

Light into the Darkness

John 1:1-9

Introduction

2022 is the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's translation of the New Testament into German. He did this so his people who hadn't studied Greek, Hebrew, or Latin could read and understand God's Word for themselves. Every culture must have the Word of God in its own language, so everyone can have the Light that shines into the darkness. With that in mind, we want to take a closer look at **John 1:1-9**.

Jesus Identified (v. 1-4)

Matthew begins his Gospel with the genealogy of Jesus. Mark begins with the Baptism of Jesus. Luke begins with a brief introduction of his Gospel and the foretelling of John the Baptist's birth. But John begins his Gospel with an identification of Jesus and overview of what He does.

Logos (v. 1)

The word John uses to identify Jesus is *Logos* (v. 1), which our Bibles translates "Word." Logos also carries with it the meaning of "reason" and "Divine Expression." When we speak of the Word of God, we can be referring to the spoken Word, the Living Word—Jesus, or the written Word—the Bible. Here, John is referring to the Living Word.

The 2nd Person of the Trinity (v. 1-2)

He says, *the Word was with God, and the Word was God* (v. 1). He was *in the beginning with God* (v.1-2). He affirms there is one God, but Jesus, a separate Person, is still God. That He is with God from the beginning shows He is co-eternal with the Father. Or, as we say in the Nicene Creed, "begotten of His Father before all worlds." "With" also means "facing" or "toward." So, He is co-equal with the Father.

Creator (v. 3)

All things were made through Him (v. 3). He is the Divine Expression. In **Genesis 1**, where we read, *And God said ...*, the Father was speaking through the Son to create everything.

Life and Light (v. 4)

In Him was life (v. 4) means He is the source of life. He gives life to all living things. *And the life was the light of men* (v. 4). When He gives life to people, He gives them light. This is not the sunlight He gives all creatures. This is the light of reason. Because of original sin, our reason is corrupt, along with every other aspect of our lives. Jesus Christ, the Logos, or "Reason" illuminates our fallen reason to bring it in line with His. We're not perfect but we can yield our reason to His.

What Jesus Does (v. 5)

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it (v. 5). That's the way it is in nature, too. Darkness cannot overcome light. The darker the night, the brighter the light shines. But

this is not the darkness of space, or the darkness of night. This is the darkness of the soul, caused by sin. It's night in our hearts until Jesus shines His light into us and gives us life.

Witness to the Light (v. 6-8)

John the Baptist was *a witness, to bear witness about the light* (v. 6). He wasn't the only witness. Adam and the patriarchs were witnesses, as they passed on the story of the Seed who would come to crush Satan's head. The prophets were witnesses, as they refined the story and gave details about the coming Messiah. John was the last of the Old Testament prophets. The apostles were witnesses, as they wrote and told others about this Jesus they knew. We are witnesses to the Light that shines within each of us.

Light to Everyone (v. 9)

The true light, which gives light to everyone (v. 9). How can He give light to everyone? We know only a few people receive the light and walk in the light. This is because when light shines in the darkness, it hurts. It reveals things we'd rather leave hidden. So, many rebel against the Light. But there are many counterfeit lights out there, people with clever words, proclaiming ways of life that supposedly give light and enlighten. John is saying that Jesus is the only Light. Everyone who receives light must get it from Him.

Our Darkened World

People think of the fall as something that happened in the past. But it is continuing today. This world we live in is going downhill, getting worse all the time. The darkness is thick. This country is in bad shape. And it will not be saved by money, the military, education, science, medicine, or politics. The only hope is the Light of the world, Jesus Christ. And it's up to us to continue to bear witness to that Light, to spread the Word of God to those around us. Someone said the other day, "Yes, but it's getting to the point where we won't be allowed to say anything about Jesus." (Read **Acts 5:28-32**). There are times we don't have to obey the government, in fact, we are called to disobey. That is when the government orders us to do something against God's Word. Christ has given us the Great Commission, to spread His Word into all the world. Not just when we have governmental support, but especially when it's an uphill battle.

How the Light Shines: Means of Grace

He has given us His written Word to be able to spread the light of Christ. When the Word is applied to water, we have the saving waters of Holy Baptism. When it is applied to the bread and wine, we have Holy Communion, where we receive the body and blood of Christ. As He shines His light into us through Word and Sacrament, let us shine His light into our community and world by proclaiming the Word to everyone.

*And the peace of God,
Which surpasses all understanding,
Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
