

Preparing for Lent: Light in the Darkness

Sunday message from February 19th, 2023
~ Notes & Reflections ~

- **Sometimes tragedy hits our lives like a dark cloud. It hangs over us and rains and rains.**
- **Darkness was not how it was meant to be.**
 - ❖ Read [John 1.1-4](#) and [Genesis 1](#). What parallels do you observe?
 - ❖ Les referred to these passages as “creation” and “new creation”. How do you see this?
 - ❖ The “new creation” passage climaxes in [John 1.29](#) when Jesus is revealed as the One who will take care of sin. How does this verse connect with the earlier passage? What significance does it have?
- **We live in the in-between time of “already” and “not yet”.**
 - ❖ How do you see this tension of Jesus’ past current and future victory over sin?
 - ❖ How does this tension impact your daily life? How do you navigate the tension?
- **There are times when we must reap the consequences of our sin, but that is not the whole story.**
 - ❖ Even when we do all the “right” things, that doesn’t mean that everything is going to be okay.
 - ❖ Darkness is not necessarily God’s punishment. It does not mean God has abandoned you or no longer cares for you.
 - ❖ Reflect on a time in your life when the above statements were difficult to believe. How did you view God? What did it look like to navigate that season? What was helpful to you?
- **Les’ wife, Renee, had a severe stroke 9 years ago and the long journey has been a struggle.**
 - ❖ What aspects of Les and Renee’s story resonate with you?
 - ❖ How does Les and Renee’s response to pain and darkness encourage and/or challenge you?
- **Consider your own story, your own times of darkness and pain.**
 - ❖ What questions, doubts or assumptions about God (His purposes, character, etc.) are raised in your mind and heart as you process your situation?
 - ❖ How might God speak to you through [John 1.1-5](#) in your pain and struggle?
 - ❖ Take a moment to imagine yourself in your darkness. What does it look and feel like? Now, imagine Jesus moving near to you. He is with you in that darkness. How does He come near? What might He say to you? How does His presence change things?
- **There is no darkness you can experience into which the light of Christ cannot shine. ([John 1.5](#))**
 - ❖ God can speak “Let there be light!” into your darkness.
 - ❖ Your darkness cannot overcome God’s Light.
- **Jesus may use His light in you to help others through their dark forest.**
- **God is Love and He is loving. God loves you.**
 - ❖ How does this statement sit with you? Is it difficult or easy to believe?
 - ❖ What might it look like to take a step of faith to believe that God loves you?
 - ❖ How might your perspective change as you believe that Jesus is present with you right now?