

Luke 11:33-36; John 1:1-9; Spreading Light in the World I. Visible Light II. Permeating Light III. Protecting the Light

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, light and darkness are a normal part of our daily experience. Especially when you are camping you notice this! You get up when the sun comes up. And when it gets dark, you start campfires and lanterns because the darkness makes it difficult to move. There is a connection between light and sight that we all understand. Without the light you cannot see- your movements are hindered. And the way in which you experience light is through your eyes. But we could also say that your eyes are the way in which you experience the world. Light comes into us by way of our eyes- and our eyes leads us forward into the world. So there is a receiving and leading aspect of sight. Well, today Jesus uses the metaphor of light and sight to teach us spiritual realities. We consider this theme: Jesus Christ displays the light to us and in us.

I. Visible Light

And the first thing we find out about this light that Jesus is displaying- is that this light is visible. No one lights a lamp to be put in a cellar or to hide it under a basket. No- light is to be seen by many. In our house we have a little storage room under the stairs- and there is a single light there. Now if I am having people over to my house at night and I want them to feel welcomed, it would be useless to turn on that single bulb under the stairs and keep the rest of the lights off. That's because no one can see that little light since it is hidden. Rather I will turn on the front lights- and the porch light- for all to see. In the same way, Jesus says that light is to be seen by all. Now what is this lights that Jesus is referring to? Well, one of the themes in Scripture is that God brings light- and with light comes life! Jesus is referred to the light of the world as we read in John 1- the light that brings life- this light is the light of men which enlightens everyone. Or as Malachi 4:2 says, the Son of righteousness will rise with healing in His wings. Light is given as a reference to Jesus and His ministry- and the gospel is now the message of light which speaks of Jesus and His work. So as the message of Jesus goes forth- the Kingdom of Light is established. And as the light advances in this world- a world which was once held under the sway of darkness- the light of liberty and life is made known. Jesus came to be seen- His works to be made known. Particularly after His ascension and in the power of the Holy Spirit-

the apostles and the church of today are called to spread this message of light to all! That is Jesus' desire made known at Pentecost- the very nature of light is that this light is to be visible- seen! So put this message on a stand- a pedestal so that all might enjoy it! But there is more to be said- since we are called to carry that light- we are ambassadors of the light! When once we have seen the light- our eyes and lives will reflect this light! This is the point of Jesus in Mt. 5- let your good deeds shine before men so that they might see them! You see, by our good deeds and words we make know the greatness of Jesus- the true Light! What we look like displays what we delight in. How we are seen makes evident what we have seen! If we have seen the light and enjoy the true vision of God- then we will reflect this in our daily living. Those who do wicked deeds do them at night- there is a reason that the majority of robberies and shooting take place at night- because the wicked deeds of men like to remain hidden. Light exposes our sin! But for those of the light- those in the Kingdom of God- these delight in deeds of righteousness and seek to live holy lives. The fact is- Jesus drives out darkness with the light of His truthful Word! This light calms our fears- exposing ignorance and imparting truth! This is the light that Jesus continues to spread by the church today! He wants the light of the Gospel to be seen- because Light is designed to be visible! As Psalm 18:28 says, for it is You who lights my lamp; the Lord my God lightens my darkness. Jesus freely gives us His light- by grace our blindness is taken away so that we can see! The light of the sun is always shining- but we need the eyes of faith to see Christ rightly!

II. Permeating Light

In v. 34 Jesus goes on to speak about the individual eye and how the state of your eyes affects the entire person. Eyes help us see- they are the instrument for receiving light. Everyday life proves this. If you have good eyes- or you have good eyesight- you can live your life and go your way with relative ease. However, if you have bad eyes or poor eyesight- you know how difficult it is at times. I remember a friend who had Lasik Eye Surgery- where once he needed thick glasses and now he has 20/20 vision- what joy good eyes can be! But Jesus is using the eye as a metaphor for the heart. Your spiritual eye is your heart. Now if your eye is good- meaning clear, healthy and singular- not blurry- then your body will be filled with good things. Having good eyes means that you see Jesus Christ and His light- and it also means that the light of Jesus can be seen

