

Out of Darkness

1 Peter 2:9-10

We sometimes speak of being “in the dark” to mean someone simply doesn’t know what’s going on. We lose much when we don’t know Christ or the truth that can set us free. Knowledge is not some small gift. God’s teaching prepares us to walk worthy of our calling in this life and prepares us for eternity. When people don’t know the Lord, they fall into many harmful ways. What we know and how well we follow the Lord’s teaching measures our character. The Lord wants us to shape us in righteousness, so we can live with Him forever. When people don’t know the Lord or take Him seriously, they end up in spiritual and moral darkness that harms everybody.

God left evidence of His infinite power and wisdom in the universe. **Romans 1:20** says, “*For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So, they are without excuse.*” The problem is that many, even when the evidence is right before them, do not acknowledge God or learn from Him.

Romans 1:21-23 says, “*For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.*” The ancient pagan culture didn’t know God and were filled with cruelty, lust, and greed. Their foolish hearts were darkened morally and spiritually.

Spiritual darkness ruins lives and ruins societies. Ignorance of God threatens the peace and welfare of any nation. **Psalms 33:12** says, “*Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD...*” The more any nation pushes God out of its thinking and its morals, the more it destroys itself. The more families forget God and live for themselves, the more bitter their lives become. The Lord’s way is not simply one choice among many; it is the only way to true and lasting joy and peace. Every other choice ultimately leads to darkness.

The Bible describes the hopelessness of life without God in **Eph. 4:17-19**, “*Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.*” Knowing God matters morally, spiritually, and practically.

Spiritual darkness comes from attitudes and choices, whether we serve God or we serve material and fleshly things. In **Luke 11:34-36** Jesus says, “*Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. Therefore, be careful lest the light in you be darkness. If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, it will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light.*”

Jesus understood that people often turn to sin and aren't willing to do what is right. In **Jn. 3:19-21** He said, ***"And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."***

When we focus on God and following His way, we stand in the good light of life; but *when we focus on selfish desires, we remain in evil darkness*. We hide our actions from others. We can even get to the point that we despise what is good and right and love what is evil and wrong. In darkness, people would rather believe a lie than love the truth. Evil people despise those who want to do what is right, because they don't want their evil ways to be revealed. A godly person who seeks to do right is never afraid of being exposed. He wants his deeds to glorify God.

The apostle Paul contrasts light with darkness in Ephesians 5. He clearly shows how immorality, impurity, and greed will keep people out of heaven. The Bible says in **Ephesians 5:6-12**, ***"Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not become partners with them; for at one time, you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret."*** God has called you to live holy lives in all goodness and righteousness and truth!

How do we move out of the darkness and into the light? The answer is, we must be rescued; and that by God himself in Jesus Christ. **Colossians 1:13-14** puts it this way, ***"He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*** Christ rescues us by redeeming us with his innocent blood and grants to us the forgiveness of sins. **Gal. 1: 3-4** tells us, ***"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father..."***

But we need to understand, the grace of God was not designed merely to forgive us our sins. The grace of God instructs us to be the new people of God who have changed their ways. **Titus 2:11-14** says, ***"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works."*** This dear brethren, is the life lived in the light!

When the Lord Jesus called Paul to be an apostle, He revealed to Paul why He had chosen him to preach to the Gentiles. The Bible says in **Acts 26:18** that Christ sent Paul, ***"to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me."***

Faith in Christ makes a difference. And that faith comes by hearing the Word of God (**Rom. 10:17**), and the power of God to save still works through the gospel (**Rom. 1:16**).

The power to change comes from hearing the gospel. God sent Paul to preach. And his message about Christ can open their eyes to what's right and good. It can tell them difference between right and wrong, good and evil. And it can break Satan's power over their lives so that they can live for God. It is no wonder that Paul in **1Cor. 2:2** said, ***“For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.”*** Through the Spirit of God, there is power in God's Word to touch our hearts, to free us from the hold of sin, and to motivate us to serve God and love others. God's transforming power will not leave you where it found you.

Peter describes this light as marvelous in **1 Peter 2:9-10** he says, ***“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”***

People who were formerly lost and godless become very different once they become Christians. Before they were not a people and didn't have the mercy of God; but in Christ Jesus they become God's people with God's mercy. God's people are a chosen race. They are people for God's own possession. God's people make up a royal priesthood. They are kingly priests offering up spiritual sacrifices to God. They are a holy nation, and their purpose is to proclaim the excellencies of God! God has led them out of darkness and into the marvelous light of God's kingdom.

Jesus in **John 12:46-48** tells us, ***“I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day.”*** We are not to remain in spiritual darkness, *Jesus gave us His word to open our eyes to an abundant life filled with goodness and blessing.*

But that same Word that is a blessing will also be the standard of our judgment. God gives light in the Word to bless us. But if we ignore that light, we put our souls in danger. Jesus pictured the Pharisees as those blinded by their commitment to human traditions. In **Mt. 15:14** He said of them, ***“Let them alone; they are blind guides. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit.”*** People blinded by human ideas frequently fail to see the glory and the beauty of the gospel. They reject the very thing they most need.

God's light is not weak or dim; it is a marvelous light. **1 Jn. 1:5** reminds us that ***“God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.”*** Jesus in **John 8:12** said, ***“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”*** This marvelous light is life itself. This life in the light is abundant and eternal. Jesus said of this life in **John 17:3**, ***“This is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”*** Our eternal life begins with knowing the only true God and His Son Jesus Christ.

1 John 2:3-6 says, *“And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.”* The marvelous light of God shines on those who know Him, love Him, and obey Him! So, do you do that?

1 John 1:6-7 says, *“If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.”* There are only two paths in this world, one leads to life and the other to destruction.

Because people choose their path, they choose their destination. God, however, graciously gives us the opportunity to change our path and to change our relationship with Him. We can always leave the dark path and come to the light. There is no greater blessing than to have fellowship with God and to be cleansed from all sin by the blood of His Son.

1 Timothy 2:3-4 says, *“This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”* God gave us the of the gospel to lead us to heaven and avoid the dark destruction that evil and ignorance brings. God opens the door to knowledge through the Word. And when we obey, God grants us life.

To respond the gospel, believe with all your heart that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Repent by changing your heart and your life; leave the old way of sin and follow the teaching of the Lord. Confess Jesus as the Christ before others, and be baptized into Jesus and His death. And when you are baptized, the Lord applies the cleansing blood of Jesus to your soul (**Rom. 6:3**) and He washes away your sins (**Acts 22:16**). Why not come to God’s light today and make a difference in your eternal destiny? You won’t regret doing what’s right.