

So the theme, as Moses said, is “**Walking in the Light**”. So we're reading starting from I John 1:5.

[Reading I John 1:5-2:6]

The first creative act which is spoken of in scripture is “Let There Be Light”. It's the birth and the birthing of God's creation. Light is the Genesis, the origin, of the world, and it's the first word spoken by God at creation: “Let There Be Light”. It represents a separation from, and the overcoming of, darkness. It is formation, or form, in a place of formlessness. The Midrash, which is the Hebrew religious texts, ask a question “From what is Light created?” And the answer is whispered: “God cloaks himself in a white shawl, the light of his splendour shines from one end of the world to the other.” This is why we were singing that song: “How great is our God”! It's not a question, it's a statement. Light does not belong to a world which is fallen; it's an emanation of an essence which originates from another side of reality entirely – light serves as a symbol of all that is good and beautiful, of all that is positive and true. The difference between light and darkness has a metaphysical significance: it's a separation of being – they're not connected, they're not part of the same universe.

The advantage of light over darkness is so obvious. It serves a particular distinction in which light is a positive symbol which is so ubiquitous all the way through scripture: redemption, truth, justice, peace and even life itself shine via light. The revelation these qualities is expressed in terms of a revelation of light. Did we not also sing of this when we sang the song “Our God is mighty to save” and where we are commanded to let our light shine?

But the symbolism of light goes even deeper, both higher and deeper: the revelation of the divine is revealed by light. The righteous people in the Garden of Eden are said to have basked in the light of the Shekinah, the Divine Glory, and God himself is described in the Psalms (as Moses read) as our light and our salvation. The use of light as a symbolic expression in reality is realised in the practical use of lights and lamps as concrete means of expressing the light that the people of God have over and against the darkness. Again which Moses read from Exodus chapter 11: that though the darkness is thick and can be felt the people of God have light in their homes. The overall significance of light as an expression of all that is good and beautiful is divided into two shades of meaning. First there is the general light at the beginning of creation and then second there's a light that contains all of Godly reality which is divided into individual lights each of which has their own identity in terms of their role to their emotions, and each of these lights finds its expression as it awakes; we are these lights.

The function of light is for illumination. In Judaism darkness had no religious significance: darkness was a mist – it was just a husk or shell – and the only extent to which it has any role to play is that it underscores a need for light, it emphasizes a yearning for light. When we experience darkness what do we long for? We long for light! Our Lord is our light and our salvation, whom shall we fear? The Lord is the strength of my life of whom shall we be afraid? What does the Psalmist mean when he says “The Lord is our light? The Hebrew word for light translates as “Illumination; to shine; a suggestion of prosperity and comfort”. We can perhaps say that the Lord is our prosperity and comfort but there's perhaps a deeper meaning. The word light in Hebrew...

Hebrew is a very interesting language: each letter has a particular meaning. The word for light is spelled: first letter is א (aleph) and the Rabbis say that א brings to form that which is formless, it

makes solid that which cannot be grasped; the second letter is ם (vav), this is the number 6 – the number of days in which the universe was created – ם is considered a very powerful letter because it represents a connection between God and humanity; and the last letter is ך (resh or ruach) which teaches us about healing and compassion, and this is also the letter that represents the Holy Spirit.

Light is therefore humanities connection to the supernatural. It is our connection to God for him to fill us with the healing and compassion of the Holy Spirit. Light expresses the true source of our being from which we receive the fullness of joy in his presence: his fullness of joy. That's right, isn't it? In John 8:12 Jesus proclaims himself in this way: he says "I am the light of the world". Jesus proclaims himself as the light of the world: "I am the light of the world" He is the physical human manifestation of the divine he is the outlet by which we have access to the divine, to our heavenly father, through the Holy Spirit; God sends the Holy Spirit into the world to bring his healing and compassion, and he does it through human form. The divine occupies human form to express itself.

This word for light that Jesus used, and to which Paul also refers, specifically expresses the wisdom and the knowledge of God. We see this in I Corinthians where Paul talks about it that Jesus has become for us Wisdom and redemption and holiness and sanctification, and he also speaks about it in Colossians where he says in Jesus I found all of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. It's light! It's light! The importance of Aramaic word expresses this double meaning of the connection between humanity and God as an expression of Godly wisdom in human form. **You** are the light of the world! That was another one of Jesus' sayings. **You** are the light of the world – in you is found the light of the divine, and through you it finds human expression.

Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, living and active word of God, and it's through his Spirit that we have fellowship with God and with one another. This is not some ideological-theological concept, this is not an intellectual assent, it is not some kind of otherworldly concept; this expresses the truth of what all relationship is about, with God and with each other. We announce when we express God's light, we announced the present and potential intentions of God, the living God, of the Universe, the whole universe. It comes to pass in us at this precise moment in time when it happens in us, and we convey the divine light to the recipients – through us, through our emotions, through our thoughts, through our words. This is how God communicates himself to other people: he does it through humanity because we have fellowship with one another. If we do not have fellowship with one another then he can't communicate himself to us. He manifests his intentions through those who come to the faith, true faith, of the gospel – who have faith in Jesus Christ.

It's all through the New Testament and it's all through the scriptures.

When Jesus said "I am the light of the world" he's saying "I am the living word of Yahweh, the God of the Universe. So when Jesus says to us "You are the light of the world" it means you are the living and active word of Yahweh, the God of the Universe. Your life is an expression of the God of the Universe. Let your light shine before humanity so they may see your good works and glorify the God who's in heaven.

For Jesus says in John "if one walks in the night they stumble because there is no light in them." If they have not got the words of God they cannot know what is right and good. So what do we need to do to communicate to the people who are in darkness? We need to communicate the word of God to them.

This is the condemnation: light is come into the world but humanity loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. Humanity's always rebelled against the laws and commandments of the God of the Universe. Because we desire not to live in terms of God's judgement we'd rather it didn't exist; but it does! Therefore we have an obligation to communicate that, to communicate the word of God, but to do it in a loving way, to be liked in the way that we communicate.

There's a thing that's connected to the word of light. The early Christians weren't called Christians, they were called children of the way because the word for "way" means a path, or a road, or a manner of living. It's used to show a means by which something is accomplished or sought. This is fellowship with God and with one another. This is what we need to demonstrate – what does our world need more than anything else? We're talking about unity: what does our world need more than anything else? It needs people living in fellowship with one another; it needs people who can communicate with one another. Social Media's complete with people who don't seem to be able to communicate with one another, 'cause they're standing on their own subjective individual interpretation of things. It's not our individual interpretation things, it's not my subjective interpretation of anything that matters – it's God's! It's God's way, it's not ours. Scripture presents us with this contrast of God's way and our way. Our way takes us out of fellowship – our way always takes us out of fellowship. God's way brings us into fellowship, and it's to be cherished.

The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ – Paul combines in this one single sentence three of the optimum cultural elements from three different religions, of three different world views: Judaism, Greek and Roman. Light the optimum divine: knowledge for the Greeks was the optimum, glory for the Romans was the optimum. The light the knowledge of the glory of God is found in the face of Jesus Christ, and now, because his Spirit resides in us, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God is found in us, in **you**, and nowhere else. **You** contain the light of the knowledge of the glory of God and it's up to **you** to demonstrate the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, and we do it together – it's called church! **You** are the light of the world. Who is the light of the world? Say "I am"! Who is the world? Who is the light of the world? Say it to the person next to you: who is the light of the world? **You are!** Am I lying? **No!**

Walking in the light. We fellowship with God through his Holy Spirit, and through his Holy Spirit we fellowship with one another, and it's a demonstration to the world of God. God is a relational being. We are relational beings; the way that we relate expresses who we are.

I've got one illustration: the mole rats – have you ever seen one of these creatures before? The mole rat: why would God create a creature such as this? Honestly, God? I'm talking about God who's redemption and peace and justice and truth and light and beauty, and then you have the mole rat! Do you know why God created the mole rat? Do you know why God asks us to reflect upon the mole rat? Where does the mole rat live? In the dark! When we live in the dark we become mole rats. Would you like to be a mole rat? No! Don't be mole rats! We're called to be children of light, you're not called to be darkness – nothing about your life is called to be Darkness. If there's anything in your life which is darkness: cut it out, don't do it. It blocks fellowship with God and with one another, and it makes us look like mole rats. And we don't want to look like mole rats, do we? No!