

DARKNESS AND LIGHT

Many aspects of life in modern America are unique to our own culture and time. July 4th, for example, means something to us that it doesn't mean to people in other countries of the world.. References to Yankees and Confederates, Democrats and Republicans, Archie Bunker, or even 9/11 are not universally understood. So since the Bible is for all people in every age it uses words that are global and timeless to communicate the truth of God.

Take, for example, the Bible references to "darkness" and "light". These are not limited to any special country, culture, or period of time. They are universally understood. No person is too poor, or uneducated to not be familiar with darkness and light. No one was born too far back in history, or in an area too remote from civilization to escape the impact of these basic realities.

Take for example, the inspired words of the Apostle John. He used darkness and light to distinguish those who followed Jesus from those who didn't. Please consider: **"In him (Jesus) was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it." (John 1:4-5) "This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed (John 3: 19 - 20). "Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light" (John 12:35-36).**

How simple! How profound Just think about it. There is something about "darkness" and "light" that transcends the need for technical explanations. Even children can experience the dangers of darkness and the emotions that overwhelm us when the lights go out.. Even the most agile person will stumble in the dark. Even the most gifted athlete cannot catch a ball in total darkness. It is easy to understand why the Bible uses the term "darkness" to describe life without Christ.

In similar fashion, those who are not blind, have also experienced the glory of a sunrise and ease with which "light" enables us to function. Blind people can perform much useful work, but it is consistently more difficult for them to do so. They are "handicapped". Again the analogy is clear. Christians walk in the "light". The glory of Christ enables us to avoid dangers and empowers us to accomplish things that we could never do without Him. We are children of the light and of the day, not children of the darkness and the night.

Pause for a moment and consider how many things you will use today that become useless without light. Here is a brief list: the clock by your bed, the mirror in your bathroom, the Bible you read for your morning devotions, the newspaper you peruse at breakfast, the car you drive to work, the tools you use to make a living, etc. In total darkness all of these have hardly any value at all. In fact, many things useful in the daylight, but come stumbling blocks at night. If you are a carpenter, how would you like to use a table saw in total darkness? If you are a truck driver, how would you drive with no way to see the highway or oncoming traffic?

"This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But 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." (I Jn 1:5-7) "Yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining. Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness. Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him." (I Jn 2:8-11)