

# Christ Reformation Church

Tillamook, Oregon

*You Must be Born Again!*

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## *Christ the Light of the World*

*December 22, 2019*

**Sermon Text:** John 1:1-14

**Scripture Reading:** John 8:12-30

Joh 1:1-14 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (2) He was in the beginning with God. (3) All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

**(4) In him was life, and the life was the light of men. (5) The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (6) There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. (7) He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. (8) He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.**

**(9) The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.**

(10) He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. (11) He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. (12) But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, (13) who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. (14) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Christmas has *lights* associated with it. Candles, decorative lights on trees and homes, stars on tree tops and so on. That first Christmas in Bethlehem had light too:

Luk 2:8-9 And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by

night. (9) And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear.

Mat 2:1-2 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, (2) saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

Light is a huge and appropriate theme in Scripture in describing Christ. He is the Light of the world as we have already read in John 8 this morning. Light shining in the darkness. I want us to consider this morning what this means – *that Christ is the Light of the World*. To do this, I suggest the following three points:

1. The world in darkness – the nature of darkness
2. Light as the necessity for sight
3. Light as the necessity for life

### The World in Darkness

The opposite and companion theme of Christ as the Light of the World is that of the world being depicted as darkness. For example:

Joh 3:19-21 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.

(20) For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. (21) 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.”

A kingdom of darkness, you see, in contrast to the kingdom of heaven which is the kingdom of light. Two kingdoms. Two citizenships. All in complete opposition to one another. One a realm of life. The other of death. One evil. The other righteous.

This present world is darkness:

Mat 4:15-16 “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles— (16) the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.”

People dwelling in darkness. That is the condition of this present world ever since the fall. Man in his sin can “see” many things. He can be very intelligent in respect to certain subjects, and yet ...there is a cloud of darkness overshadowing it all. The most

brilliant scientist, or mathematician, or philosopher or scholar is a fool when it comes to a true understanding of all the data he knows:

1Co 2:14 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

That phrase “not able to understand” is what this “darkness” depicts. We use the word “see” in this sense quite often – “*Do you understand this? Yes, I see it.*”

When Jesus told Nicodemus this:

Joh 3:3 Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

...that is exactly what He was talking about. Unless we are born again and thereby given *light* (eyes), we cannot “see” (understand or comprehend) the kingdom of God. Its nature and truths are foolishness to the man in darkness.

This world then is in darkness. There are many other aspects to this darkness that the Bible describes – a realm of death, a realm of misery, of slavery to the prince of darkness, of sin and calling that sin “good.” This realm of

darkness is a place where men often become worse than beasts and where they call a statue they themselves carved from a tree...god. The darkness is like this:

Isa 5:20 Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

Darkness is also a place of *fear*. That is strange, isn't it? How many of you were afraid of the dark when you were a kid? We really weren't afraid of the darkness itself, but of what might be hiding and lurking in the darkness, right? I remember being told by my parents when I was just a kid to take the garbage out. It was night time and the garbage cans were some distance from the house by the unattached garage. When I hadn't done so after a half hour or so they thought I was being disobedient, but I remember very clearly that I was afraid to go out there. I couldn't see. Parents sometimes forget what it was like to be a kid.

People who live in the darkness, who are children of darkness, who do not have the Light of Christ, *live in fear*. They may pretend they aren't afraid, but they are. I think that one reason people write horror novels and make

scary movies (with a lot of dark basements and so on) is because they are trying to make light of the “boogeyman” in the darkness. But in the end, the fact is that Satan is real, the darkness really is a place of death and fear.

And it is into this world that the Light came...

Isa 60:1-3 Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. (2) For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. (3) And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

### Light as the Necessity for Sight

Eyes do not work when there is no light. As mysterious as the nature of light is, we know that if we are going to *see* when it is dark, we need a light. Light waves have to reflect off of objects and come to our retinas if sight is going to be possible. This whole business of the eye, by the way, is enough in itself to prove to all people that there is a Creator who is God.

