

"LET THERE BE LIGHT..."



TEXT: 2 Corinthians 4:6,7

INTRO.: A. Light is a mysterious and marvelous force. Think of a world absent of light, bathed in constant, thick darkness. No color, no beauty, no life! Without light nothing can live. Even in the murkiest darkness of the depths of the ocean, some light penetrates to sustain life. And there in that world of darkness, creatures themselves generate some light, eerie though it may be.

B. Light must have a receptacle or source. Before the creation of the universe there was only eternal light – the glory of God. When He created the heavens and the earth His first act was to speak light into existence. **"And God said: 'Let there be light and there was light.'**" Of all God's creation, the thing that most clearly reveals & most closely approximates His glory is light. He is called **"The Father of lights..."** and Jesus refers to Himself as **"the Light of the world."** In this early stage or day one of creation the Lord is making a cosmos of chaos. *"The picture is that of someone who comes into a dark room to arrange the furniture, and before doing anything else, he turns on the light."* (MacArthur, "The Battle for the Beginning" p.80)

TRANS.: After speaking of the spiritual darkness of Satanic blindness of the unsaved (v.4), Paul then states the remedy in v.5: "...we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." In the next two verses Paul speaks of three light sources...

I. CREATIVE LIGHT: V.6A

ILLUS.: Paul uses the analogy between the primeval creation and the new creation of the believer. Both the physical world and we were born into darkness.

A. Physical Darkness & Light:

1. Since God is pure light He did not need to create it, but He did create darkness.

Isaiah 45:7 *I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things.*

2. Matter had to be created before light, because without matter light is invisible to us; a beam of light shining up into the night sky would be invisible if there were not tiny particles in the air to reflect it.
3. Since God is the source of this first light on earth, it had to come from one point in space & bathe the spherical earth in light on one side, casting a shadow or darkness on the other side; hence night & day.
4. This light was present before the light holders (the sun, moon & stars) appeared on day four of creation.

B. Spiritual Darkness & Light: v. 6b (cf. v.4)

Acts 26:18 *To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.*

1. Darkness & light are always in conflict & so it is with both the old creation and the new creation or the old nature and the new nature.
2. The light which dispels the darkness of sin is **"the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."**

II. REFLECTIVE LIGHT: V.6C

A. Moses' Face:

1. Paul may still be thinking of the glory of God reflected on the face of Moses.
2. This was a fading light (cf. 3:13).
3. It seems that there is an intent here to compare the face of Moses w/ the face of Jesus.

B. Jesus' Face:

ILLUS.: The "face of Jesus" is a fascinating subject. However, as you know, we have no photographs or accurate paintings of our Savior preserved, which seems unusual, since He caused such a stir in Israel during His lifetime. But of course, He wanted to avoid idolatry and did not want to violate the Commandment regarding making likenesses of Deity. Since He is the "express image of His Person" no one should attempt to replicate Him or a likeness of Him.

1. The question is what is this **"light...in the face of Jesus"**?
 - a. The glory of the divine nature is manifest in Jesus.
 - b. He is the brightness of God's glory & the express image of God's Person.

Hebrews 1:3 *Who (Jesus) being the brightness of his (God's) glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;*

- c. It was by & through Jesus that the glory of the Father's perfections were made known to man, and the glory of the divine attributes of God can be made known only through Jesus. – O. Greene

III. REFRACTIVE LIGHT: V.7

DEFINITION: "Refractive" = when light passes from one medium to another, e.g., from air to water. In context it is when the light of the Gospel passes from God to man & then to other men.

A. Heavenly Treasure:

1. The antecedent of **"this treasure"** is found back in v.4: **"...the glorious Gospel of Christ..."**
2. It is called both **"glorious"** and referred to as a **"treasure"** because:
 - a. It is divine in its source: **"...thus saith THE LORD"**
 - b. It is dynamic in its operation: **"...the power of God unto salvation"**
 - c. It is clear & definite in its claims: **"...& hearing by the Word of God"**

B. Earthen Vessels:

ILLUS.: We all know how Gideon placed lights in earthen pitchers when his small band surrounded the camp of the Midianite army & how at his signal the men blew the trumpet & shouted **"the sword of the Lord and of Gideon"** and then smashed the earthen pitchers so the light would shine. It was by the shining lights of these broken pitchers that the victory was won. God did the rest.

We place great treasures in valuable vessels; God does the opposite. We may ask why didn't He entrust this treasure to holy angels, the cherubim, or seraphim?! The answer is in the verse: **"...that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us."** God is jealous of His glory & will not share it with anyone.

1. There is no beauty in an earthen vessel.
2. There is no strength or durability in a piece of pottery.
3. There is no value in a clay pot!

CONCL.: When we "let our lights shine" – like Gideon, it is not our light, but His. When the supernatural happens & someone is saved, it is He Who must get the glory, not the clay pots in which He has placed His "treasure!"