

The Glory of it All (On Wisdom & Light)

Scripture:

Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, 'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a **light for revelation** to the Gentiles and for **glory to your people** Israel.'

Luke 2:28-32

Prayer:

O Holy Spirit of God, reclaim us today as your disciples.
Guide us, illuminate, and sanctify us.
Bind our hands that they may do no evil.
Cover our eyes that they may see it no more.
Sanctify our hearts that evil may not dwell within.
Be Thou our God & Be Thou our Guide.
Wherever You lead us, we will go.
Those things you have forbidden us, we will renounce.
And whatsoever it is that You command us,
by Your strength we will do.
Lead us today into the fullness of Your truth.

With... (TOGETHER)... The Light of God before us.
The Light of God behind us.
The Light of God above us.
The Light of God beside us.
& The Light of God within us.

Amen.

The Light. (Have this image up as I talk about light)

Simeon, as he looks at the CHRIST-CHILD calls him;

“A Light for revelation to the gentiles”

And there is no doubt that his metaphor is rich... His use of the word light, and though it is from God, it is also born out of a rich Hebrew history that includes:



God's light that led the nation of Israel.

The radiant **face of Moses** who stood before God on the mountain.

Maybe Simeon the pries smiled at the Christ-child as he remembered the words of **Isaiah chapter 11**: the prophecy of Christ saying. **A righteous “Branch” will stem from his roots**. Perhaps he ran over to look at the golden candlestick shaped like an almond branch, bearing fruit, & giving light to the “holy place” of the tabernacle & the temple.

His thoughts could have included...

A ceremony of lights on the temple steps to celebrate: God “TABERNACLED” among them.

But his choice of words here are... Divine! **“A Light for revelation to the gentiles”**

For us here in America we might hear this word Light and go to the rich metaphor of the **Lighthouse**. The idea that our seas have been troubled in this darkness, and we know that there are more “rocks” out there... and so “Guide us Lord Jesus, draw near and give us counsel”.

For St. Francis and some of the others, there was a daily regiment of prayer called the **Via-illuminativa** or the “Way of Light”. This was a prayer of absorbing God’s light into their lives.

And...St. Francis would see things in nature like...

A tree whose arms would stretch towards heavens.

A **sunflower** who turns its face toward the eastern sunrise.

A vine of beans growing up a tripod of sticks and bending itself towards the light.



This is a **heliotropism** in nature, but for us, we are praying for a kind of **“Theotropism”** (Turning ourselves toward God) In a prayer like this:

Heavenly Father draw our hearts this morning toward your light, bend us O Father out of this darkness and into your goodness.

John in his 1st Letter says this about Jesus & his message to us. Now imagine this, and many of you have done this, **you’ve been reading through the scriptures, All the stories, prophecies, & poems** of the old testament, the gospels, early church history in all of Paul’s letters, stories, rants, ha ha, Paul can rant. And then you get to John’s letters, just 20 pages from being done with the whole Bible and John says this:

This is the message that we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that **God is light** and in him there is no darkness at all.

I John 1:5

To confirm this, Glorious, [title: “The glory of it all”]

To confirm this, Glorious & prophetic blessing from Simeon, that this child was to be not only the Light of revelation to the Gentiles, but also God’s “Glory” to the nation of Israel, we have these words from Jesus in John 8...

“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

John 8:12

So we’re going to leave this behind for a bit. And may these rich & prophetic words of Simeon, may they mean a bit more to us now... But now I want us to move on to a couple of very substantial question:

What is Darkness? & HOW, is Jesus our light?

Darkness is this: [Take a look at the chart here.](#)

It can be difficult at times I think to see the darkness in our own lives. We’re blind & full of ourselves, we spend too much time worrying about everyone else. And Christians are not

What is Darkness?

Love	Hatred
Joy	Fear
Peace	Fury
Patience	Intolerance
Kindness	Mean-spiritedness
Goodness	Constriction
Faithfulness	Rigidity
Gentleness	Cruelty
Self Control	Reactionary

exempt from this. When I encounter Christians who seem to be layered in darkness, I think of them as folks... who have worked really hard to climb to the top of the ladder... only to find that it's leaning against the wrong building.

