

WEEKLY DEVOTION – Tuesday, October 8, 2024
Pastor Bruce Kischnick, Grace Lutheran Church, New Albany, IN

“Blinded by the Light”

READING: John 3:19-21 – 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. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.

I have already told you about a number of mishaps that occurred to us on our summer fishing trip to Canada. But there's more! The first afternoon on the lake, we fished until the sun was hanging low in the west. We finally decided it was time to head on in. Problem was, the sun was so bright that it blinded us and obscured some of our landmarks. We thought we knew where we were headed, and as we came around an island, we saw the camp ahead of us. I was running the motor so I headed at high speed toward camp. But as we entered a broad bay I began to have my doubts. I studied the camp and the surrounding landscape, and suddenly I stopped the motor and said to my partner Dennis, "That's not our camp!"

Now what? Both of us had last been on this lake 6 years earlier. We were disoriented and unsure just where we were. We talked it over and headed back out of the bay and around a point. At that we could see the camp ahead of us. Cheered by the sight, I made for it at high speed. But as we got closer I suddenly stopped the boat again and said, "That's not our camp either!" To our right we spied an island, and just offshore were two men in a boat. We raced in their direction, now completely disoriented. When we got within hailing distance, I shouted, "Where is Expeditions North Camp from here?" They looked at us bemused, then one of them pointed off to our right at an angle. We followed that course directly into the sun. We could see nothing in its glare until finally the forest blocked its rays and there was our camp. We couldn't see it until we were within a hundred yards of it, and mighty glad were we when we did.

Jesus was and is the "Light of the World". In our reading for today he talks about the sad truth that many human beings did not welcome his light when it came into the world. They were creatures of the dark, happy to choose their own way and to live lives in defiance of God's word and ways. Like any denizens of the dark, when the light shown on them, it blinded them. It challenged their way of life and exposed their sin for what it was. Jesus' purity, goodness, and Godly wisdom were a direct affront to their "earthly wisdom" and turned their hearts against him. They could think of no solution other than to destroy the Light so they could remain in their darkness.

Things are really no different today. Human beings continue to convince themselves that they have no need of God's word nor the illumination that word can give to their lives. They prefer to go their own way, in the darkness, because it suits them. God and his word are too bright for them. The Light threatens their notions of right and wrong. It contradicts their claims to the "right" to abortions on demand, multi-gender sexuality, the misuse of drugs, the redefinition of marriage, and the like. The Light blinds them with its purity and causes them to push ever deeper into the darkness.

You and I thank God for his light. We know we needed Jesus to free us from the hold of the darkness. No one else could, least of all our own sinful selves. His words and his actions "brought us out of darkness into his marvelous light." Now we can see what is good, what is right, what is needed, and what is Godly. His Law and his Gospel show us the darkness within, lead us to repentance, and bring us the good news of his forgiveness. The Light of Christ makes that possible. Hurrah for the Light!

Dennis and I felt very sheepish about being lost and disoriented out on the lake. We thought we were better navigators than that. It actually embarrassed us. But then we found out that my brother Alan and his partner were also lost and went in the wrong direction twice. In addition, Freddy, the "Master Fisherman" among us had also been headed in the wrong direction when Alan and Nate came across him. We had all been blinded by the light. We had all gone astray. We all needed to be directed in the right direction. God sent his Son Jesus Christ into the world so the darkness could be pushed back and overcome. That light is too bright for many, but to us who believe it is the "Light of Life". Amen.

PRAYER:

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- 1) **MARY MILLER CRUISE** through the Locks is set for October 19. Interest was such that the bus filled immediately. We are also taking the van. The cost of the cruise is \$38 per person. If you are signed up, please send or bring a check made out to "Grace Lutheran Church" to the office or in an envelope in the offering plate.
- 2) The Jackson County Lutheran Federation has again taken the initiative to place Christian Christmas videos for children on our Louisville TV stations. This coming Sunday we will accept a Door Offering to support this effort. If you want to be part of that, you can send a donation marked "Christmas TV" and checks should be written out to "Grace Lutheran Church". We'll send all the proceeds on to our partners in Jackson County.