***Spiritual Light vs. Spiritual Darkness

Colossians 1:1-2

COL-099***

2 Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture is inspired by God, and profitable for teaching, for proof, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

Matthew 15:7-9: "And Jesus said to them, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far away from me. But in vain, do they worship me: teaching as doctrines, the precepts of men; neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men.’"

Matthew 13:17: But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears, because they hear. For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it; and, to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."

2 Timothy 2:15: "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."

Acts 20:32: "Now I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified."

Revelation 2:17: "He who has an ear to hear let, him hear what the spirit says to the churches."

Please turn in your Bibles to what the Holy Spirit has written in the book of Colossians 1:9-14. Our subject is "Paul's prayer for the Colossians, segment number 33.

The apostle has pointed out here that the Colossian believers have been qualified by the grace of God alone for an eternal spiritual inheritance. This qualification begins with the free grace salvation of the sinner, based on believing the gospel; that is, trusting in Jesus Christ, and the payment which He made on the cross (the payment of the death penalty for our sins).

1 Thessalonians 2:13-14: "And for this reason we also constantly thank God, that when you receive from us the Word of God's message, you accepted it, not as the word of men, but for what it really is: the Word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe. For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea. For you also endured the same suffering at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they did from the Jews."

The Word of God is alive and active. And the way that people undermine that fact is to pretend that the Bible is not the message of God, and to pretend that it is simply the word of men. This is a very important verse. 1 Thessalonians 2:13: "For this reason, we also constantly thank God that when you received from us the Word of God's message, you accepted it, not as the word of men, but for what it really is: the Word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe."

I have noticed that when people want to reject what God says, and what God commands, they make a simple statement about the Bible: "But men wrote that book." And the implication is that the Bible is simply the word of man. It is not the supernatural Word of God. Don't let that disturb you. You know better. You know that the Bible can be challenged, but it cannot be disproved on any account. But that's the word you get. Many of you have gotten that reaction from friends and family, when you have pressed them that here is a principle of truth, and you must accept it because God has spoken. And they say, "But somebody wrote that. We don't know whether that's true or not. That is not so.

Move over to 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14: "But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren, beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation, through sanctification by the spirit, and faith in the truth. And it was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." This is for those who have the good sense to say, "Yes, God has spoken," and recognize that He has chosen you to understand that.

When somebody says, "But it's just the word of men – somebody wrote, that your heart should go out to that person because that is what the Word of God tells us: "There is none that seeks after God. No, not one." And by nature, nobody goes for God. By nature, everybody is indifferent for God. Does that mean that they don't go for religion? No, they go for religion big. They go for what Satan creates in a big way. They all want religion. But they don't want the Word of God (the message of truth) that will take them from an eternity in the lake of fire to an eternity in a presence of God.

So, consider yourself fortunate, Paul says, that when the salvation message was brought to you, you believed it. God chose you. He brought you conviction. You believed it. And by the sanctification, the setting apart of the Spirit of God to faith in the truth, you have a destiny with the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven.

Now, if you understand that, there's not very much that can come into your life that's going to be disturbing or upsetting. If all that stands before you is an eternity with the glory of God in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, what in the world can come into your life that's really distressing? Hard times? Yes. But they're going to leave. They are going to be gone. This too will pass. Death itself? Yes. But that only makes everything better, not worse. It is a great thing to have been chosen to be enlightened by God concerning the Word of truth.

So, it's no small thing when Paul tells the Colossians, "God has qualified you," and that qualification, first of all, includes your salvation. And it is such a total work of God that you never have to worry about whether the salvation project has been properly executed. You can count on it that it was done right, because God alone did it.

But there's a second factor in this qualification which is equally important. And this also is based upon the sacrifice of Christ: that it enables the believer to serve God by means of the Holy Spirit for eternal rewards in heaven. It is great to be saved, but it is equally great to be able to serve the living God, of all things: the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. And He is dependent upon us for that service. That's how His work gets done. If you don't serve, the work doesn't get done.

