

Jesus: the True Light

Lesson 3

John 1:6-13

Opener

Ask: What comes to mind when you think of “light?”
(goodness, purity, truth, sight, salvation)
What about “darkness?” (evil, sin, death, deception)

Think of the world as a dark cave, with people wandering around in the darkness trying to find their way through it. Someone from outside the cave comes and tries to give light to the people, and a few take it and they are able to see their way through the cave. However, some imposters have developed a false light that glows only for a moment, leaving the people in the dark after they have taken hold of it. Those who have the real light try desperately to share it with those in the dark, but many refuse it, preferring to trust in the darkness.

Jesus is the real light that leads to eternal life. We must grab hold of Him and He will guide our path.

Scripture

God sent John the Baptist to tell everyone about the light so that everyone might believe because of his testimony. John himself was not the light; he was only a witness to the light. The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was going to come into the world. But although the world was made through him, the world didn't recognize him when he came. Even in his own land and among his own people, he was not accepted. But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn! This is not a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan—this rebirth comes from God. vv. 6-9

Discussion

John, the disciple of Jesus, is the writer of this book. However, he talks about a different John in these verses—John the Baptist. He was called by God to prepare the way for the coming of Christ. In verse 23 of this same chapter, we hear John the Baptist say of himself: “I am a voice shouting in the wilderness, ‘Prepare a straight pathway for the Lord’s coming!’”

Verse 9 is a crucial verse because it establishes that Jesus is the real light. He is the genuine article—the Son of God. There is no other light that compares to his. In John 14:6 Jesus tells us, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.” We cannot get to God through Buddha, Mohammed, being a good person, or through any other means. Only Jesus Christ can light our path to heaven. He is the “real light.”

vv. 10-13

These verses show the great tragedy of the world: the creation (people) didn't recognize the Creator (God). Even the Israelites, God's chosen people, didn't. They were expecting a strong military leader to save them from their earthly rulers. But Jesus had another reason for coming: to save us from sin and death. Anne Graham Lotz says in her book *Just Give Me Jesus* that "The first time he came, he came to establish the kingdom of God, not in the world, but in the hearts of men. He was born to die. And so he was rejected."

In other words, Jesus came to save us from spiritual darkness, or separation from God. If we believe in Him, we can be in the light, which is a relationship with God (eternal life). Jesus came to save us *inwardly—in our hearts*—not outwardly through the powers of this world. However, many people did not understand this and so he was rejected by many.

The good news is that not everyone rejected Jesus. And God has a special gift for all who believe in his son: WE can become God's children! This puts us in the same family as Jesus!

Ask: What does it mean to be a child of God?

(to be in God's family; to have heaven as our inheritance; to have the Holy Spirit within us)

Ask: Is everyone a child of God?

(NO—only those who accept Jesus as Lord. This is why John says that "to all who believed in him and accepted him he gave the right to become children of God"!

Verse 13 tells us we are "reborn" spiritually when we believe that Jesus is the Son of God and accept him as Lord of our lives. This means that we no longer live to please ourselves and follow darkness, but we live to please God and walk in the light of Jesus.

Romans 8:17 tells us that "everything God gives to His Son, Christ, is ours, too." This means that we have the same Spirit in us that was in Christ! And we also have an inheritance waiting for us in heaven.

What a promise! Why would we not want to "walk in the light, as he is in the light?"

(1 John 1:7)

Application

Ask: Do you feel like you are stumbling around in the darkness of life?

Do you know Jesus, the light of life?

If you have never prayed and asked Jesus to live in your heart, that is the first step to walking in the light of a relationship with God. Pray and ask God to forgive you of your sins and give your life to Him. Then you can be sure you are in His family!

Maybe you have accepted Christ as your Savior, but you have turned back to the sinful ways of darkness. Ask Christ to renew your walk with him and He will light your path once again as you study the Bible and pray.