Lent 2022 “Bringing Sin into the Light” 1 John 1:5 – 2:2

This is the message we heard from Jesus and now declare to you: God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all. So we are lying if we say we have fellowship with God but go on living in spiritual darkness; we are not practicing the truth. But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin. If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. If we claim we have not sinned, we are calling God a liar and showing that his word has no place in our hearts. My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate who pleads our case before the Father. He is Jesus Christ, the one who is truly righteous. He himself is the sacrifice that atones for our sins—and not only our sins but the sins of all the world. - 1 John 1:5 – 2:2

Jesus has a message for us, a message first given to John and now passed on to us: “God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all.” Jesus is telling us that what light is in the physical realm, God is in the spiritual. What does light do? Primarily, light reveals. You and I can see each other because there is light in this room. So, to say that God is light is to say that God reveals things as they really are. He reveals himself to us, through his Word and through his Son, Jesus Christ, and shows himself to be the One who loves us. He reveals our neighbor to us and bids us to love him or her. And, he reveals ourselves to us, and this includes showing us our sin.

In theory, we respect the light. Truth is a good thing. But, for some, all that light is too much. They don’t like having their sins revealed, and so instead of living in the light and being honest about their sin, they live in spiritual darkness. Instead of spending time in the Bible where they may learn about God and about themselves, including their sin; instead of following Jesus’ example of how to live in obedience to God; instead of regular Christian fellowship with people who are seeking to live God’s way; they have bought into the false teaching that the Christian doesn’t need any of those things. Consequently, they live in darkness.

Characteristic of living in darkness is to say that we have no sin. When we do so, John points out, we are only fooling ourselves. If we were to turn off the lights in here and somehow able to make it completely dark where you couldn’t see a thing, and for some of us to claim that because we couldn’t see each other there was no one else besides ourselves in this room, would be to fool ourselves. Simply declaring that there are no other people – that there is no sin – does not make it so.

To live in the light of God is to come face to face with our sin. What, then, do we do with our sin? We confess it. We don’t deny it, try to cover it up, make excuses for it – we confess it. And, when we confess, when we are honest with God about the sin he shows us in ourselves, then the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross cleanses us from our sin. We are forgiven of our sin, and having been forgiven, we are free to walk with God in the light as he is in the light.

I invite you to close your eyes and prayerfully listen as I again read our text.

Then, I will lead us in the Prayer of Confession.