of course, as we shall see, the great theme of later chapters. Hereby we know that we know him if we keep his commandments, and his commandments are really only one. Now, Paul says the same, Romans 13, verse 9. Romans 13, verse 8. Owe no man anything but to love one another.

And we mustn't let the debt remain undischarged. For he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. You don't have to tick off all the points of the law that you're keeping them, provided you love others.

For this thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love, work is no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. We were thinking of that rich young ruler the other night, and the Lord said, well, have you kept the commandments and enumerated them, the ones we've read? And I noticed that some time ago I'd got it from somewhere, I'd jotted in my Bible, do not commit adultery, that is, do not take another's husband.

Do not kill, do not take another's life. Do not steal, do not take another's property. Do not bear false witness, do not take another's reputation.

If I'm concerned for the other, do you know the antidote to adultery? The antidote to adultery is love. The numerator says, oh, as long as there's love you can do what you like. No, no, it's love that forbids it, that stops you.

Love for whom? Oh, not for that woman or man, but for their partner. If I love him, if I love them with cowardly love, would I want to steal that one and come between them? It's love for others that prevents me pinching what belongs to them, and then they don't know where it's gone. And you know, you've got no idea of the terrible grief that is caused by stealing.

You've got no idea how bothered they are, how worried. The grief to others caused by stealing. Love covers all that.

And criticising and taking away another's reputation, if you love that brother, you won't do it. And so, hereby we don't know that we know him if we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous, they're comprised in one. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

And that is to be, as we shall see, one of the evidences that we have ourselves, passed from death into life, is that we who were unloved and unloving, now begin to have evidences of love for our brother, because we have been loved of God. Understand, however, that loving your brother is not the way to the new birth. You can try to be more loving, it won't bring you one little bit nearer heaven.

It won't bring you into the new birth. But having found at the feet of Jesus new birth, then love for one's brother is the evidence. And so he goes on, in verse 9, He that saith he is in the light, here he is, attacking this false profession, in the light of this.

He that saith he's in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. Now you might think that perhaps you don't hate anybody. But you know, in scripture there's nothing in between, it's either black or white.

It's either love or hate. There's nothing in between. And if it isn't love, then the Holy Spirit says call it hate.

And of course there is one passage, more than any other passage in the New Testament, that tells us what love is. That great passage in 1 Corinthians 13. Therefore hate is simply the opposite of 1 Corinthians 13.

And therefore we can look at 1 Corinthians 13, decide what is the opposite, and put the opposite in that verse. And it really begins to come very close to us. It has indeed to my own heart this morning, as I've been going through it.

Look at 1 Corinthians 13. Charity. Verse 4. That's the old English word for love.

I don't know it's out of date. We talk about a person being charitable, or not very charitable. That wasn't a very charitable remark.

You didn't deal with him with much charity, did you? So the old word charity still lingers with us, and it still has the right meaning. Though, doubtless, we ought to read here, as the New Versions do, love. Love suffereth long, that is, is patient and is kind.

The opposite of that is impatience and unkindness. So we turn back to the first epistle of John again, and put that in. And what do we find? He that saith he's in the light, and is impatient with his brother, and unkind to his brother, is in the darkness even until now.

You see, before we go further with this, the rationale for these failures in my relationship to my brother, putting me wrong with God, is this. I used to think that my relationship to God was a two-point circuit, God and me. And provided there was no break in that circuit, the divine current of life would go on flowing.

But I've since discovered that that is a very inadequate conception. As I read John's epistle, I discover my relationship to God is not a two-point circuit, it's a three-point circuit. God, me, my brother.

And the divine current has to run around three points. I may imagine that I'm very consecrated, having my quiet times, and doing the right thing with regard to God. But if there's a break in the circuit between my brother and me, the whole current stops in any case.

And I'm as much wrong with God as I am with my brother. And so we read, if there isn't love, if there's the opposite of love, he that saith he is in the light and is impatient and unkind to his brother, whoever that may be, the one across your path, is in the darkness even until now. What else does it say in 1 Corinthians 13? Love envieth not, that is, is not jealous of his brother.

And so we go back to the other passage, he that saith he is in the light and is jealous of his brother, is in the darkness even until now. I confess myself to have said I'm in the light. One of the things that sometimes come into my heart all too often is jealousy.

Sometimes I don't know why I'm in the dark. I can't find out what's gone wrong. I've come to say to myself, Roy, if in doubt, it's probably jealousy.

And if I'm in doubt, it nearly always is, because jealousy can be a very hidden thing. You can only see it by its symptoms. You are criticising the other person, not appreciating the other person.

The real thing is we're jealous. He that saith he is in the light and is jealous of his brother, he's in the darkness even until now, and I know for one that that darkness can be a darkness that can be felt. Misery, indeed.

We go on. He that saith he's in the light, and we go back to 1 Corinthians 13, love vaunteth not, itself is not puffed up. Love doesn't boast and isn't proud.