**Rewards in Heaven**

Ephesians 2:10 spells it out in a very personal way: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." He saved you. For what? For a mission: "For good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." Aren't you going to be downright embarrassed when you stand up before the Judgment Seat of Christ, and they flash up on the screen there, the mission? Here's what God saved you for. Here was the destiny. Here was the purpose of your life. This is why you were conceived. Here it is. You were to do this, this, and this. This was to be accomplished. Nobody else could do it just your way. And over here, on the accompanying screen, there's a blank, where they list how you fulfilled your mission. That's going to be a low-time in life. You will look up here at what might have been; and, you look up here at what was: "How did I miss it?" Most people will miss it because they've never been taught the Word of God. And a lot of those who were taught didn't have enough sense to believe it and act upon it. They didn't have the right perspective. They didn't have the right priorities.

Now, I'm happy to tell you that they are not going to do that in heaven. Some of you looked panicky for a moment. It will be in the mind of God what might have been. And it'll probably become very clear to you. That much is true. But they're not going to throw up here on the screen what you didn't do, and what you did do. That's not going to happen.

However, I'll tell you what will happen. The rewards that they had prepared for you, as per the mission, are not going to come to you. To the extent that you fulfilled the mission, the rewards will be there. All of this, in the providence of a sovereign God, has been put together in eternity past. That is what the Christian life is all about. And, of course, we're talking about the deep things of the Word of God. Most preachers wouldn't touch that subject with a 10-foot pole, because that bears a very heavy burden of responsibility upon those who suddenly are alerted to the fact that, if they get a life, they're not going to have time for God. But if they get the life of Christ, they're going to have time for their whole eternity. Which do you want? A life of Christ, or do you want to get a life? And the more you get a life, the less you are going to be fulfilling the list on this side that God has preordained for your mission.

In the book of 2 John 1:8, we therefore read this admonition: "Watch yourselves, that you might not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward. For that side of the mission, there is a full reward. It's right there. It's all attached. And John says, "Watch yourself, Christian, that you don't lose what we have accomplished." What has he accomplished? What has John accomplished? He's trained these people. He's been a good drill instructor. He's been a good DI. He's given them the information. He has run them through the drill. He has run them through the paces. They know the story. They have the deep things of the Word of God. They have that understanding. That's what he has accomplished. He says, "Now, you follow through on that, and you'll get every bit of reward that God has designed for you. That's the only way to go.

Now, these two marvelous acts of God: saving us; and, enabling us to serve, are described as an inheritance from God, which is associated with the light of Bible doctrine. Titus 3:5-7: "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing by the Holy Spirit." That verse makes it very clear that nobody is saved by any kind of doing on your part: none of your rituals; none of your good works; none of your good intentions; and, none of your spiritual exercises. Nothing that you do saves you. It is only what Christ has done. His absolute righteousness is what saves us. And how does He do it? Because you deserve it? No, because of His mercy. And only God knows why He would exercise that mercy to most of us. But His heart goes up out to us. And please remember the biblical definition of the word mercy. It means "relief for your agony;" or, "relief for your suffering and the suffering of sin." That's what mercy means – somebody who comes and relieves my suffering. Here's the suffering of sin and all the consequences. How do you do that? By the washing of regeneration. That means that He washes you clean of that moral guilt by making you spiritually alive. That's what regeneration is. And He renews you spiritually by an act of the Holy Spirit when He baptizes you into Christ.

**It's All by God's Grace**

Titus 3:6: "Whom He poured out upon us." Now He renews us by the indwelling Holy Spirit Whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior. So, you started off life spiritually dead and physically alive. Suddenly, you accept Christ as your Savior. You believe the gospel, and you come alive spiritually, and the Holy Spirit comes and indwells you. He's poured out upon you richly because of what Jesus Christ has done. Titus 3:7: "So that being justified (now having been declared as a possessor of absolute righteousness) by His grace."

