

## Keep That Light On!

The other day I was in the church building and it was dark. One of the lights is out in the hallway and it was really, really, really dark. I could see this little orange light beside the water fountain. At the point I thought I was close enough I turned so as to reach for the light switch. However, I had not taken enough steps and hit a door frame. Besides feeling really dumb, I bent my glasses and hit my head. At that point I thought of what the Bible says about "light."

The Psalmist says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119.105). Light illuminates and makes it possible for us to see where we are going. Believe me when I say we need to see where we are headed. God's word defines sin and goodness. It tells us how to and how not to live. It teaches us how to worship God in a way that pleases Him. The best marriage guidance book in the world is the Bible. Roles of the husband and wife are defined for us and tell us how to love one another. Child rearing is addressed in the Bible. When we turn off the light we tend to stumble around in the dark, fall over things, and get hurt. Later on the Psalmist says, "The unfolding of Your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple" (Psalm 119.130). We can either use the Bible to help us avoid the pitfalls of life and walk in the paths of righteousness or we can close our Bibles and hurt ourselves.

Jesus said, "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3.19). In the Bible, darkness is often connected with sin and light with righteousness. Jesus came to show us the will of the Father. He was the light of the world (John 9.5). Why did the Jews reject Jesus? It was because they choose sin over righteousness. Today we have the Bible and we can either use it or toss it away. There is an old saying, "The Bible will either keep you away from sin, or sin will keep you away from the Bible." Such is true. A lot of critics of the Bible are trying to justify themselves and sin. A lot of supposed atheists argue against God because they do not want to be judged for their lifestyle.

Jesus also said, "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden...Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5.14,16). There is an old song, "We Are the World's Bible" which contains the following words:

We are the only Bible the careless world will read,  
We are the sinners' gospel; we are the scoffer's creed;  
We are the Lord's last message given in deed and word,  
What if the type is crooked? What if the print is blurred?

There is a great responsibility with being the "world's Bible." In some ways we may be the light to illuminate someone's pathway to God. We may be the example which may inspire someone to start reading their Bible and going to worship services. Our manner of dress or language or friendliness may be what someone will notice and start to examine their life. We need to make sure the print is not blurred or crooked. We are not to try and hide our convictions or beliefs. There is a real danger in trying to be part-time Christians. As I said last week, a light bulb generally does not blow while it is on but it blows when it is turned on or off. Such is true of a Christian. Those who keep the light on and shine day after day are steadfast and faithful. It is when we start to dim our light and become part-time Christians that we become unfaithful.

Those who walk in the light have fellowship with each other and God. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1.7). In verse five, John tells us God is light and there is no darkness in Him. If I am in the Son and you are in the Son then we are in the same Son. We are both in fellowship with God; therefore our fellowship is dependent on being right with God. Man often stresses the idea of getting along with each other but that is really simple. If we do what God says then we will both be right with God and each other. It is when we leave God out of this picture and stress our horizontal fellowship (man to man) that we get into trouble. If we stress our vertical fellowship (God to man) then the horizontal will take care of itself. The key is to be living according to God's word.

-- Dennis Tucker