But he that saith he's in the light and is proud, and boasting, and making the others feel small, because that's what boasting does, he's in the darkness even until now, as a break in the current, in the circuit. Goes on to say, love doth not behave itself unseemly, that is not rude, therefore he that saith he's in the light and is rude to his brother. Just plain rude, that's all.

He's in the darkness even until now. Love seeketh not her own, that means isn't selfish, doesn't insist on its own way and rights. But he that saith he's in the light and is selfish towards his brother and insists on his own way, he's in the darkness even until now.

It goes on to say, love is not easily provoked. It doesn't easily become resentful and irritable. He therefore that saith he's in the light and is easily provoked by his brother, or by his wife, or by the children, is in the darkness even until now.

You might even doubt the whole business, if that's the situation, says John. He goes on to say, love thinketh no evil, revised version, does not take account of evil. Love doesn't mark the things that people do to it, doesn't hold them, doesn't brood over them, doesn't take account of evil done to it.

But he that saith he's in the light is all the time taking account of the things that people do, the fact that they seem to count them, the fact that they don't seem to take notice of them, that they appear to do this. That's not love for that brother. Love isn't marking the other's faults.

But when you do, when I do, we're in the darkness even until now. And then it goes on to say, love rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth. I think it's Moffat who gives a wonderful translation to that.

Love, and I think it's right, his translation, is not glad when others go wrong, but rejoices when the truth rejoices. Sometimes I found a little spark of rather pleased when another brother, perhaps especially if he was excelling me, is seen to be not quite so excellent and may go wrong somewhere. That's not love, that's hate.

He that saith he's in the light and is glad even a little bit when the other person goes wrong is in the darkness even until now. Love rejoices when the truth, when the truth can rejoice over a person. Love rejoices.

It doesn't care whether you're getting a little bit of light, of limelight. He's been blessed. But hate doesn't.

And so we see this terrible thing hereby we do know that we know him when we keep his commandment as his commandment is that we love one another but so often. There's the very opposite. And we have the description of the man who hates his brother.

He's in, it says that he's in the darkness. And walk is in darkness. And knoweth not whither he goeth, you don't know where you are, my friend.

You may be professed to be spiritual. There's been something going on like this in your life for ages to war back one person. You're in the darkness.

You don't know where you're going, whether you're coming or going. And you're stumbling. Oh, but it says he that loveth his brother abides in the light and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

Oh, it's a wonderful thing. When we've learnt to love our brother, how do we do it? It isn't by trying to love him. It isn't even by asking God for more of his love for that brother.

It's by confessing the thing that isn't love and putting it right. And it's love that leads you to do it. It is possible to put a thing right with a brother mechanically.

Try and get a blot off your conscience and you probably end up by hurting that brother. And oh, it's Calvary love that leads us to put it right. You go to Jesus.

You see you as a sinner are loved, yet in your sin. You see, although you've sinned, you nonetheless have an advocate with the Father. He's on your side and it helps you to repent.

Like John, although you have all these horrid things in you, you find that repentant sinners are given a place on the bosom of Jesus. And you get it straight there. And then it's love that sends you to put it right.

It's something very touching when somebody driven by love puts it right with your brother. You don't know how I've been feeling. And you know that at that moment he's beginning to love you.

He wouldn't have come to you with it had it not been that it was love leading him to put it right. And he learnt that love at Calvary where he saw he was so loved of God. This is the way.

And as you come to Jesus with the unlove, Calvary love is poured into your heart. The love of God for you and then it reflects out to that other brother. And the circuit is mended.

And the divine current flows from God to you and from you to that brother and from that brother back to God. And every time the current goes round those three points the voltage seems to get stepped up. It gets more and more and more until you and I can know heavens of love.

Not only love for me but love for one another. But being what we are it won't be without many a conviction of the light about the unloving attitude or thought or word or behaviour which is taken to Jesus. We put it right with our brother and once again I say it's love that does it, not a mechanical formula.

There's no mechanical formula. You must say everything to your brother. No, no, love is the thing that will guide you.

You won't hurt your brother. You'll be the one to be in the wrong. And so the current will flow.

Hereby we do know that we know him if we're keeping his commandments in this way. If we're really willing to yield ourselves unto obedience that came to me this morning. Am I willing to yield myself to, it doesn't say Jesus in Romans 6, to obedience.

Am I going to make obedience my master? I'm not going to regard repentance or putting things right or doing this and that as the occasional thing. I'm prepared to recognise that this is to be the principle to walk with you in this way, obeying. And as your light shows, as your light convicts so shall we have the divine current flowing.

Let us pray. Amen. Lord Jesus, thou hast had to show us all, probably this morning, thou hast shown me where there has been virtual hatred because it hasn't been love.

A little bit glad when a brother's gone wrong. Forgive me, Lord. Thank thee for showing it me.

Many of these other things easily prevent. And Lord, I know that when that's so, I'm in the dark, but praise thy name that the light is shining and the blood of Jesus is flowing and there's healing and the pouring in of thy love. We give thee thanks for this.

We ask thee to make it clear to us. Interpret all this to each one in their need. We ask it in thy dear name.

Amen.

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