We see the reiteration again and again. There are no works. It's all grace. Yes, you are as good as Jesus Christ in the sight of God now spiritually – all by the grace of God: "We might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Because you have been born-again (entirely justified by an act of God) you are an heir of everything that comes to Jesus Christ in his humanity. You will share in every bit of that. And that's the hope of eternal life. And I certainly hope that you know by now that the word hope in the Scripture does not connote a possibility of not realizing that. When the Scripture speaks about hope ("elpis") (el-pece'), that God presents, it's a sure thing. In English, it gives us an idea that maybe it'll happen; and, maybe it won't. But when the Bible says you're going to have the hope of eternal life, it means: "You betcha. Don't worry about it. You will most certainly have it." Why? Because it's all by the grace of God. It's all dependent on the character of Christ. It doesn't have anything to do with what we do or what we are. And if that's not a relief, see your doctor in the morning.

**Spiritual Light**

The Bible categorizes some things as spiritual light. Among them are the gospel; doctrine; love; glory of God; character of God; person of Jesus Christ; truth; divine good works; believers who are in temporal fellowship; goodness; and, righteousness. All these things, among others, are listed in the Bible specifically as being in the light, because all of this that has happened to us has come in the truth, the light of the Word of God. It is not the inventions of the Pope, or any other hierarchy, or the magisterium of the College of the Cardinals, or any priestly or any preacher group. All of this is the light of the Word of God.

**Spiritual Darkness**

On the other hand, the Bible also characterizes some things as spiritual darkness, and we have seen that that includes: Satan's kingdom; hatred; Satan's power; evil deeds; spiritual disorientation to the truth; the human good of the sin nature; unbelievers; belief in world peace without Jesus Christ, the prince of peace; hell; and, carnal Christians. All of these are areas of darkness spiritually. Satan; his world system; and, the sin nature envelope mankind with an impenetrable cloud of darkness. This is the normal environment of unbelievers; of all economic levels; of all social levels; and, of all IQ levels. And you'll make a very grave mistake if you do not deal with people on the fact that they are enveloped by a black envelope cloud of spiritual darkness. They know nothing about God except the inventions of Satan. They know nothing about walking with God. They know nothing about what awaits them out in eternity that's a reality.

Now, because a person may have a high IQ, you might make the mistake of thinking they know something. Or if the person has a high social position, or has some prominent place in life, or in the public view, you might think that this person must know something. If he's not a believer, he's surrounded with darkness. Or it might be a person who is in great economic power, or great financial capacity, and you might think that he knows something. Without Christ, all he knows is inordinate spiritual darkness. It is only the believers in Jesus Christ who break free of this cloud of spiritual darkness into the light of God's Word.

So, this is what is behind Paul's statement here to the Colossians, whom he has recognized as well-taught devoted Christians who walk before God, when he talks to them – that they are saints in the light: "Giving thanks to the Father Who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light" – to share in two ways: by being saved by Him; and, by being qualified (made able) to serve.

Many Christians are saved, but they can't serve God. No one has ever explained to them the spiritual maturity structure of the soul. Nobody has ever explained to them that the power that saved them is the same power which will enable them to be brilliant servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. They don't know how to go about using the grace system of perception to get "epignosis" full knowledge doctrine stored in their human spirits, so that they can develop the capacity to have the mind of God. And if you don't have the mind of God, you have the mind of Satan. Consequently, most Christians, while they are born-again (they have a little bit of the mind of God), most of the mind that they have is the mind of Satan. Therefore, they will act accordingly.

Who is responsible for that? Well, if that Christian has had access to instruction in the Word of God, they're responsible for it. Either they weren't there, or they sat there, and they listened, and in their mind, they did not say "Amen." They did not approve. They had mental reservations. And immediately, Satan had a great victory, and the hook was in them without their realizing it.

I have repeatedly told people: "You don't want to attend a church like Berean Memorial Church, because you are going to get instructed in the Word of God. And as Jesus one day turned to the Pharisees and said, 'I have taught you the truth, and you can't believe what's going to happen to you on the other side, because you have rejected what I told you. You are going to find that it would've been better for you never to have listened to Me, and never to have received the instruction, because in eternity, you get punished in the lake of fire according to your enlightenment spiritually.'"

