

September 10, 2023
God's Good News Story
Jesus - The Light of The World
You & I - Light Bearers of Christ's Love

In our year long series 'God's Good News Story' we have traced the work of God to bring mankind into a right relationship with Him. It has been a story of obedience and disobedience of light and darkness.

Adrian Rogers in his book "Standing for Light and Truth", tells this story... *"I heard of an English professor who walked into his classroom one day and wrote these words on the blackboard 'Walk with light.' He then asked the students who wrote these words. Some said Goethe, others Emerson, and still others guessed the poet Wordsworth. But the professor said, 'No, I read these words on the traffic light on my way to class this morning.'" (p. 15)*

"**The first words** of God recorded in the Bible are: Genesis 1:3...**"Let there be light."** King David sings (around 1000 B.C.): **Psalm 27:1**...**"The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?"** **Psalm 119:105**... **"Thy Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path"**.

Later we find in **1 John 1:5**... **"God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all"**. Darkness universally symbolizes sin and death; light corresponds to life and holiness and purity.

Sadly, much of this story we have seen the darkness of mankind's disobedience and sin. Last week we briefly touched on the the 400 year period of silence and darkness between the Old testament and the New Testament. Isaiah the prophet, around 700 years before Christ lamented about the rise of darkness among God's people.

Isaiah 9:2... ***The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.***

Fast forward 700 or so years and we find God's answer to the darkness...

John 1: 1-14...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 came into being through Him, and apart from Him not even one thing came into being that has come into being.*** ⁴ ***In Him was life, and the life was the Light of mankind.*** ⁵ ***And the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not grasp it.*** ⁶ ***A man came, one sent from God, and his name was John.*** ⁷ ***He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him.*** ⁸ ***He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light.*** ⁹ ***This was the true Light that, coming into the world, enlightens every person.*** ¹⁰ ***He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, and yet the world did not know Him.*** ¹¹ ***He came to His own, and His own people did not accept Him.*** ¹² ***But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God,***

to those who believe in His name,¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a man, but of God.¹⁴ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us; and we saw His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

This passage ties together last week's message on John the Baptist and the Ministry of Light of Jesus. Jesus is the one and only True source of Light, of Hope of Redemption.

John 8:12...Then Jesus spoke to them again: *"I AM the Light of the World. Anyone who follows Me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life."*

Seven 'I AM' Sayings of Christ

John 6: 35, 48.. I AM The Bread Of Life

John 8: 12, 9:5... I AM The Light Of The World

John 10:9... I AM The Door

John 10:11... I AM The Good Shepherd

John 11:25... I AM The Resurrection And The Life

John 14:6... I AM The Way, The Truth, And The Life

John 15:1... I AM The True Vine

The Ways of God and Light

- Light provides guidance (Ps 119:105, Prov 4:18).
- Light exposes evil and sin (Ps 90:8, Eph 5:13-14).
- Light dispels darkness (Gen 1:3, Ps 18:28).
- Light communicates safety (Ps 56:13, 1 Jn 1:7).
- Light brings comfort (Ps 78:14, 139:12).
- Light invites enjoyment (Eccl 11:7).

- Light communicates things about God (James 1:17).
- Light is used to describe salvation (2 Cor 4:4-6, Eph 5:13-14, 1 Jn 1:7).
- Light is used as a garment (Rom 13:12, 2 Cor 11:14).

The People of God and Light

- Israel was called to be a light to the nations (Is 42:6, 49:6, 60:3).
- The church is the light of the world (Matt 5:14-16, Eph 5:8, Phil 2:15).
- We are children of light (Matt 16:8, Eph 5:8, 1 Thess 5:5).
- We are the saints in light (Col 1:12).
- We are called into His marvelous light (1 Pet 2:9).
- We should bear the fruit of light (Eph 5:9).
- We should wear the armor of light (Rom 13:12).
- We should carry the message of light (Acts 26:23, 2 Cor 4:4-6).

Above points reprinted from:
<https://korycapps.wordpress.com/2013/10/27/the-biblical-theme-of-light/>

2 Corinthians 4:6... For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

1 John 1:5-7...This is the message we have heard from Him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with Him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

As Christians and Disciples of Jesus Christ we have a responsibility and privilege to be bearers of God's Light. Jesus is the True Light, but He has called us to share the light to a world in need.

Watch this short video from the Voice of the Martyrs as we remember people all over the world who still live in darkness and for believers who are under persecution by the powers of darkness.

Sejon... Voice of the Martyrs

Here in America and around the world there are people that are lost in the darkness of sin. We must be willing to share the Light of Hope and Salvation... to Share Jesus

Listen to this story called The Cave People from Max Lucado that reminds us that just as Jesus is the Light of the World, we too need to join Jesus in sharing "God's Good News Story" as He has called us to be "Share God's Light to a Dark World" as well...

LONG AGO, or maybe not so long ago, there was a tribe in a dark, cold cavern. The cave dwellers would huddle together and cry against the chill. Loud and long they wailed. It was all they did. It was all they knew to do. The sounds in the cave were mournful, but the people didn't know it, for had never known life.

But then, one day, they heard a different voice. "I have heard your cries," it announced.

"I have felt your chill and seen your darkness. I have come to help."

The cave people grew quiet. They had never heard this voice. Hope sounded strange to their ears. "How can we know you have come to help?"

"Trust me," he answered. "I have what you need." The cave people peered through the darkness at the figure of the stranger. He was stacking something, then stooping and stacking more.

"What are you doing?" one cried, nervous. The stranger didn't answer.

"What are you making?" one shouted even louder. Still no response.

"Tell us!" demanded a third.

The visitor stood and spoke in the direction of the voices. "I have what you need." With that he turned to the pile at his feet and lit it. Wood ignited, flames erupted, and light filled the cavern.

The cave people turned away in fear. "Put it out!" they cried. "It hurts to see it."

"Light always hurts before it helps," he answered.

"Step closer. The pain will soon pass."

"Not I," declared a voice. "Nor I," agreed a second.

"Only a fool would risk exposing his eyes to such light."

The stranger stood next to the fire. "Would you prefer the darkness? Would you prefer the cold? Don't consult your fears. Take a step of faith."

For a long time no one spoke. The people hovered in groups covering their eyes. The fire builder stood next to the fire. "It's warm here," he invited. "He's right," one from behind him announced. "It's warmer." The stranger turned and saw a figure slowly stepping toward the fire. "I can open my eyes now," she proclaimed. "I can see." "Come closer," invited the fire builder. She did. She stepped into the ring of light. "It's so warm!" She extended her hands and sighed as her chill began to pass. "Come, everyone! Feel the warmth," she invited. "Silence, woman!" cried one of the cave dwellers. "Dare you lead us into your folly? Leave us and take your light with you." She turned to the stranger. "Why won't they come?" "They choose the chill, for though it's cold, it's what they know. They'd rather be cold than change." "And live in the dark?" "And live in the dark." The now-warm woman stood silent. Looking first at the dark, then at the man. "Will you leave the fire?" he asked. She paused, then answered, "I cannot. I cannot bear the cold." Then she spoke again. "But nor can I bear the thought of my people in darkness." "You don't have to," he responded, reaching into the fire and removing a stick. "Carry this to your people. Tell them the light is here, and the light is warm. Tell them the light is for all who desire it." **And so she took the small** flame and stepped into the shadows.

Isaiah 50:10,11... *Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the word of His servant? Let the one who walks in the dark, who has no light, trust in the Name of the Lord and rely on their God.*

Matthew 5:14-16... ¹⁴ *"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*

Choose to share the Light of Jesus to a dark and lost world.