

Sermon Notes

Advent Meditations: Light & Lights

Luke 2:9

December 6, 2015

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Advent Meditations: Things & Themes

We are surrounded by a number of events, or practices, or “things & themes” during this time of year, and many of them are fun and enjoyable, some of them are traditions, and many are surrounded by a general merriment. Last week we looked at *gifts* and today we will take a look at *light and lights*. The goal is to think biblically about these things and themes.

Varying reactions...

Getting it, Getting into it...

Bothered & borrowed...

Light and lights may be joyful and festive, and the darkness is commonly fearful. The Lord’s presence is considered to be likened unto light; there is a brilliance, a glory. The Lord’s presence may also be fearful and destructive: “No man can see My face and live” (Ex. 33:20). The Lord’s presence—even through angels—is fearful, demanding, and nothing to trifle with. If the Lord is favorable to us—lifting up the light of His countenance upon us (Psalm 4:6; 44:3; 89:15)—there is welcome and delight. If not there will be terror.

“In the end that Face which is the delight or the terror of the universe must be turned upon each of us either with one expression of with the other, either conferring glory inexpressible or inflicting shame that can never be cured or disguised” (C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*).

PRESENCE: Light & the Lord

His Presence

Light is presented as the Lord’s garments (Psalm 104:2), and His dwelling “place” (1 Timothy 6:16); He is referred to as “the Father of lights” (James 1:17), and it is bluntly said that “God is light” (1 John 1:5). The Holy City of the New Heavens and the New Earth will have no need of the sun, “for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light” (Rev. 21:23).

The Lord’s Activity

The Lord’s activity is “light work.” Light was created and is mentioned 13 times in the first nineteen verses of Genesis 1. The Lord provided light and removed light during the Egyptian plagues (Ex. 10:23).

It is no wonder that He is referred to as a “consuming fire” (Deut. 4:24; Heb. 10:29).

The Tabernacle, and later the Temple were to be constantly and regularly lit (Ex. 25:6, 37; 27:20; 30:8; 35:8, 14, 28; 39:37; 40:4; Lev. 24:2; Nb. 8:2).

The Lord’s favorable presence

This is considered a lifting up the light of the Lord’s face/countenance (Psalm 4:6; 44:3; 89:15).

It is no wonder then that when Saul/Paul was intercepted by the Lord, each description refers to blinding light, even brighter than the sun (Acts 9:3; 22:6; 26:13). Peter’s release from prison occurred in the presence of an angel as well as a light shining (Acts 12:7).

GUIDANCE

The Lord’s presence is a guiding presence. This was known from the pillar of fire and cloud, both forms of light to provide guidance (Ex. 13:21; 14:20; Neh. 9:12; Psalm 78:14).

[see also Job 29:3; Psalm 18:28; 36:9; 119:105; Proverbs 6:23; 1 John 1:5-7]

JUDGMENT

We really cannot separate the Lord’s presence from His guidance, or from His judgments/determinations. We recognize a distinction, not a division. This was present from the first mention of light in the Bible. When the Lord God created light, He named it, He defined it, and He passed judgment. The light was called “day” and the darkness was called “night.”

The Lord’s presence—His light—is an exposing presence (Mark 4:22; Luke 8:16; 12:3; 1 Cor. 4:5; Psalm 90:8; 139:12).

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

Those who dwelled in darkness, upon them a light has shined, and this is the true Light, Jesus (John 1:9). He is “God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God (Nicene Creed), and is *the* Light of the world. At His birth, old men sung of His coming and the light which also arrived, and our text does not hesitate to speak of the glory-light which surrounded the angel, the shepherds, and the announcement.

He is the very **presence** of God (Emmanuel: God with us), the precise **guidance** of God, for He is the Word made flesh, and He is the Judge and ultimate **judgment**, for He is One who has “reconciled all things to Himself...whether things on earth or in heaven having made peace through the blood of His cross” (Col. 1:20).