

Remnant Life Church
February 24, 2019
Treasures Found in Darkness
Daniel 1:1-5

In just a few short weeks (Sunday morning; March 10, 1:00 a.m.) we will turn our clocks ahead to Daylight Savings Time

The days get longer meaning there will be a steady increase of the hours of daylight than darkness until June 21 (summer solstice) when there are the most hours of daylight in a single day of the year in the northern hemisphere

On June 21 this year, there will be 16 hours 33 minutes of daylight and 7 hours 27 minutes of darkness.

Of course, the Bible uses light and darkness more than any other description for good and evil

- In the NT – dark(ness) 58 times, but light 89 times
- Light means life – Life in Jesus
 - When Jesus described Himself it was that word He used:
 - **John 8:12** - *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*
 - It is the word used for our purpose to the world
 - **Matt 5:14-16** - *"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."*
 - It describes what should be our very countenance
 - **Luke 11:34-36** - *Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are healthy, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are unhealthy, your body also is full of darkness. See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness. Therefore, if your whole body is full of light, and no part of it dark, it will be just as full of light as when a lamp shines its light on you."*
 - The simplest identification of Jesus
 - **John 9:5** - *While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."*
- So then darkness should be avoided, run from, and despised in every way because there can never be anything good in the darkness – right?!
- Well...maybe we should not be quite so hasty to dismiss what may be discovered

READ – Daniel 1:1-5

Charles SPURGEON, the great Baptist preacher and theologian of the mid to late 1800s was listening to a friend read, and in the course of reading the Gospel of John he came to the 17th verse of the 6th chapter: "but it was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them." "Wait!" said Spurgeon "That is ugly! Dark! And Jesus had not come to them," and he lapsed into a reflective silence.

- Every person, every Christian should desire light over darkness
- Physically, emotionally, spiritually, relationally...
- I want to share 7 treasures available to us when we find ourselves in a time of darkness

Make no mistake, these seven are not always easy to find because it is hard to see in the dark (both physically and spiritually)

1. You need not be surprised, when seeking the light, when you encounter the dark.
 - a. Job declared - *Yet when I hoped for good, evil came; when I looked for light, then came darkness. (Job 30:26)*
 - b. Virtually every moment in the light is preceded by darkness
 - i. Noah spent over a year on the ark
 - ii. Abraham stood poised with a knife over his son's chest
 - iii. Moses was wanted for murder and fled the opulence of Egyptian royalty to live in the desert
 - iv. Jonah was in the belly of the whale
 - v. Jesus hung on the cross
 - c. Darkness is present in this world but it is a place we will pass through
2. When we are in the dark and there is no light, we have the opportunity to trust and rely exclusively on the Lord
 - a. Jonah had few options when he was sitting in the belly of the great fish
 - b. When David was on the run from King Saul
 - i. He did not rally his men to fight and defend him
 - ii. He cried out to God for comfort and protection
 - c. It is most often at the very end of ourselves that God allows the light to come
3. In the darkness the Lord's mercy and grace is not only revealed but recognized and seen
 - a. *Even in darkness light dawns for the upright, for those who are gracious and compassionate and righteous. (Psa 112:4)*
 - b. **READ – Acts 12:6-10**
 - i. James, the brother of John, has been executed by Herod
 - ii. He has now imprisoned Peter with most likely a similar fate waiting
 - iii. The angel did not just come to comfort Peter
 - iv. He came to physically change his circumstances
4. There are "treasures of darkness" to be found, so don't always be in such a great hurry to get out of it
 - a. *I will give you hidden treasures, riches stored in secret places, so that you may know that I am the LORD, the God of Israel, who summons you by name (Isa 45:3)*
 - b. There are times when you will find these treasures ONLY in the time of darkness

- c. Elijah was hiding in a cave from Jezebel struggling with his feelings of loneliness and isolation, battling depression
 - i. He had to be at that place to know God not only spoke in fire from heaven but in a whisper
 - ii. He had to be in that place to hear God's voice
 - 1. To shut everything else out – even the victory
5. There is never a time of darkness we must endure that can stand in comparison to what Jesus went through for each us on the Cross
- a. *At noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. (Mark 15:33)*
 - b. No matter how dark the situation you are dealing with is, there are always others who are struggling more
 - c. An anonymous saying thought to have its roots in Persian philosophy
 - i. "I was sad because I had no shoes, till I met a man who had no feet"
 - ii. This was said to be the creed of Helen Keller
 - iii. It kept her from despairing into self-pity
 - iv. *Jonah 2:9 - But I, with shouts of grateful praise, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. I will say, 'Salvation comes from the LORD.'"*
 - v. You can, and SHOULD, give praise to God for His blessings even in the darkness
6. If we seek Christ in the dark, we will find Him
- a. In **John 20** we read that Mary Magdalene came to the tomb while "it was still dark,"
 - i. Her faith and desire to seek Jesus brought the first revelation to the disciples that the grave had not held Jesus
 - b. Our tendency in times of darkness is to stop moving and wait the time out
 - c. Many times our movement is what will hasten the end of the darkness but...
 - i. Seeking God's direction
 - ii. Obedient to the council of the Holy Spirit through various means
 - 1. *Prov 13:10 - Where there is strife, there is pride, but wisdom is found in those who take advice.*
 - 2. *Prov 15:22 - Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.*
 - iii. Isolation falls directly into the enemy's plans to keep you in the darkness for as long as he can
7. You have the assurance that Jesus will not leave you in the dark
- a. **READ - John 6:16-21**
 - b. The disciples had two options when the storm came up
 - i. Either take shelter as best they could in the boat and ride it out
 - ii. Or keep on rowing
 - iii. They did not see Jesus until they had been rowing over 3 miles in the storm

- c. The time in the darkness may seem like forever but God will not leave you there
- d. Jesus knew exactly where the disciples were in the storm

- There is power in the darkness
 - The power of the enemy
 - Uncertainty, anxiety, fear
 - But greater still - the power of God!
 - **Philippians 4:4-7** - *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

No one willingly seeks darkness over light -

- The circumstances may be very difficult -
- But if you will look, there are treasures to found even in those dark moments of your life
- And when you seek them, you take your eyes off of yourself and set them on the things of God
- There are treasures to be found in your times of darkness – seek them out and know the blessing of God even in those difficult times.