

**LIGHT AND DARKNESS**  
**John 3:16-21, Romans 10:9-17**

**Our whole lesson today begins in the beginning. God created the heavens and the earth, which was a formless void and covered in darkness. God said light be and light was. God saw the light was good. Without light there would be no energy, no life.**

**John writes, 'in Jesus is life itself. The life is the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness does not overcome it.'**

**Jesus himself says, 'He is the light of the world. Whoever follows him will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.' This means the light is always here for us if we are his followers. But we must want it. (John 8:12)**

**Someone brought light into your darkness. I remember who brought light into my darkness. Had he not determined to be a light would I even be here this morning?**

**The idea that we may be the light for someone is awesome. Light is God's gift to us: part of his grace. Even with this gift and the Holy Spirit always with us our thoughts so easily turn towards the darkness. We must flip our spiritual light switch.**

**God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. (1 John 1:5)**

**God is the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. (James 1:17)**

**The Bible condemns gray. We cannot be between light and dark, between hot and cold for Jesus will spit us out. (Revelation 3:16)**

**We cannot claim that we do not know the difference between light and dark. We have spiritual definitions of light and darkness as well as Webster's dictionary.**

**Light is radiant energy, brightness, illumination. It represents holiness and purity.**

**The Word of God is a symbol of light. “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (Psalms 119:105)**

**The “Light of God” is an expression for God’s truth, holiness, purity, and wisdom. God is the source of all light being an eternal and self-sufficient source.”**

**The “Light of the world” is Jesus Christ.**

**Darkness is without light, hidden, gloomy, and ignorance. Dark is associated with chaos, evil, and destruction. It represents death and the underworld.**

**The Word of God tells us that you and I are ‘the light of the world.’ This message is for all of us. I hope we leave this morning with a brighter understanding of how important our role as Christ’s witnesses is. We have been called out of darkness into God’s marvelous light and we should reflect it.**

**All of us have entered dark rooms. When you flipped the light switch where did the darkness go? Probably not too many of us think about that but I have. It happens so quickly that saying the darkness flees seems very appropriate.**

**Darkness does not flee on its own. There must be light to change. Light must come. So we should not expect someone in darkness to change on their own. People seem unable to change. We tend to judge those who are in darkness. Someone must bring light, not judgement, not rules or required changes in how they live but light.**

**We may be the source of light for them. God uses us as light sources not judges.**

**If we are always angry, put upon; feel treated unfairly we are part of the darkness. We get pulled by the power of darkness. It works so subtly on our ego and pride.**

**It is hard to not get drawn in by the darkness. We must choose to hit the switch for light to enter and darkness to flee.**

**How powerful is the darkness? Human nature, natural sinfulness, draws us to power, wealth, self-righteousness (pride), recognition, ego, etc. We**

**will be drawn to what affirms who we are and far too often we easily find that affirmation in darkness rather than light.**

**Have you ever been in a mine: not just the entrance, but deep inside where you must have a flashlight, a miner's helmet with a light or some sort of electrical lights strung along the way, and the light go out?**

**You sense there is nothing to hold on to: the opposite of faith: my picture of hell.**

**Jesus said many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while others will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' (Matthew 8:11-12)**

**How many of us have been in a cavern when the guide turned off the lights? What did you sense? Blindness, we could not see (even our hand in front of our face). Did you sense you could reach out but there was nothing to touch? For a moment, everyone with you was quiet. You were alone. Only gravity gave you any sense of the familiar because you could feel it was solid beneath you.**

**I do not know exactly what hell is like but I know it is dark: there is no light because the source of light is not there. It is utter darkness. In my mind, a person is suspended without even gravity to create a sense of place. Is it quiet: is a person in hell alone? Shouts and screams just get absorbed into the endless darkness. A person in hell will be alone and suspended. I think many people today are in darkness and feel this way. Can we be the light in their darkness?**

**With this sense of what darkness is, can we now project how the darkness may feel to others? Can we see them through Jesus' eyes and feel Jesus' pain for their darkness?**

**How great is our God! Our prayer is that others would see God's greatness through us. We have been called out of darkness into God's marvelous light and we should reflect it.**

**God's Word tells us 'He who has begun a good work in us will take it to completion.' (Philippians 1:6) Do we believe this about ourselves?**

**The armor described in Ephesians includes Good News not judgement and hate. If our faith is based on being anti-anyone, are we walking in Christian faith?**

**The message of the Old Testament prophets was turn back to the true God. Are we called today to be instruments of light with the same message?**

**Are we encouraging people to embrace Jesus or are we delivering some other message. Is Christ Good News or is he portrayed as something else?**

**Intellectually our culture is becoming more and more expedient. Some Christian leaders seem to be ignoring Christ's teaching about the poor, the widow, the sick, and strangers because it is more expedient than speaking the word of Jesus.**

