**THE LIGHT HAS COME**

**Jesus Is THE Light, John 1:1-14**

Christmas Eve Services- 12/24/22

**WE Slide 1 MERRY CHRISTMAS! Great to see everyone and thank you for taking time out to celebrate with us.** The last couple of weeks leading up to Christmas we’ve been talking about DARKNESS and LIGHT- specifically SPIRITUAL DARKNESS/LIGHT and what the Bible says about those 2 things. **Just look around- social media, the news, it’s obvious… we live in DARK TIMES- wars in the world, in politics, in our homes.** People struggling to cope with the realities of life. **We live in the richest country in the world, have all our basic needs met, most of our wants satisfied, yet our world is depressed, anxious, discontent, angry. Why?** Because of what the Bible calls spiritual darkness; all are born in spiritual darkness. **Slide 2**

1. **Spiritual Darkness =** Spiritual/physical death-leads to an eternity w/out God, spiritual ignorance-meaning “don’t know the truth” about spiritual things/we are living based on wrong information**.**

* This happened when Adam/Eve chose to obey self rather than God/did life their way, disobeyed.
* They believed they knew better than God how life should be lived
* We all live thinking we know better than God which is the core of all our problems- our self-focused thinking.
* That choice caused Adam/Eve/all humans after them to be born God spiritually dead, Ephesians 2:1
* On top of that, Satan works to keep people in the dark, 2 Corinthians 4:3-4

**We’re a MESS, because we also think we know better than God.** Everyone is looking everywhere but to God for the answer. **Wow Harald! Way to ruin my Christmas warm-fuzzies!** Sorry, but we need to know the truth of our situation so we can know the truth about Christmas! **At Christmas we celebrate the fact that God has done SOMETHING- the ONLY THING that could be done.** He made it possible to have our SPIRITUAL DARKNESS/spiritual death removed and give us SPIRITUAL LIGHT through SPIRITUAL LIFE which comes through JESUS CHRIST. **See, SPIRITUAL LIGHT speaks to…**

1. **Slide 3 Spiritual Light =** Spiritual/eternal life with God and spiritual understanding here on earth.

* This happens when we choose to trust God and what He says about how we receive spiritual life.
* God is the God of my life not me.
* This is something only God can do for us/in us.

**AND WHAT WE’LL SEE TODAY** God did what had to be done to bring spiritual life through Jesus Christ, God the Son.

**Slide 4 OUR CHURCH’S DESIRE, our GIFT to you, is to give you from the Bible, God’s Word, what the truth is so you can make a choice whether to remain in spiritual darkness or receive God’s gift of spiritual life through faith in Christ.** Like any gift you can receive it or reject it.

**TODAY: Answering the question from last Sunday- How is it that Jesus is the One who can give SPIRITUAL LIFE/LIGHT?** We’re looking at the first few verses of the Apostle John’s biography of Jesus, pg. 1058.

1. **John served alongside Jesus was trained/mentored by Him for 3+ years; he’s writing as an eyewitness.**
2. **He has nothing to gain from writing this, in fact, he ends up exiled on the Island Patmos as punishment for teaching that Jesus is God and he eventually dies on that island.**
3. **He is says in chapter 20:31 Slide 5** John’s purpose for writing was so his readers would believe in Jesus.

**The great thing about John’s Gospel is that it challenges all kinds of people… Slide 6**

1. John challenges ATHEISTS because Jesus claims to be the God they don’t believe in.
2. He challenges AGNOSTICS because He says you CAN know God, ultimate truth.
3. He challenges SPIRITUAL people because He says without Jesus there is no SPIRITUALITY.
4. He challenges TRUE BELIEVERS because He says there’s no sitting on the side lines.

**AS YOU CAN SEE there’s a lot in John’s writing so starting Jan 1- Easter Slide 7 we’re going to work through the Gospel of John.** Let me CHALLENGE you, especially if you’re skeptical but don’t mind being challenged in your beliefs, begin reading through the Gospel of John, join us for this study and truly evaluate whether what God has to say is true or not. **If after doing that you say “Nope! I’m good!” then at least you personally evaluate what Jesus said and did rather than on taking someone else’s word for it.**

**ALRIGHT!** **Having said all that why do we believe Jesus is the One who can give SPIRITUAL LIFE/LIGHT?** Here’s what God had the Apostle John write. **READ Slide 8-16 What is John saying? TRUTH:**

1. **Jesus is GOD, and as God, is the only one who can give spiritual life.**
2. **Jesus is MAN, the one who took God’s judgment for our sin against God.** John covers this in the rest of his gospel.

**John ended this section in v. 14 Slide 17 with “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us…”.** John is saying that Jesus is the Word that was back at the beginning of creation, the Word that is God. **Slide 18 John connects his gospel to Genesis- “in the beginning”.**

**GOD**

1. **JESUS IS GOD**
2. **“In the beginning”- It’s interesting…**Matthew connects Jesus to Abraham, Luke connects Jesus to Adam, John connects Jesus directly to God. **The verb “was”, is key here. Slide 19**
3. **The Word “Was” God**
4. “was”; eimi; verb; imperfect tense = continual, continuous, always.

