

The Light

Ephesians 5:6-14

6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not become partners with them; 8 for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), 10 and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. 11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. 13 But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, 14 for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." (Ephesians 5:6-14 (ESV))

For two weeks now, we have been dedicating ourselves to the study of a mysterious kind of "darkness" that now exists all throughout the world, a kind of darkness that is filled with and controlled by spiritual forces that live and move and have their being within that darkness, a depraved existence and a condition of life that is not even imagined in the worst of the Hollywood movies.

But though that "darkness" be hidden from our conscious minds, it is still so very, very real, and so much more evil and demonic than we could ever imagine. And it churns round about us every moment of every day, concealed from our conscious minds both by the "mercies of God" and by the "blindness" that the "darkness" brings to our eyes! And the question that I would have you and me to consider as we read these words is, "Are our own eyes so blinded by the "darkness" that we accept its presence and its culture of vile behavior as simply being "normal"?" Or, "are we instead prepared to believe and accept the truth of the words written here in Ephesians 6, verse 12?"

12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. (Ephesians 6:12 (NIV))

May I say to you and to me that we must make the right choice as we consider these truths, because our whole eternity depends upon the choice we make!

As I asked the Lord to help me in my own understanding of this "darkness", my thoughts were immediately taken back to the very beginning, those very first moments when God first began His work of creating this world. You will recall that He said that the world in those beginning moments was completely covered in "darkness", a "darkness" that was

darker than any kind of “darkness” imaginable to man. And the first thing that God did was to bring “light” into the world. Listen to these first words of Genesis 1 . . .

1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. (Genesis 1:1-4 (ESV))

You’ll note here that as God brought “light” into the world, the sun and the moon had not yet been created to provide that “light”. The sun and the moon were created four days later. They were not needed because God Himself was the “light”. And while I can’t imagine God’s kind of “light”, it was real beyond measure, perfectly lighting up all of existence.

And yes, we will see God’s glorious kind of “light” again at some time in the future, when Christ comes back and brings the “new world” into existence. We read about that in Revelation 21. Listen!

22 But I saw no temple in it (the new city of God), for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23 The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. 24 And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. (Revelation 21:22-24 (NKJV))

God is the true “light”, a “light” like no other “light”, described here as being His “glory”. And His “glory” illuminated all of existence back there in the beginning in the newly created earth. And yes, God did, on the fourth day of creation, then go on to create the sun and moon to guide mankind and all of the other creatures of the earth through their days and nights. But His own glorious light still remained present, and it was described with the simple word, “good”, and it truly was “good”. And Adam and Eve, and all of creation enjoyed the goodness of God’s light, because it was so “good”.

Why would God’s special “light” be so very “good”? It is because all of creation, and especially Adam and Eve, could then see everything as it really was, not just the physical reality of the created things, but also the beauty of the holiness of God that filled all of those things.

I confess that as I try to imagine the kind of “light” that would reveal the “beauty of the holiness of God” in everything that I look at, my mind boggles down and my imagination fails me. But though I say that, I also know that even now, God is revealing Himself to

those of us who have His Spirit living within us, giving us very special “eyes to see” at least some small revelations of the “beauty of His holiness”.

And I am also confident that on that day when He finally calls this world and this life to a close we will then see Him and the “beauty of His Holiness” in all of its true glory and, oh what a glorious day that will be. And I so look forward to it.

. . . But may we return our thoughts back to those beginning days of creation . . . we now know that God’s special light remained there in the Garden of Eden most all of the days that Adam and Eve lived there. And they thrived! How many those days were, a few or many thousands, we are not told, but those were truly very, very “good” days.

But then, there came a fateful day when the “prince of darkness” inserted himself into the way of life taking place in the Garden, and before long, he found a way to beguile dear Eve, and then to tempt her husband, Adam. And from that moment on forward, “darkness” would begin to do its evil work. And God would remove His true “light” from the presence of men and darkness would then prevail throughout the earth.

And with God’s true light removed from them, Adam and Eve, and then their sons became blinded to the evil influence of satan. Their eyes and their minds could no longer see the true reality of all that was taking place. And almost without notice, evil began to replace all the “goodness” that once filled the earth. And now, ever since those days, mankind has walked in “darkness”, influenced at every turn by the evil forces that dominate and control all who live within the darkness.

And so, here we are today, every person who is born upon this earth is born into that “darkness”. It is the “normal” existence for all of us, and most of the people will live and die on the earth and never know anything different.