**Men Love Darkness**

In the Bible, on various occasions, the Holy Spirit has brought the subject of light and darkness together, in contrast. These are very illuminating. The first place is in John 3:19. The natural, unsaved person, by nature, gravitates toward spiritual darkness. That's the only thing that he's compatible with: "And this is the judgment: that light is come into the world, and men love the darkness rather than the light, for their deeds were evil." The light of Christ and the Word of God has come into the world, but because the unsaved are enveloped in a cloud of darkness, and because they do terrible evil things, they prefer being covered by darkness, so that they can do their evil things. And even though Jesus Christ has said, "Look. I'm going to let you walk in the light. Here's the entrance. It is much nicer in here. It is much happier in here. It will bless you here on earth much more to be walking in light, and it will count for all eternity for you in heaven. Why do you want to be in darkness?" But because men who are unsaved do not have any love for the light, they choose the darkness.

**Light Exposes Evil Deeds**

Secondly, the doers of darkness hate spiritual light, and they avoid it to keep their evil deeds from being exposed. John 3:21: "But he who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifest as having been wrought in God."

John 3:20, "Everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought to God."

Now, here's the contrast in a very dramatic way. Those who are in the truth; who are in the light; and, who have a heart for the truth, are going to come to the Word of God. Those who want to go in darkness are going to avoid the light of the Word of God. Now, this applies to Christians as well. There are people who are perfectly born-again and going to heaven. But carnality has grasped their souls so that their minds are now beclouded to the glory of walking in the light. And their minds have now been enveloped with darkness. And what has become a relationship to Jesus Christ has turned into a religion. Therefore, they will begin to move away from any place where the light of the Word of God is what is proclaimed. And they will find someplace where the darkness that they're more comfortable with is not upset.

There are Christians galore who walk in semi-darkness, and they don't realize what they're doing to themselves and to their children in that semi-darkness. Those who hate the spiritual light avoid the Word of God so as not to have their deeds exposed. In fact, in the same thing that I told you earlier, the denigrating of the Bible, because some man wrote it, Isaiah 5:20 puts it this way: "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light, and light for darkness;, who substitute bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter."

Now, you know very well that that's what's taking place in our society today. Good is being called evil. And evil is being called enlightenment. They substitute darkness of Satan for the light of the Word of God. They substitute the bitter fruit of following Satan; the world; and, the sin nature, for the sweet blessings of obedience to the Word of God.

How shocking this is can only be portrayed sometimes by watching the world in action. I caught part of a TV program this week which was going through all the steps of a homosexual and lesbian marriage. That is the big thing on the horizon now – that this great thing that God calls an abomination is now to have the dignity of marriage and the acceptance in society. It is not just that people are free to destroy themselves if you want to, but that you must accept that what they are doing is equally acceptable to God and to everyone else. And here are two Jewish men, two men of whatever, and two women, going through all the steps that a young couple goes through in getting married – all the details of the wedding, and then having to discuss how they're going to finish the ceremony. They usually they kiss one another. And the parents are sitting there cringing, and they're saying, "Just make it a light, fast kiss. And you sit there, and you wonder: "What on earth has happened such that, this which is darkness and an abominable darkness, is being portrayed here in public as great enlightenment.

Anybody who is a believer, and who has the Spirit of God within him was recoiled in disgust with that. And great pity went out toward those people who were involved, not only for what they're doing to themselves now. And as the preacher ended, one of the preachers says, "May they have a long life." And I said, "That's in doubt." He didn't respond, however. But the very relationship is a deadly potential of disease as you know. And you not only pity where they are now, but your heart goes out to the eternity that they will confront someday, not to mention the preachers who performed the ceremony.

The doers of darkness just hate spiritual light. And they avoid it by challenging the authenticity of the Bible, and its reliability as the voice of God. And then they begin calling what God says is good – they say, "That's evil." And what God says is evil, they say, "No, that's good. That's just old-fashioned to think it's evil.