But darkness is this: Let's take a beautiful description of who we should be as it relates to the Spirit's work in our lives and then look at the contrast behaviors.

Darkness can always be found in those moments when you're placing your interests in front of God's.

Elisabeth Elliot **tells this story of Jesus...**

One day Jesus said to his disciples : "I'd like you to carry a stone **for Me.**" He didn't give any explanation. So the disciples looked around for a stone to carry, and Peter, being the practical sort, sought out the smallest stone he could possibly find. After all, Jesus didn't give any regulation for weight and size! So he put it in his pocket. Jesus then said : "Follow Me." He led them on a journey.

About noontime Jesus had everyone sit down. he waved his hands and all the stones turned to bread. He said, "Now it's time for lunch." In a few seconds, Peter's lunch was over. When lunch was done Jesus told them to stand up. He said again, "I'd like you to carry a stone for Me." This time Peter said, "Aha! Now I get it!" So he looked around and saw a small boulder. He hoisted it on his back and it was painful, it made him stagger. But he said, "I can't wait for supper." Jesus then said : "Follow Me."

He led them on a journey, with Peter barely being able to keep up. Around supper time Jesus led them to the side of a river. He said, "Now everyone throw your stones into the water." They did. Then he said, "Follow Me," and began to walk. Peter and the others looked at him dumbfounded. Jesus sighed and said, "Don't you remember what I asked you to do? Who were you carrying the stone for?"

When Jesus says: "Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." **He's inviting you to move outside of your world and into His!**

So there you go... That's darkness. And it's roots are selfishness.

HOW, is Jesus our light?

To begin answering this question, I want us to look at the account of Jesus' birth in the book of John. [Smiley here]

Some of you may be saying: Now you're just being funny Dean, because there isn't an account of the birth of Jesus in the book of John. Ah but there is... Look here.

The Word Became Flesh (John's Christmas Story)

In John chapter one:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

... And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory,

John 1

So John is saying...

In the beginning was the Word or **“Logos”**.... John is speaking directly to the Greeks. And in doing this it's important for us to know that **“This is an absolutely... culturally loaded & philosophical term”** for greek philosophical & religious groups.

To the Greeks, “Logos” was their “God of Identity” So if you were a skilled craftsman, you had discovered and was living in your “logos”. You had found your “reason for life”

So for John, this was very much a “Paul in Athens” kind of moment. Similar to when Paul said:

“You even have an idol to an unknown god,
let me tell you WHO this is.”

So for just a second, lets hear this scripture as is was intended for the greeks to hear it..

In the beginning was the REASON FOR LIFE, and the REASON FOR LIFE was with God, and the REASON FOR LIFE was God.

... And the "REASON FOR LIFE" became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory,

Last week our teaching was on WONDERFUL, as we're going through this famous prophecy in Isaiah, where Christ is described as WONDERFUL, and this week it is **Counselor!**

This is HOW JESUS IS OUR LIGHT...

He IS our Counselor, and to John's point,
He lives at core of our Reason For Life!

Listen to this, this is our **Bottom Line:**

Our "**REASON FOR LIFE**", in God's wisdom, came near to us at the birth of his Son, Jesus. And **HE shines** this wisdom into the dark corner of our lives.

Listen to this scripture and I'll close from here...

"I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are-- I in them and you in me, all being perfected into one. Then the world will know that you sent me and will understand that you love them as much as you love me. Father, I want these whom you've given me to be with me, so they can see my glory. You gave me the glory because you loved me even before the world began!

"O righteous Father, the world doesn't know you, but I do; and these disciples know you sent me. And I have revealed you to them and will keep on revealing you. I will do this so that your love for me may be in them and I in them."

John 17:22-26

Benediction:

The LORD bless you, and keep you;
The LORD make His face shine on you,
And be gracious to you;
The LORD lift up His countenance on you,
And give you peace.'

Numbers 6:24-26