But thanks be to God, He did not leave us in despair. As He removed His “true light” from among us, He left us with a special promise and a special covenant, a covenant of “Grace and Mercy” promising that He would someday return and bring His “true light” back to us. And He has done exactly that. In what these scriptures call, “the fullness of time”, God introduced His plan to bring His “true light” back into this dark world. We read about it in the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 9,

2 The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.

(Isaiah 9:2 (NKJV))

In these words, Isaiah began to tell the world that soon the “true light” of God would be returning to the earth. And then in John chapter 1, we read,

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. 8 He (John) was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. 9 The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-14 (ESV))

Until the moment that Jesus came to dwell among us, there was no “true light” of God to light men’s way. But thanks be to God, from the first moment of Jesus’ birth, His “light” began to break through the darkness. And as these words tell us, for those who would receive the blessed presence of Christ into their hearts, God’s “true light” would begin to dispel the darkness that was born into their souls.

Think about this folks! We were once living in the blindness of the “dark world”. But from that first moment that Christ entered into our hearts, everything changed, light began to dawn in the darkness of our souls. And we can now begin to see all the things of life as they really are.

Consider that thought for a moment! As you and I walk through our day inter-mingling with those who choose not to receive Christ into their lives, everything that is taking place is being seen from two very different perspectives. And no, we who have received Christ are not in any way superior. It is simply that the “light of Christ” that lives within us now illumines things very differently.

Does that mean that everything becomes “crystal clear” immediately once we are saved? We know well that it does not, but it does begin there. And from there, our knowledge and our understanding is able to grow all the more. But listen, for us to do that, for us to move on forward with our newly acquired vision and understanding, you and I have to join ourselves with His light as it flows through our hearts and souls and minds.

And the “secret” to any progress that we will have in our moving on forward with Him is found here in these same scriptures that we just read . . . and it has to do with these same two words that we have been studying, the “Word” and the “light”. Listen again . . .

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:1-5)

Consider for a moment what God is revealing as He gives us these few truths? Here, Jesus is declared to be the “Word” of God. What is it that we are being told in that single revelation of who Jesus is, “The Word”?

While our meager minds will never fully comprehend God in all of His many attributes, this one attribute, the Lord Jesus coming to us as the “Word of God”, tells us clearly that Jesus is the “spoken voice” of God. And oh, how powerful that voice truly is. Jesus was the “spoken word” who created all that has come into existence. Verse 3 of John 1, All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.

God simply “spoke” and all of the worlds were created, simply by His voice. And Jesus was that “voice”, that “Word”.

And for us, as we read these words that have come to us in these scriptures, they too are that same “Voice” of God, the power and wisdom of God, able to do all things and to illumine all things to our understanding. Hebrews 4 . . .

12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account. (Hebrews 4:12-13 (ESV))

So then, as we read the words of these scriptures, the special “true light” of God shines through them making things known to us that we never knew before, driving out the “darkness” within our souls and allowing us to see and to know real truth from God’s perspective and not from the world’s perspective.

And yes, while the “true light” is being made available to us, you and I have our own responsibility. We must continually be reading and searching through His “Voice”, the “Words” of these scriptures, learning the truths that fill their meaning. And as we ask

and seek and knock, the light of the glory of God will shine into our hearts and we will see through the darkness. And the things that we read and the things of this life will become miraculously clear to us.

What is the proof of these things that we are saying here today? All we have to do is look at the world around us, at the way it goes about its daily life, lost and pitiful and poor and wretched and naked and blind (Revelation 3:17); thinking that it knows all the answers, but failing miserably at every turn. And I am not just speaking about the obvious corruption in this world, the terrorism in the mid-east, the inner-city depravity, the Wall Street corruption. No, the “darkness” of sin runs to the depths of every unsaved soul and is manifested loudly and clearly in broken lives, broken marriages and broken dreams, all around us.

That “darkness” is pervasive, but thanks be to God, you and I who have Christ can see through the darkness and can know what real truth is supposed to look like. God’s light gives us vision and knowledge and wisdom to see and to know things that those who live in the darkness do not know.

But a warning needs also to be given here, that if, and as, you and I fall short in our studying and asking and seeking and knocking, then the darkness and the failures of that darkness will surely return to us.

So in closing, I exhort each of us to step on forward and to diligently dig into this mystical “Word of God” and to diligently apply its truths in the daily activities of our lives, then God will be faithful to illumines our eyes more and more, enabling us to see more and more within the darkness.

Don’t you want that for yourself . . . and for your family? We can have it if we will only be diligent to ask, to seek and to knock! Listen, as we close . . .

8 for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), 10 and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. 11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. (Ephesians 5:8-11)