**There is no Darkness in Jesus Christ**

The third contrast between light and darkness is that there is no spiritual darkness in Jesus Christ. And yet, what do most of the religions of the world do? The reject Him. Here is the one person in Whom there is no spiritual darkness, and they reject Him. 1 John 1:5: "And this is the message we have heard from Him, and announced to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all." And in the person of Jesus Christ, He declared Himself to be the Son of God, and thus, to be the light that God is. There is no spiritual darkness in Jesus Christ.

So, if the Bible comes along and says that something is evil; that something is wrong; and, that something is an abomination to God, you cannot come along and say, "No, it's okay." That doesn't make it light, because there is no darkness in God. And if He says that something is darkness, man cannot make it light.

**Satan Pretends to be Light**

In the fourth place, Satan pretends to be an angel of spiritual enlightenment. And that's what he does. And do I have to tell you that the way he does this little con job of being an angel of light is by quoting the Bible? Just look back to the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness. How did he try to deal with Jesus? By quoting the Bible to Him. He was quoting the bible: "The Bible says this; and, the Bible says that." He was distorting and twisting the truth, acting as if he too were a believer in the Word of God.

2 Corinthians 11:13 says that those who follow Satan, who are his spiritual leaders, disguise themselves as the communicators of Christ, but they're deceitful workers. And 2 Corinthians 11:14 says, "And it's no wonder that the human agents act this way, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light."

**No Compatibility between Light and Darkness**

Then fifth: there is no compatibility between light and darkness. And this creates a very great problem. Not only is there no compatibility between light and darkness in terms of a Christian and an unsaved person, but it becomes very sticky when two Christians: one who's walking in fellowship with God; and, one who is not walking fellowship with God, now find themselves thrown into some human relationship where they should have compatibility, but they cannot. A spiritual Christian cannot have compatibility with a carnal Christian.

2 Corinthians 6:14: "Do not be bound together with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?" And the answer is nothing. There is no fellowship between light and darkness.

So, don't get yourself bound in life to relationships as a Christian with an unbeliever. That is madness. Do not rationalize getting into relationships, especially lifelong relationships, with unbelievers. That is self-destructive. But in every other area of your life, how can you be in partnership with somebody who is an unrighteous person? How can you be in business? How can you be in whatever activity of life where you are related in a partnership with something that is lawlessness? How can light have fellowship with darkness?

Now, this is talking about in-depth relationships. This does not mean that you get on the bus, and you say to the bus driver, "Are you a Christian?" And he says, "No, I'm not." And you say, "I'm not riding this bus." You're going to do a lot of walking if you do that. And that's what Paul says. Paul says, "I'm not telling you that you don't have any dealings with the unbeliever. Else," he says, "you have to get out of the world, because they're around you all the time. What he is saying is that you know that there's no compatibility between light and darkness. So, don't get yourself tied in to relationships in life that bind you closely to an unbeliever, because you're going to find conflict. You're going to find that you cannot walk in peace with them.

Then Ephesians 5:8 tells us that salvation transfers one from the realm of spiritual darkness to the realm of spiritual light. Now, how could that be, if they're both the same? If there's no real difference? Ephesians 5:8: "For you were formerly darkness (you Christians), but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light." You don't need me to explain that to you. You were formerly darkness. You were an unsaved person. You were enveloped in that cloud of human viewpoint and of satanic delusion. Now you are born-again. You have come into the light. You have the light of doctrine. You have the light of the Word of God. And you know how you should live. Now walk as children of light.

Here's the simple principle that the Jews were given in the Old Testament. God said, "I'm going to take you into this great and wonderful place. I've prepared a special place for you." Poetically, God spoke of it as: "A land flowing with milk and honey." He said, "All I want you to do now is to learn the doctrines that I've explained to Moses. And I want you to be obedient to My commandments; my ordinances; and, my institutions. And I'm going to bless you with a life like you can't imagine; prosperity like you couldn't imagine; and, good health like you've never seen. You're going to look out here at all these pagan people, and look at their deadly diseases that they're dying with. I'm telling you that none of these diseases are going to be upon you – not a one. All you have to do is one thing. Obey the doctrines that I've explained to Moses as the principles for living. If you do not obey those, then all of these things will come upon you." And you would think that they would all know that.

