

# 1 John 1:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

## Analysis

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**This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.** John presents the foundational revelation received from Christ: God is light. This is not metaphor but essential nature—light defines God's very being. In Scripture, light represents holiness, truth, purity, knowledge, and life. "In him is no darkness at all" eliminates any dualism: there is no mixture, shadow, or variation in God's moral perfection. The emphatic double negative (skotia en autō ouk estin oudemia, σκοτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδεμία) removes all possibility of moral compromise in God.

The source is crucial: this message was "heard of him"—from Christ Himself. It's not human speculation about God's nature but divine self-revelation. "Declare" (anangellomen, ἀναγγέλλομεν) means to announce authoritatively, like a herald proclaiming royal decree.

This truth has profound implications for fellowship with God and full joy. If God is absolute light, fellowship with Him requires walking in light. There can be no compromise with darkness—no secret sins, cherished lies, or moral relativism. The exclusiveness of light and darkness establishes Christianity's exclusive claims: light cannot fellowship with darkness.

## Historical Context

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The declaration "God is light" directly challenged both pagan and Gnostic theology. Greek philosophy sometimes associated the divine with light, but typically as one attribute among others. Gnosticism taught dualism—light and darkness as equal, eternal principles. Some Gnostic systems claimed the creator God was evil or ignorant (associated with darkness), while the supreme God was pure light but distant from creation.

John's absolute statement refutes these errors. The God who created the material world is pure light with no mixture of darkness. Creation is not a cosmic mistake or the work of an inferior deity. Against moral relativism in Greco-Roman culture, John declares absolute moral standards rooted in God's unchanging character.

The Old Testament background includes passages like Psalm 27:1, Isaiah 60:19, and James 1:17. John presents Jesus as the fulfillment of this light-imagery—"the true Light" (John 1:9), "the light of the world" (John 8:12).

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How does the truth that "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" affect your view of sin and holiness?
2. In what ways might you be compromising with darkness while claiming fellowship with God?
3. How should God's absolute holiness shape your evangelism and your view of those who reject Christ?

## Interlinear Text

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καὶ αὕτη ἔστιν ἡ ἐπαγγελία ἣν ἀκηκόαμεν ἀπ'  
**and** **This** **is** <sup>G3588</sup> **the message** **which** **we have heard** **of**  
G2532 G3778 G2076 G1860 G3739 G191 G575

αὐτῷ καὶ ἀναγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς φῶς ἔστιν  
**him** **and** **declare** **unto you** **that** <sup>G3588</sup> **God** **light** **is**  
G846 G2532 G312 G5213 G3754 G2316 G5457 G2076

καὶ σκοτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδεμία  
**and** **darkness** **in** **him** **no** **is** **at all**  
G2532 G4653 G1722 G846 G3756 G2076 G3762

## Additional Cross-References

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**John 8:12** (Light): Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

**James 1:17** (Light): Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

**Psalms 27:1** (Light): The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

**Isaiah 60:19** (Light): The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.

**John 1:9** (Light): That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

**John 1:4** (Light): In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

**John 9:5** (Light): As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

**Revelation 22:5** (Light): And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

**Revelation 21:23** (Light): And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

**Psalms 36:9** (Light): For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

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