

Preaching Dec. 24, 2017, VP

There was a sign in the heavens that accompanied the birth of Jesus. Commonly called the star of Bethlehem. This star was seen by people in a faraway land. Apparently, they thought that a king of the Jews was born, Mat. 2:2. The bright star guided them to the location where our Savior was lying in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn, Luke 2:7.

Jesus the Prince of Peace

700 BC, the prophet **Isaiah 9:6-7**, *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called **Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*** ⁷ *Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be **no end.** He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.*

Jesus our peace

60 AD, the apostle Paul in **Ephesians 2:14-18**, ¹⁴ *For **he himself is our peace,** who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,* ¹⁵ *by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. **His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace,*** ¹⁶ *and in **one body to reconcile both of them to God** through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.* ¹⁷ *He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.* ¹⁸ ***For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.***

Jesus our Light

Isaiah prophesied about Jesus, the dawning of the light, **Isaiah 9:1-2**, ^[a] *Nevertheless, there will **be no more gloom** for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan—* ² *The **people walking in darkness have seen a great light;** on those living in the land of deep darkness **a light has dawned.***

Jesus announces that He is that light. After He heard the John the Baptist had been put in prison, He returned to Galilee, **Mat. 4:12-14**. *When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he withdrew to Galilee.* ¹³ *Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali—* ¹⁴ *to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah:*

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Jesus announced Himself that He is the light of the world, **John 8: 12**, *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”*

He promises us that whoever follows Him will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

Jesus tells us to let our light shine before men, **Mat. 5:16**, *In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*

I have to stress that this kind of shining has nothing to do with having an outwardly shiny countenance or beautiful and pleasing appearance, Isaiah 53. It is a manifestation of the character of Christ through a disciple.

Rejection

Isaiah prophesied that Jesus would be rejected, **Isaiah 53**, we know that Jesus was rejected by His own people and the world, John 3:19. Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Why is this? Because people refuse to follow Jesus.

What happens when we follow the light?

Several things will happen when we believe and follow the light truthfully:

1. Our relationship with God the Father will be restored and as a consequence also relationships that we have with each other, Romans 13:8.
2. He will leave His peace with us, a peace that the world can't give, John 14:27.
3. We will have access through Him to the Father in one spirit, Eph. 2:18
4. We become sons, heirs and members of His household, Gal. 4: 4-7.

If I can't see His light, then what is the matter with me? **Mat.6:22-23**, *“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy,^[a] your whole body will be full of light. ²³ But if your eyes are unhealthy,^[b] your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!*

This situation is definitely for unbelievers. Would it then be possible for “believers” to be in such state? If we as “Christians” live as the world then we are in the same a pitiful state.

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If you belong to Christ and you advertise and are offering praise or thanks to Budha or any other created being or you find yourself so great, then you are certainly in darkness! This is just practicing godlessness. This happens a lot, just look around you and especially the social media.

Basic Characteristic of Christian life

For a Christian it is matter of remaining in the vine, in Christ. This is a life of being aware at all times that only the Lord's efforts are sustainable and acceptable to God the Father. This means that a Christian submits his own will to that one of the Christ. This is the Christian's reasonable spiritual service, Romans 12:1-8. And this is what will be tested and when it passes it will be remembered by Christ.

It is the reason that in all things; big and small, pleasant and unpleasant, blessed or in suffering, we recognize God and thanks Him for His mercies and grace! This is a true sign of being godly.

This has all to do with the transformation of our minds by the Holy Spirit.

A Christian can submit his life to Christ because of his acute awareness that he is part of God's family and household. This is the meaning of being called and justified by God.

Through the manifestation of these basic characteristics, by faith from first to last, we will surely be the light in this world that Jesus has told us to be.

Let us pray

Benediction

Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶ and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.