Now, they had some certain fears, understandably, not the least of which was, when they came into the land of Canaan, and they found that particular segment that were over-sized people. And when these Jews came in, and they looked up, they said, "Yeah, this is a very lush, fertile place. What a place to live in! I mean, this is California and Texas all mixed together. What a nice place to be, and what a prosperous place to be!" But when they saw the inhabitants, they said, "We looked up at these guys, and we felt like grasshoppers, ready for their big foot to come down and stomp. We can't go in there." Caleb and Joshua said, "What are you talking about? God has already told us we have the victory," as He has to us Christians: "Greater is He Who is in us (the Spirit of God) than he that is in the world (the spirit of Satan). So, what are you worried about that you're not going to win?" You're worried that you won't have the battle only. You're going to have the battle." And there are some Christians that keep whining about the fact that the process of serving God is a battle. But the battle is the Lord's. You are the agent. You are on the field of battle. You're going to become the veteran of the conflict. But the victory is in the hands of God. Just get out there with the soldier's equipment that God has provided. Stay in temporal fellowship. Act according to principles of the Word of God. And close with the enemy. Don't flinch for one moment. He is already dead in his tracks.

Well, the sad fact is that these people were transferred out of spiritual darkness into the place of spiritual life, and they had all this great understanding from God, so that the Jews were an enlightened people, but they couldn't rise to it. When they came to Kadeshbarnea, they said, "No." On the base of the ten bad reports (the majority report) they wouldn't go. Joshua and Caleb pled with them: "Go in. Let's go. It's a done deed. God has spoken." But they wouldn't. God was very angry. He expressed Hid anger to Moses. And at first, he was going to do very dire things to them. But then God said, "Here's the decision, Moses. You go tell them that anybody who is now alive in this group, who is 20 years old and older, is never going to go into this land. They are never going to see the milk and honey. They're never going to cross into this wonderful climate, and the provisions and the things that I had in mind to do for them. The only people who are going to go in are those who are 19 years old and down, and Joshua and Caleb. They will go in. You, Moses, won't go in because you disobeyed Me at the rock. When I told you to speak to it the second time, instead, in your anger, you let the people make you so mad that you stepped out of doctrine yourself, and you hit the rock a second time. I gave you the water, but the rock was a symbol of My Son. And the water of life I gave you the first time, He had to be hit once in suffering. That was His death. You fouled up the symbol by hitting Him a second time. He does not get sacrificed twice.

So there was grief for Moses, but the people that night – they went to tears. There was nothing but crying and wailing. The next day they said, "We're going in. We were foolish." They go to Moses and say, "We did the wrong thing. We should have obeyed God. Doctrine is the way to go. And His Word has made it clear. We're going in." But Moses says, "Don't do that. You've passed the point of your blessing." And that's a chilling thing for a Christian to realize – that you can go pressing; you can go your way; and you can go ignoring the leading of the Holy Spirit, and you'll pass the point of your blessing. And you will be up there when the screen is put up, and it says, "Here's the blessing. Here's the mission." And you will say, "Oh my. That's what I could have done." But you have zilch – nothing, because you didn't execute. And you got past the point of blessing.

These people said, "No. No, I don't believe that. We have positive volition. We think positively. We're going in. And they charged in, and it was a slaughter. They were destroyed left and right. So, then those who survived got back, and Moses said, "Okay, let's go. We're going to walk around here 40 years. You were whining not so long ago about the hard times you were having, and that I led you out here so that your children can die. I'll tell you what's going to happen. Your children are going to walk all over this wilderness. We're going to camp out for a huge camp out for 40 years. They're going to be just great. But the people who are going to die are you, who would not obey the light that you have."

Do not be sons of disobedience. Ephesians 5:6 says: "Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things, the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be partakers with them." So, when you run into a Christian who is a carnal Christian, you have a problem as a spiritual person (whatever your relationship is to that person), to realize that they're walking in a low-grade kind of religion, and you are trying to walk in the light of the deep things of God, and to fulfill your mission. You treat them with as much grace as you can, but you realize that they are a potential danger to you.