in you- since you reflect what you see! Have you ever seen a close picture of someone's eye- where you catch a reflection of what they are looking at! Like a perfectly calm lake reflecting the surrounding mountain! Well- our eyes reflect what we see- just as our souls reflect what we delight in! Whatever we desire will be made known in the state of our heart- if we desire light we will look like the light! Good eyes act like a lantern- directing our steps and leading where we should go. An old English proverb said- "your eye is a window into your soul." In reality, you follow what you look at! If you look straight ahead and down the road- you will drive straight! If you constantly look over your shoulder, you will drive into a ditch! If you pursue light- if Jesus, His gospel and glory is what you desire- you will find that your eyes and your heart will be attracted to holy things! Your whole body will benefit when you receive and pursue the light! When you take in the light, that light begins to permeate your whole being! When your soul is good- good flows forth from you! However, if your eyes are evil- if your sight is poor, divided and blurry; you will fall into a ditch or get into an accident. As Jesus taught in Mt. 15:19- if your heart is bad your words will be evil. It is not your hands that make you unclean, it is your wicked heart! And if your eyes are evil- if your heart is bad- how deep will that darkness be as Jesus said in v. 34. If you carry a candle into a cave- and proceed to blow that candle out- how dark will it be? What you look at – what dwells in your heart- determines the direction of your life. A broken lamp produces no light! There is a correlation. What you look at takes root in your heart- and the state of your heart determines what you look at and how you look! Both the things you pursue- and how others perceive you- are linked to the stake of your soul! A bad eye- a corrupt soul- results in a life full of spiritual and moral darkness! If your moral compass is broken- if the spiritual thermometer is shattered- if your heart is bankrupt- how can any good come? Without faith it is impossible to please God- without a new heart and good eyes- you can never do anything good! You have seen this on TV before- two witnesses interviewed after a crime. One justifies the action while the other uphold the truth and condemns the violence. What makes the difference is the eye of the beholder! As Isaiah 5 warned- woe to those who call darkness light- who seek to confuse the truth and exchange goodness for evil! Your eye informs your opinion- your soul, your view of life! May Jesus give us good eyes and a pure heart so that we truly love what

is lovely and pursue what is right and true! The Son's light has different affects on people- just as the sun in our sky softens wax but hardens clay. Not all receive the light with joy! The longer you hate the light- the harder it becomes to see!

III. Protecting the Light

Jesus closes this discussion on light with a warning in v. 35- be careful- take heed. The word is Skopeo in the Greek- Literally cast your eyes and direct your attention. Take heed towards yourself- mark and contemplate the state of your heart and the condition of your eyes! What kind of eyes do you want? Do you want good eyes? A spiritual 20/20 vision? Then be singular in your devotion to the light! Turn your eyes towards Jesus! Or as Prov. 4:23 says, the heart is the wellspring of life, so keep your heart with all vigilance! Guard your heart, for your life flows from it! To say this another way, if you want a pure and holy soul which is the desire of all Christians- be careful what you set before you! Be careful what you take in through your eyes- and be careful what you reflect to others by way of your eyes! Set your heart on things above- seeking light and light with all diligence! Have no part in darkness or the ways of death and deceit! Keep your eyes pure and your heart unstained! This past Sunday we considered Lust in our Men's Book study. Don't you know that what you look at is taken into your heart? Who here has not desired to wash their eyes because of what they have seen? You can't "unsee" something! Praise God for the forgiveness of sins and the washing in Christ's blood! But for those who have received a new heart- and good eyes from Christ- let us heed the warning of Christ! Be careful what you set before your eyes! Watch over what you feed into your heart! For if you pursue holiness by the strength of the Spirit- if you guard your eyes, heart and soul- you can be wholly bright!

To conclude, Jesus has given His light- shed His brightness into this world! We have received His light- now we are called to reflect it! What we take in determines what we give out! Guard the light and protect the purity of your eyes! As Eph. 1:8 concludes, I ask that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened- to know the home to which you have been called! Praise God for the light of truth seen in Jesus- and may we all spread His glorious light abroad!