Christ is the light which must come to us if we are ever going to “see” His truth. Consider:

Gen 1:1-3 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (2) The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. (3) And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light.

Before anything else was done, before any life could be, there had to be light. Before God’s creation could even be visible, there had to be light. And so it is in regard to Christ coming to us as Light in the darkness:

2Co 4:3-6 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. (4) In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (5) For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. (6) For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Light is necessary for sight. And Christ is necessary for us to see His truth, to believe and understand His Word. Just as God’s Word said “let there be light” at that first creation, so He commands

“let there be light” in our hearts so that we know Him and see His glory in Christ. No one will ever love or know God without Christ because He is that Light who enables us to see. This is what He showed us in all of His miracles of giving sight to the blind.

Joh 9:30-33 The man answered, “Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. (31) We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. (32) Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. (33) If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.”

He was given two “sights” – physical eyes and more importantly, spiritual eyes to see the glory of Christ and to believe in Him.

### Conclusion – the Obligation the Light Brings

Jesus taught over and over again that when He shines His light on people, when He comes into this world, when His Spirit brings His truth, His gospel, the evidence of His existence in Creation, *people are obligated to believe it.* For example:

Joh 9:4-5 We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. (5) As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

And again:

Joh 3:19 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.

Joh 15:22-24 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. (23) Whoever hates me hates my Father also. (24) If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father.

Act 17:30-31 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, (31) because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

Mat 11:20-22 Then he began to denounce the cities where most of his

mighty works had been done, because they did not repent. (21) “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. (22) But I tell you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you.

Joh 9:4-5 We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. (5) As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

Now, let’s think very personally about this. Have we, each one of us, had the great privilege of having the Light of Christ shone upon us? That is to say, have we heard the gospel? Do we hold His Word in our hands? Have we come here to this place each week and heard the Light of His Word? The answer to these questions is obvious. Christ’s light has shone on us.

Right now, at this moment, it is day – you are hearing His Word. Christ requires us to “work the works” of His Father who sent Him. What is that work? *To believe in Christ. To receive His Light.* But just as we see every single day, the daylight fade, the sun set and the darkness of the night come, so it is in regard to Christ as Light. He shines on us, but not forever. There comes a time in every person’s life when, if they persist in hating the Light and refusing to believe in Christ, the Light will be withdrawn, night will come, *and it will be an eternal darkness.*

The question then becomes, *have we received that Light? Have we loved that Light – or have we chosen the darkness?* Because here is the very plain truth the Lord has told us over and over: *When the Light of Christ comes to us, we are accountable for receiving it by faith. The work He requires of us is that we believe His Word. And hear this clearly –*

It is therefore a very fearful thing to refuse Christ’s light. It is the Christmas season. People think of this baby born in a stable in Bethlehem. But what are they going to do with Him? He is the Light of the World as He Himself said. He is shining ON you, but if you are to be saved from that eternal blackness, *He must shine IN you!* You must be born again.

***We will not always have the Light shining on us.***

And therefore, this requires straightforward honesty in dealing with ourselves. *The first step the blind man or woman must take in being*

Listen again:

*healed is to admit that they are blind. That something is very wrong with them. They must admit that they cannot see.*

So, how about you? Perhaps someone is here or is listening elsewhere to these and you are blind. You don't see the glory of Christ – you see no real need of Him. The things here in God's Word are, if you will honestly admit it, foolishness to you. Well, here is Christ, the Light of the World, the remedy for your blindness and sin inviting you to believe in Him and be delivered from the darkness you are in. But remember, His Light is not always going to be shining on you. He must shine IN you – you must be born again.

And finally, a thought for the Christian from that blind man who Christ healed centuries ago:

Joh 9:24-34 So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner." (25) He answered, "Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." (26) They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" (27) He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also

want to become his disciples?" (28) And they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. (29) We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." (30) The man answered, "Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. (31) We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. (32) Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. (33) If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." (34) They answered him, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" And they cast him out.

There it is. The experience of the Christian – the children of light – in this present darkness. Once we were blind, but now we see. Because Jesus is the Light of the World.