Had Israel not listened to those 10 men, they would've enjoyed all that God intended for them to enjoy. They did not recognize that those 10 men were in carnality, and out of step with God. How did they know that? Because God had spoken. It's not too hard to take a look at people, and see that what they are fighting against is spiritual enlightenment, because their sin nature objects to something it should not be objecting to. Salvation transfers one from the realm of spiritual darkness to the realm of spiritual light. So, act accordingly.

**Believe Bible Doctrine**

Number seven: the light of Bible doctrine should be believed while it is available. John 12:36: "While you have the light, believe in the light, in order that you may become sons of the light. These things, Jesus spoke, and He departed, and hid Himself from them." What a poignant verse! When you have the light of the gospel and the light of doctrine being explained to you, live in it. Don't turn your back upon it. If you do, and if you move in carnality, you'll begin to revert back to the old lifestyle of the unsaved. And the time will come when this will bounce off of you. You'll sit in church, and you'll hear the most exhilarating expositions of the Word of God and the deep things of God, and it'll blow right past you, because you have gotten a life. And now your focus is not on: "What am I going to do for the Lord Jesus Christ this week?" Rather, it will be: "What am I going to do to live this life that I've gotten? It is not the life of Christ in me – my hope of glory." While you have the light, believe in it, in order that you may become sons of the light. It's not enough to be instructed in the Word of God. You have to believe in it. That means you act upon it. That means you live accordingly.

**Light Reveals Good Works**

Then number eight: those who are positive to God's truth welcome the light of doctrine to reveal their good works. John 3:21 points this out to us: "But he who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifest as having been wrought in God." Those who are walking in the light, and those whose focus is upon pleasing the Lord Jesus Christ, they want to come to someplace that's a place of doctrinal enlightenment. They just gravitate toward that like iron filings do to a magnet. They're drawn to it. Why? Because they're practicing the truth. How do you practice the truth? You learn the doctrinal principles that somebody has taught you (the pastor-teacher), and then you say "Amen" to it, and you live accordingly. So, suddenly, you're walking in the light. And the more you walk in the light, you don't have any hesitancy about your deeds being exposed. You're quite happy for people to know who you are; what you are; what you think; how you're living; and, what you're doing, because you're in the light. You're not any more perfect than any of the rest of those worms, but you are walking in the light. And when you need correction, you make it. This is what has been wrought by God.

**Christians are often not Received by Spiritual Darkness**

Finally, point number nine: those who proclaim the light of grace salvation will often not be received by the unsaved and spiritual darkness. The book of Acts 22:28, "And the commander answered, 'I acquired this citizenship with a large sum of money.' And Paul said, 'But I was actually born a citizen.'" Here, this man is interrupting the apostle Paul, and he is claiming that he has a superior position because he has received it from the government. The apostle Paul says, "I too am a Roman citizen, but I was born into it." If you're not born into the family of God through grace salvation, you're not in the family of God. And those who proclaim the freedom of being born into the citizenship of the family of God and the kingdom of God – they're going to be rejected by the unsaved who walk in spiritual darkness. They think that they have something superior. This poor commander had to buy his Roman citizenship. The apostle Paul says, "Mine is superior, because I was born into it." And what you're born into, you cannot be unborn from again.

So, those who proclaimed the light of grace salvation, they're usually not accepted. They're not received. But nevertheless, they are the ones who are in the right, and who are in the truth.

So, in Colossians 1:12, Paul thanks to the Father Who has qualified these believers to share in an inheritance that He has put aside in heaven for the saints – an inheritance which exists in the light. I hope you have a little better idea of the contrast between the light of God and the darkness of Satan. It is all around us in this world, and it is constantly tempting us, as it did Israel of old, to go with the pagan darkness rather than staying with the enlightenment that they already had from the Word of God. May the light which has shined upon you be the light which guides you this week.

Heavenly Father, we want to thank you for this, Your Word.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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