



As we celebrate Christmas together as a church family we will be thinking about how the idea of LIGHT is woven throughout the story of Jesus coming to this world. God said...

LET THERE BE

Light

This foundational truth of light's existence is rooted in the essence of who God is. The Bible teaches that...

GOD IS Light

At His core God is light.

1 John 1:5-7

⁵This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

Throughout the Bible God is described as pure light. He exists without even a hint of darkness. I believe that is both literal and figurative. In other words, I believe that God literally is LIGHT!

Paul describes to his student Timothy the brilliance of God's appearance...

1 Timothy 6:15b-16

God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶who alone is immortal and who lives in **unapproachable light**, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

Unapproachable Light. The greek word for unapproachable carries with it the idea of *inaccessible*; or *which no man can approach*.

Remember this story from the Old Testament book of Exodus?

Moses goes up on Mount Sinai to receive the 10 Commandments and the Law, and after being close to the essence of God his face is glowing...

Exodus 34:29-30

²⁹When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the Lord. ³⁰When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him.

God is LIGHT. He is an unapproachable, inaccessible LIGHT. In him there is no darkness at all. Both literally and figuratively.

The issue is now clear. It is between light and darkness and everyone must choose his side.

- G.K. Chesterton

Our God is good. That goodness is seen in His very appearance.

Psalm 104:1-2

¹Praise the Lord, my soul. Lord my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendor and majesty.

²The Lord wraps himself in light as with a garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent

GOD CREATED Light

Before the world existed, there was only darkness. God reached down and created light.

Genesis 1:1-5

¹In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

³And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

⁴God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

(vs. 2) *"the earth was formless and empty"* literally means **astonishingly empty**.

So the world was empty? No, astonishingly empty.

(vs. 3) *"God said... LET THERE BE LIGHT."*

God spoke the words, "LET THERE BE LIGHT" and "there was light."

God, who is LIGHT, spoke light into existence.

God speaks and things happen. God says, "Let there be light." **And it happens.**

Think about this...

Everything that exists originates from God. Genesis employs a special Hebrew verb for the act of creation (*bārā'*) the subject of which is always God. No other subject is employed or implied.

Man, too, "creates" (poetry, music, literature, architectural wonders, for example) but not in this sense.

One of the ways we were made in God's image is that we have the ability to create, but only from what already exists. But to create "out of nothing" is an attribute of God alone.

"To create" is exclusively an act of God, and by employing it in the first and last verse of the creation story (1:1 and 2:4), the writer is employing something that looks like "bookends" that encase the central idea that

God is at work. Easy as this is to write (and read!), try to imagine the power it takes to bring into existence the entire cosmos!

All of the work that God did during creation was done, “ex nihilo” which means “out of nothing.” God is so powerful that he speaks and where there was nothing, there is now something.

(vs. 4) says “He saw that the light was good.” Then he separated the light from the darkness. In other words he set the days in motion.

God created the order of light and darkness. (vs. 5) God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.”

The physical light of the sun and reflected in the moon God put there. He set the days in motion. He gives this world order.

God spoke light into this world and brought order. The light dispels darkness and chaos.

GOD SENDS THE

Light

Not only did God speak light into existence, but he sent a part of himself into this world to be the LIGHT.

⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

The apostle John uses the idea of light and darkness to describe Jesus coming to this world. God sends the LIGHT, Jesus, into this dark world. But the darkness cannot overcome this light.

Though the light shines on things
unclean, yet it is not thereby defiled.

- *Augustine*

Just like turning on a light in a dark room dispels the darkness, Jesus coming into this world dispelled this dark place.

Christ shines in a dark world, but the darkness does not diminish His light.

John 1:6-9

⁶There was a man sent from God whose name was John.

⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

⁹The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.

John the Baptist came into this world in order to introduce the light to everyone. John 1 says "He came as a witness to testify concerning the light."

There had been many "false lights" that had claimed to be the messiah in this world, but John says (vs. 9) "the true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world."

Jesus is the true light. The Messiah come to this world. And we can decide whether we want to live in His light or not.

1 John 1:5-6

⁵This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶**If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth.**

That's the overview of Christmas. Jesus came to bring light into this dark world. He is the force of good. The darkness cannot diminish His light.

1 John 1:7

⁷But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

This December when we see the lights around town. Let's think of Jesus. And let's commit to walk in his LIGHT.

Small Group Questions.

1. What are some of your favorite holiday memories and/ or traditions?
2. When it comes to holiday shopping, do you enjoy it, does it stress you out. Why do you react this way?
3. Read 1 john 1:5 - what does this tell us about God? What does this passage mean?
4. Discuss the attributes of light and darkness. What feelings are brought about by each?
5. When the power goes out in a small town, it can cause chaos. When we bring darkness into our personal lives, what can happen?
6. Read 1 john 1:7 - If we claim to love Jesus, our lives have to shine a light. You cannot claim to love Jesus and walk in darkness. How do we overcome darkness and live in the light?
7. The Bible tells us that God created everything, even you and I. Since we are created in His image, what does that tell you about who you are?
8. As you close your group, encourage one another to be Light, maybe discuss how you can literally be light this Christmas season. Pray that each person will be reminded that Jesus is the light.