**The verse could be read this way… Slide 20-21 The Word was not something God created, but someone who is GOD HIMSELF**. Then John says the “Word” is a “He” v. 2- “He was with God.”

1. The “Word” is a person- HE was with God.
2. John says the Word is God, yet distinct from God because this Person was “with” God.
3. John’s confirming the DOCTRINE of the TRINITY- God is One God existing in 3 persons- all equally God yet distinct. We distinguish them, but they are One.
4. God the Father, God the Son- the WORD **who did not yet have human form**, God the Holy Spirit. **By the way…**
5. John’s confirming what Moses wrote this in Genesis 1:26 **Slide 22**

**I get it, this is MIND-BLOWING stuff but don’t disregard it because you can’t completely grasp God.** This is exactly the kind of God we want- one we can know personally but not know completely otherwise we’d be God and that’s a scary thought. **Let me continue to blow your mind- He, the Word, God the Son, who since His human birth we call Jesus, as God created EVERYTHING. Slide 23**

1. As God He created everything. **This is the cool part of this.**
2. Genesis 1 says that God **SPOKE**, what was created came through His “**WORDS**”.
3. John is saying that God the Father was the architect and God the Son was the contractor.
4. The Apostle Paul describes it this way, Colossians 1 **Slide 24-26**
5. **Some may say, “Hey! What about evolution?”** You need faith for either theory. It makes more sense an eternal/infinitely powerful/wise Designer made this intricately complex world/humans than some eternal existing gases that co-existed without ever exploding somehow mixed and exploded to give us what we see. You have greater faith than me if you believe that.

**Slide 27 As CREATOR then, the Word/this Person/God the Son is the SOURCE of life- not just physical life, but more importantly spiritual life.** There is no spiritual life/understanding in anyone or anything other than Jesus Christ- no philosophy, no religious ritual/tradition, no personal list of good works

1. As Creator He is the source of life- physical and spiritual.
2. Initially Adam/Eve had both physical and spiritual life, but their sin brought spiritual darkness, death to them and all who came after them, including you and me.
3. For that spiritual life to be restored GOD has to do something.

**And that’s exactly what God did when God the Father sent God the Son to our world.** John says the SPIRITUAL LIFE and THE LIGHT- spiritual understand IS God the Son and the spiritually dark world CANNOT overcome it. **Let me re-read what John says about the Word/God the Son coming to our world as a human being.** **Slide 28-31**

1. **JESUS IS MAN**
2. **The Word, God the Son, the Creator, Became Flesh- God the Son Became a Man**
3. He lived a perfect life on this earth.
4. He showed us God’s Glory, who God is in the flesh - His attributes, His commands, His power over His creation, and most importantly for us His love for mankind.
5. **The Light, Jesus Christ, As the Source of SPIRITUAL LIGHT Enlightens Every Person**
6. The “world” did not “know” Him- ginosko; chose to not recognize Him as God/Creator. Paul in Romans 1 tells us that man chose to worship the creation, worship self, rather than recognize God.
7. Even God’s own people, Israel, “did not receive Him”- paralambano; failed to accept Him as their God/Creator/Messiah.

**The world as a whole, as well as the Jewish people, may have rejected Jesus but what about you? Slide 32 Here’s where the Christmas message INTERSECTS with our lives.** The SPIRITUAL LIFE/UNDERSTANDING you need is only found in Jesus Christ, God the Son, the Word, Your Creator. **It’s not something we or anyone else can give us.** John says…

1. **JESUS GIVES SPIRITUAL LIFE AND UNDERSTANDING**
2. **We Can’t Give Ourselves Spiritual Life/Understanding**
3. “not of blood”- it’s not physical, it’s spiritual.
4. “not…will of flesh”- it’s not something you can do for yourself..
5. “not…will of man”- not something someone else does for you- a priest/pastor, denominational teaching or religious ritual can declare you spiritually alive.

**Spiritual life/understanding only happens if you RECEIVE Jesus and BELIEVE in His name. Slide 33**

1. **Only God Gives Us Spiritual Life/Understanding**
2. “receive”- lambano; take hold of for themselves
3. “believe”- pisteuo; entrust one’s spiritual wellbeing to.

**John’s been talking about spiritual life and understanding, but he switches things up to show that this is something very personal- it’s being adopted into God’s family.** He says when we receive and believe we are given the right/power to be a child of God.

1. “right”- exousia; power, authority, ability

**As we close and the BAND comes up. Slide 34 What will you do with the truth that Jesus is God, He’s your Creator, and the one who came to RESTORE your spiritual life and give you the ability to become a child of God?** **Slide 35** Let me encourage you to accept God’s gift- tell Him you receive Jesus and believe in Him.

**YOU TAKEAWAYS**

**If that’s you then have a conversation with God right now, your heart to His**…

**A- Admit** you’re in spiritual darkness due to your sin.

**B- Believe:** entrust your spiritual life to God.

**C- Confess:** ask God to forgive you, give you spiritual life.

**If you’d like to do that tonight let me lead you in a prayer you can pray, your heart to God.** Ask for hands.

**PODCAST: Experience the gift of spiritual life and light this Christmas!** John 1:1-14, Genesis 1:26; Colossians 1:13-16