

A LIGHT IN THE DARK

By

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A gross inconsistency becomes evident at this time every year. Every city, shopping mall, retail store, and almost every house are illuminated with dazzling, throbbing, and flashing lights. Throngs brave the wind and weather to attend the annual “Festival of Lights” at Texas Tech University, when thousands of lights are turned on to the strains of Christmas carols, presumably to honor Christ who claimed to be, and is indeed, the “light of the world.”¹

But here is the contradiction: While outside the electric lights gleam brilliantly, on the inside the darkness of humanistic atheism permeates the educational process. In fact, it has become quite evident that not only the educational system, but the media, the arts, the judicial system, and the public at large are willing to be guided by anything in the world except the light of truth which is found in Christ.

The apostle Paul, in his brief survey of mankind’s deterioration, writes that “because that, knowing God, they glorified Him not as God; neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasoning and their *senseless heart was darkened*.”²

The words of F. Godet of 100 years ago are well worth consideration: “Now man could not remain stationary. Not walking forwards in the way of *active religion*, he could only stray into a false path, having neglected to set God before it as the supreme object of its activity, and understanding was reduced to work *in vacuo*, it was in some sort made futile; it peopled the universe with fictions and chimeras...The *heart* is, in the New Testament, as in the Old, the central seat of personal life, that inner power which determines at once the activity of the understanding and the direction of the will. Destitute of its true object, through its refusal to be thankful to God as God, the heart of man is filled with inspirations of *darkness*; there are the guilty lusts inspired by the egoistic love of the creature and self.”³

This vanity of reasoning and darkness of the heart is the only explanation for the vile immorality that permeates society on all levels, from the highest and most honored offices to the back streets of the poorest slums. But it also helps to explain the bitter hatred of Christ that is seen in the media and in higher education. In the same chapter which Godet discusses, Paul goes on to explain that men, in their vain reasoning and darkened hearts, become “haters of God.”⁴ To the Colossians he concisely declares that “men by their wicked works have become the enemies of God.”⁵ As Godet writes, “Hating God is the highest manifestation of pride, which cannot brook the thought of this superior and judge.”⁶

God-fearing people are overwhelmed daily at the atrocities being committed throughout this supposedly civilized nation. We often hear them say, “I don’t believe a sane person could be so evil,” and the courts are ready to acquit the worst criminal on his claim of insanity. What is even more amazing and unbelievable to many is the deep-seated hatred of Christ that is repeatedly expressed by people on television and in the press.

One wonders why should anyone hate Jesus? Though Christians have faults, Jesus had one. Christians make terrible mistakes, but Jesus performed perfectly and was completely “without sin.” Why, then, in a nation founded upon faith in Jesus as the Son of God, as both Lord and Savior, is there such a hatred for His teaching and commandments?

It is generally thought that all people would like to end up in heaven in the delightful presence of God. But not so. The children of darkness despise the holiness and purity of God. In the words of the Psalmist, they rage against Jehovah and His anointed, saying, “let us break their bonds asunder and cast their cords from us.”⁷ Such rage recently made the headlines when men like Pat Buchanan and Dan Quayle sought to bring into focus Christian issues of morality. It is openly expressed wherever the effort is made to stem the tide of teenage pregnancy by teaching them the rules God has given. They rise up in unison to denounce the Christian ethic and brand its proponents as ignorant bigots. The people who uphold righteousness are labeled as the evil ones.

The homosexual community, which practices the sin God describes as abominable, unites and not only campaigns for special rights, but openly recruits young people to become as vile as they are supported by educators and government officials. Prostitutes have now been baptized in this cesspool of evil by forming several organizations seeking to sanctify prostitution and have it accepted as an ordinary type of work. Some of these are PUMA (Prostitute Union of Massachusetts Assoc.), ASP (Associated Seattle Prostitutes), HIRE (Hooking is Real Employment), and COYOTE (Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics).

Such rebels are already under judgment, as Jesus explained: “And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil. For everyone that does evil hates the light, and comes not to the light, lest his works should be reprov’d.”⁸ **Truth is ever unwelcome to evil, and in the children of darkness there is an intense hatred of truth and good.**

It should not surprise us that those who walk in darkness should develop both a hatred of God and a hatred of all that is good. Jesus warned, “If therefore the evil that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness.”⁹

The broad scope of evil is seen when you consider that, in addition to those who engage in sexual perversion, there are vast numbers of people who defend them, such as the media, the politicians, the educators, and some 43% of the voters who chose the President, a man who promised to support them.

Even more saddening are the many church leaders who have joined the dark forces and, rather than trying to stamp out the evil, are trying to justify it and extinguish the light of Christ’s truth. I am reminded of what Jesus said to the religious officials when they arrested Him: “This is your hour, and the power of darkness.”¹⁰

As Carl Henry wrote, “There is a new barbarism. This barbarism has embraced a new mentality...not simply rejecting the legacy of the West, but embracing a new pagan mentality where there is *no fixed truth*.”¹¹ (Emphasis added.) When one awakens and comes to the light, he may be shocked to find that he is living, indeed, in the midst of such barbarians. It is only when one is enlightened by the *fixed truth* of Christ that he can see the depth of evil behind the veneer of respectability and affluence of those with whom he once found companionship.

Jesus warned that men would avoid the penetrating light of truth which He revealed and that only those who “do the truth” would come to the light.¹² When one is first confronted with the stark truth which Christ reveals, he is like one awakening from sleep to the blazing light on the sun. he would shut his eyes against its painful rays. Yet, it is just this burning light of truth that is essential to bring about the intended change in our lives, and to the extent that we avoid the light, we also avoid developing the godly character which God desire in His children.

The last plague sent by Jehovah upon the Egyptians before the night of death was darkness. Their hearts were darkened until they could not perceive the power of God nor believe the message of Moses. “And there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days; they saw not one another, neither rose any one from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.”¹³ When they still refused to obey Jehovah, the final plague was upon them, the death of all the first-born, followed by thee destruction of all the armed men.

The light of Christ is the way of life — eternal life in the day of resurrection — but the darkened mind is destined for death, the final death at judgment.

The truth about man’s sinful condition and the ultimate judgment of death is absolute agony to the darkened minds of this generation. It is unbearable unless one is willing to subject himself to the operation of that light, to have his sins manifest, to thrust himself completely into the unquenchable flame of God’s truth and light of His love, and be cleansed of all sin through faith in Jesus and obedience to the gospel.

It is in the face of just such darkness that the apostle Paul writes that we are to “become blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.”¹⁴

“Arise, shine; for thy light is come.”¹⁵

REFERENCES

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6. *Therefore Stand*, pg. 545
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8. John 3:19, 20
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11. *Twilight of a Great Civilization*, Carl Henry, Quoted from *Vanguard*, Vol. I, No. 2
12. John 3:21
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14. Philippians 2:14–16
15. Isaiah 60:1

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