

Living in the Light of the Gospel of John



John 1--John 3

He was present at creation. “Before anything else existed, there was Christ, with God. He had always been alive and is Himself God” (John 1:2, The Living Bible). As you read John 1:3-9 you see some direct comparisons to Gen.1:1-5. Light created in the midst of darkness. “In Him (Jesus) was life, and that life was the light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.”(John 1:4,5 The New International Version)

The Book of John is written in order that we may know that Jesus is truly God as well as fully man. He is the eternal Son of God who provide the gift of eternal life and light to those living in the darkness and hopelessness of sin.

In Genesis 1 we see God speaks the Word and creation takes place. In John 1 we see the Word coming forth and dwelling with us. As the Message Bible in John 1:14 declares, “The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one of a kind glory, like Father, like Son. Generous inside and out, true from start to finish.” John is saying, “This isn’t just a bunch of spiritual mumble jumbo. “I’m telling you what we have seen with our own eyes, Jesus is the real thing.”

When John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him he declared. “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,”(John 1:29 NIV)
Experiencing the Living Christ is something we can’t just keep to ourselves. What was the first thing Andrew did when he met Jesus according to John 1:41,42?
What did Philip do when Jesus said “Follow Me” according to John 1:45?

Many people have the wrong idea that Jesus is against people having a good time. They think that Christians never have any real fun. Yet in John 2:1-11 we see Jesus performing His first miracle at a wedding party. Here He over rules the laws of nature and turns water into wine. What Jesus is declaring through this act is that He has so much more to offer than the intoxicating wines of this world. Through the Living Waters of His presence we can experience the New Wine of the Holy Spirit.

After this first great miracle Jesus takes us to the temple. “In the Temple area He saw merchants selling cattle, sheep and doves for sacrifices, and money changes behind their counters. Jesus made a whip from some ropes and chased them out, and drove out the sheep and oxen, scattering the money changers’ coins over the floor and turning over their tables! Then, going over to the men selling doves, He told them, “Get these things out of here. Don’t turn My Father’s House into a market!”(John 2:14-16 TLB) In 1Cor. 3:16,17 we are told, “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him; for God’s temple is sacred, and you are that temple.”(NIV) When you read these two verses together what do you believe they have to say about Jesus’s desire to drive the lusts for money and power out of our lives in order that He be truly our Lord and Savior.

It is critical that we believe in Jesus if we are going to experience the Life and Light He has promised. In John 2:23-25 we read, “many people saw the miraculous signs He was doing and believed in His name. But Jesus would not entrust Himself to them, for He knew all men. He did not need man’s testimony about man, for He knew what was in man.”(NIV) Even though they believed in His name why do you think Jesus could not trust Himself to them? Could it have been that they believed only because they saw the miraculous signs? What do you think it means to believe even when there appears to be no signs? How does one continue to believe at a time like that? Real faith is that faith which causes one to continue to follow Christ even when it is unpopular to do such. Jesus gives power to all who believe in Him to become children of God (John 1:12) The word believe occurs 8 times between John 2:23-3:21. But as we saw in John 2:23-25 believing is more than seeing signs and being draw to the one who performs them. Jesus knows what is in each person and He knows that a sympathetic spectator is not the same as a person of faith, He cannot give Himself to spectators.

When Nicodemis comes to Jesus at night Jesus makes it clear that true faith is a result of being born again. When Nicodemis questions how this can happen Jesus responds, “You’re not listening. Let me say it again. Unless a person submits to this original creation-the ‘wind hovering over the water’ creation, the invisible moving the visible, a baptism into a new life-it’s not possible to enter God’s Kingdom. When you look at a baby, it’s just that: a body you can look at and touch. But the person who takes shape within is found by something you can’t see and touch-the Spirit-becomes a living spirit.”(John 3:5,6 The Message Bible) Jesus goes on to explain that the miracle of the new birth is possible because He (the Son of Man, the Son of God) has come. “No one has ever gone up into the presence of God except the One Who came down from that Presence, the Son of Man. In the same way that Moses lifted the serpent in the desert so people could have something to see and then believe, it is necessary for the Son of Man to be

lifted up-and everyone who looks up to Him, trusting and expectant, will gain a real life, eternal life.”(John 3:13-15 TMB) Jesus is speaking of His death on the cross for our sins. Jesus had spoken of this earlier in John 2:19:22 when in response to the challenge from the Jews concerning His authority Jesus declared, Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days. The Jews replied, ‘It has taken forth-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?’ But the temple He had spoken of was His body. After He was raised from the dead, His disciples recalled what He had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.(NIV)

Yes, God loved the world and gave. Please read carefully John 3:16-18 and explain who God gave and what this means to you personally. Listen to what Jesus says happens when this gift is refused. “This is the crisis we’re in: God-light steamed into the world, but men and women everywhere ran for darkness. They went for the darkness because they were not really interested in pleasing God. Everyone who makes a practice of doing evil, addicted to denial and illusion, hates God-light and won’t come near it, fearing a painful exposure. But anyone working and living in truth and reality welcomes God-light so the work can be seen for the God-work it is.”(John 3:19-21 The Message Bible TMB)

John the Baptist knowing Jesus is the Son of God gave the following testimony. “He (Jesus) must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less. He has come from heaven and is greater than anyone else. I am of the earth, and my understanding is limited to the things of the earth. He tells what He has seen and heard but how few believe what He tells them. Those who believe Him discover that God is a fountain of truth. For this One--sent by God—speaks God’s /Words, for God’s Spirit is upon Him without measure or limit. The Father loves this man because He is His Son, and God has given Him everything there is. And all who trust Him-God’s Son-to save them have eternal life; those who don’t believe and obey Him shall never see heaven, but the wrath of God remains upon them.”(John 3:30-36 The Living Bible TLB). What do these verses have to say to you personally? What do you think it means to believe and trust in Jesus?

Please join me this week in studying in detail chapters 4-6 of the Gospel of John. Remember we are calling this series Living in the Light of the Gospel of John. As you read please note what light you are receiving from your reading for your daily life.

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