*DEVOTIONS*

March 6 - 11

*You are the light of the world*

**Monday, March 6 John 1:1-9**

*“The true light that gives light to everyone”*

 At creation God said, “’Let there be light’; and there was light” (Genesis 1:3). Out of the very life of God, light shone forth to dispel the darkness. That light of creation is in human beings in a particular way: the light of God gives life when the breath of God breathes life into us. In Christ, the light of God takes on additional aspects of life when the light of Christ becomes the source of eternal life. Jesus Christ, the Word, has come to open our eyes to the life of God, life which raises the dead. Jesus is the light of the world and whoever follows him “will not walk in darkness, but have the light of life” (John 8:12).

 The desperate condition of humanity is that we live in darkness. Against the darkness is set the goodness of God and his offer to the world in Christ, the One who brings the light of God. If it were not for this supernatural intervention, we would remain forever in darkness. Further, says John, the darkness of the world cannot defeat the light because the light, being the Word of God, created the world and is therefore stronger than the world.

*I praise you, Jesus, for bringing God’s light into our dark world. Amen.*

**Tuesday, March 7 John 3:18-21**

*“Everyone who does evil hates the light”*

 Here is the great paradox, the two-edged meaning of Jesus’ coming. He came in love to save, to heal, and to offer spiritual birth. He did not come to condemn or judge. But his coming forces the issue. Now we must decide! There is both wondrous possibility and great peril in our exposure to the light. If we choose to accept Jesus as the One who has come down from heaven, we will be born again. But if we choose to reject the light, we have brought condemnation upon ourselves and we will die.

 On the one hand is the influence of evil. It is a darkness which keeps each of us from accepting the great gift; it is a rebellious pride which will not allow us to confess our sin and receive God’s forgiveness; it is a self-centeredness in each of us that constantly insists that we can work out our own salvation. On the other hand is the power of the Holy Spirit. To be born again in the Spirit is to accept and believe and step into the light. There, our faith is plainly evidenced by our obedience to God.

*I have come into the light that is you, Lord, and I believe. Amen.*

**Wednesday, March 8 John 12:44-50**

*“I have come into the world as a light”*

 The public ministry of Jesus is about to come to end, and the responses to Jesus have been varied. Some have been exposed to the light and are eager to become “children of God.” Others are willing to betray Jesus (such as Judas Iscariot), and still others are plotting his death. Others are asking questions but remain in the darkness. Then there are those who have come to believe in him, but they refuse to make this faith public out of fear of what their fellow Jews may say or do to them.

 In these verses Jesus speaks in clear, strong language as he makes a final plea for belief, probably in the temple courts. Throughout his ministry Jesus has been eager to give his Father the glory. So he makes it plain that faith is not to finally rest in him, but in his Father who sent him and gave him the word he was to speak. Seeing Jesus is seeing the Father since the Son abides in the Father and the Father in the Son. Salvation, being brought from darkness into light, comes by faith.

*Believing in you, Lord, I believe in the Father who sent you. Amen.*

*DEVOTIONS*

March 6 - 11

*You are the light of the world*

**Thursday, March 9 1 John 1:5-7**

*“God is light – walk in the light”*

 “God is light!” For John, the word “light” is rooted in the Old Testament understanding of light where it has to do with *finding God’s path.* “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105). The light of God shows his people the way for their feet. Light is also connected in the Old Testament to the discovery of the character and nature of God by his people. Psalm 27 tells of David’s discovery not only of the way, but of God himself in the midst of David’s trial. He had found the face of the Lord: “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?” (Psalm 27:1).

 “Walk in the light!” John uses the language of the roadway to illustrate that God’s light is not an abstract philosophical ideal to be honored and held up for respectful admiration, but a relationship to be lived. God’s light is like a dynamic roadway upon which we are to walk on a day-to-day basis. When we experience God’s light in this way, it makes all the difference in how we live our life.

*By the light of your Word, Father, I will be guided in my daily walk. Amen.*

**Friday, March 10 Philippians 2:12-15**

*“Let your lives shine brightly”*

 When Paul says that believers must “work out their salvation,” he does not mean that they should “work for” salvation on the final day. He means instead that they should conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ as they await the final affirmation of their right standing before God. They are to do this “with fear and trembling,” because such seriousness is appropriate to the task of living out their commitment to the gospel in a way that demonstrates that they are genuine believers.

 Paul follows this general statement with a more specific command. The Philippian believers should stop complaining and arguing, so that they may shine as beacons of light within the darkness of a world gone astray. When the world witnesses Christians complaining and arguing among themselves, it certainly does not reflect positively on the Christian faith. The light of Christ will not shine brightly in the world unless his followers commit themselves to living each day in the love and joy of their Father.

*Let my light shine brightly for you, Lord, so others may see you. Amen.*

**Saturday, March 11 Matthew 5:13-16**

*“You are the light of the world”*

Jesus followed the beatitudes with the expressive symbol of light, referring to the enriching influence of the Christian in the world and to the influence or witness the Christian shares in Christ. Light is a symbol of radiance, of openness, of joy compatible with the “blessedness” expressed in the beatitudes. There is nothing secretive about the Christian commitment or way of life. The disciple is described as a light to the world, an influence for openness and honesty, for acceptance and love.

 A light is to be of service. The disciples are lights in the world, not calling attention to themselves but pointing the way of God. They obtain their light from the One who is the Light of the world. This visibility and service is expressed by Jesus in two illustrations: the city on the hill and the candle placed on the lamp stand. The light dispels darkness simply by being present. And the motive is to illuminate the way of God for others, that by seeing our good works they may be attracted to God.

*I will live openly in the world as your disciple, Lord, a visible witness. Amen.*