

The Light of the World

John 1:1-13

7/11/04

Intro

John begins his gospel with a declaration of the deity and majesty of Jesus Christ. John declares that He is the Word of God, that He was with the Father from the beginning and that He is the Creator of all things.

He then declares that Jesus is the light of the world. The world was in darkness and God sent light into it, but the world did not all welcome the light, some people prefer the darkness.

The world is in darkness and Jesus is the light. That brings to us a decision about how we will live; we must decide if we will walk in the darkness or walk in the light.

In these verses we gain insight into darkness and light and understand how we should live in a dark world.

I. He is the Light of the World

A. The light is life

- The world was in darkness and the world was in death.
- Death is both a destination and condition of life now. It is separation from God.

- But when God sent light into the world He was sending life – both a destination and a condition of life.

John 10:10, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”

- But that life comes from a decision to follow after Him. We receive light, but we must follow after Him.

John 8:12, Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

B. The Word of God is light

- John begins by using the words of the book of Genesis, “In the beginning...God.”
- John writes that the Word was God and was with God.

Illus - When I had an opportunity to speak at a Muslim mosque, they asked for a scripture that showed that Jesus was both one with God and separate from God. That verse is John 1:1.

- The Word of God is light and it is truth.

John 8:31-32, So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

Psalm 119:105, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

C. The light shines in the darkness

- Verse 5 – but the darkness did not receive it.
- Some people prefer darkness because it hides what they do.

Illus – when Adam sinned in the Garden he hid from God in the shadows.

John 3:19-21, "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."

- The light brings accountability – it reveals the truth.

Illus – it's like waking up in the morning, turning on the light, and looking in the mirror; sometimes it makes you want to turn off the light and go back to bed!

II. You are the Light of the World

A. Because His life is in you

- In Ephesians, Paul says that we are children of the light.
- Verse 4 – His life was the light of men.
- Jesus said we are the light of the world...

Matthew 5:14, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden."

Illus – Ronald Reagan loved to quote that scripture and a sermon based on it by John Winthrop in 1630, who said that America is that shining city on a hill.

B. Don't hide it under a bushel

- This is the next statement from Matthew 5 in that Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:15-16, "...nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lamp stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

- Some people prefer to be light only when they are around others who are the same.

- Some Christians find themselves in an internal conflict because ...

C. Not everyone likes the light

- If the world loves darkness and doesn't like the light, they will not like you either.
- We must be careful not to try to win the affection of those who love darkness.

Galatians 1:10, "For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ."

2 Corinthians 6:14, "Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?"

III. Walk in the Light

A. Let your light so shine before men

- That they may see your good works and glorify you Father in heaven... Matt 5:16
- Some people think this means that "men" are people they don't know.
- But it truly means before everyone.

Illus – live your life before your spouse, your children, your fellow workers... so they will know that you are different because of Christ in your life.

- What difference has Jesus made in your life?

Proverbs 4:18-19, "But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, that shines brighter and brighter until the full day. The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know over what they stumble."

B. Don't light your own fire

- To live selfishly, to live as if we were independent of God – is to light our own fire.

Isaiah 50:11, "Behold, all you who kindle a fire... who walk in the light of your own fire this you will have from My hand: you will lie down in torment."

- There is an interesting contrast in two concepts:
 - **Shine your light before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. And ...**

Matthew 6:1-5 Beware of practicing your righteousness before men...

- The answer is that when they see your good works they **glorify your Father in heaven.**
- They see and recognize that the change in your life is because of God working in your heart.

Psalm 115:1, “Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to Your name be glory.”

Conclusion

In Jesus is light and life. May we truly be changed because His life changes us from the heart.