**We are warned to not be mismatched with unbelievers. For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness?  
(2 Corinthians 6:14)**

**Do others think we are foolish? Do we accept this or do we rise up our hackles and demand to be respected, well thought of, etc.? (1 Corinthians 1:18)**

**Do we demand behavior changes before we share Good News? God did not do that to you and me. We must let God deal with the behavior of others. We are to be spokespersons of hope and freedom and grace.**

**Jesus says no one can come to him unless drawn by the Father who sent him (John 6:44). How does God draw? Does God use you and me to draw others to Christ? If so, do our words bring hope, love and liberty or do they add to someone else's' darkness?**

**Remember it is God's will that no one perish, period: no one. (2 Peter 3:8).**

**Satan has created so much confusion, so much darkness that we have to be careful to not judge. Do we see people through Christ's eyes?**

**If you do not share the Good News with someone does that mean you do not love them? Do we judge and condemn? Because of their behavior do we think some are not worthy of the Good News: darkness instead of light.**

**We are to serve Christ. Are we seen as his servants? Are we instruments of grace, a light in the world around us in the dark? Comfort, patience, peace, freedom are these our message? We are to stand on the Rock: not wallow in the mud.**

**We all need to be aware of what we read and listen to and search our hearts to determine if the message we receive is of Christ or the world: light or darkness. What we take in either feeds the rot in our lives or sheds light in our own darkness. What we read and listen to: what we say and what we do are all choices.**

**How do we bring light? Does our attitude reflect a Holy God or our own self-righteousness? Are we a light of grace or a haughty Christian? What do our words present to the hearer? We are all sinners. We all fall short of the glory of God so why is it so easy to find ourselves acting like little gods.**

**People will believe anything so they can rationalize their rejection of Jesus. This is the power of darkness and the lies of Satan. People's human nature seeks any reason to deny Jesus. Do we give them that rational by our actions and words? If we condemn and judge why would they have anything to do with the Christianity we reflect?**

**Do we feel persecuted for Jesus sake or is it about our ego and identity. Persecution in the America is non-existent. Are those who mock Christians worse than us? What does God think? It is pretty gentle persecution to be called a fool for being a follower of Christ.**

**All this talk about losing our religious liberties is darkness talk. What liberties have we lost? The only one I can think of is power: our self-righteous ability to tell others how to live.**

**Must everyone else be like me and think like me? Do we need everyone to affirm us? Must they live and act in a certain way to affirm my faith?**

**People will find any reason not to be in the light. We go out of our way to find some thought or movement or political action that will allow us to rationalize our failure to walk in the light. This is normal sinful human activity and we must guard ourselves against it.**

**What help are our thoughts, words and actions? Do not let it be said of us that we have added to someone's darkness. If we let it, the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it. (John 1:5)**

**Remember whosoever confesses Jesus before men Jesus will confess before the Father. From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same the Lord's name is to be praised. We are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that we may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Peter 2:9)**

**This is the judgement. The light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God. (John 3:19-21)**

**Can we apply Paul's words from the Book of Acts to ourselves? Paul asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The Lord answered, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But get up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and testify to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you. I am sending you so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me." (Acts 26:15-18)**

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

**For once we were darkness, but now in the Lord we are light. Live as children of light. (Ephesians 5:8) But you, beloved, are not in darkness... for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. (1Thessalonians 5:4-5)**

**John writes to us 'This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.' (1 John 1:5-7)**

**The LORD is our light and our salvation; whom shall we fear? The LORD is the stronghold of our lives; of whom shall we be afraid? (Psalm 27:1)**

**'You and I are the light of the world. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.'**  
**(Matthew 5:14-16)**

**We are to do all things without murmuring and arguing, so that we may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, in which we shine like stars in the world**

**The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.'** (Matthew 4:16)

**We can choose to be part of this miracle: light can come to those we encounter no matter how deep their darkness is!**

**Once we were darkness, but now in the Lord we are light. Live as children of light. The fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.'**  
**(Ephesians 5:8-14)**

**Can we do this? God's Word says yes. 'Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.' (Philippians 2:12-15)**

**God is and he is a rewarder of those who seek Him. We can be a light that encourages another person to seek him. (Hebrews 11:6)**

**If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. One believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. The scripture says, 'No one who believes in him will be put to shame.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'**

**But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!' But not all have obeyed the good news; for Isaiah says, 'Lord, who has believed our message?' So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ. (Romans 10:9-17)**

**Isaiah recorded and Paul repeated the following. 'You know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.' (Isaiah 5:20 and Romans 13:11-12))**

**'God has chosen to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.' It is your hope of glory. It is the hope of glory for others. (Colossians 1:27)**