

Good Morning! Grace and peace be to you from God our Father and
Our lord Jesus Christ!

Today is week 2 of 1 John. We've heard again the beautiful poetry of
John. John uses such amazing imagery to explain God to his flock in this
letter. He brings back those same stirring illustrations and echoing
refrains that we have heard before; that evoke such strong emotions
and memories for us.

Sacrifice and Sin.

Truth and Lies

Light and Darkness.

I thought it might be a good day to experience a couple of those first
hand.

Look around the Sanctuary. Where is there darkness? Where are the sources of Light?

Prominently, of course, up on these screens shines the Word. The Word – the Lamp unto our feet - the Logos - Christ with us today - the emanator of light, through which creation was made. The word in which we everyday can experience God's word for our lives. Where we can see our light of hope and forgiveness. Where we can hear God Guiding us through each patch of darkness that blinds us and makes us lose our way.

Candles - On the Altar we see 2 more sources of Light. There is a reason that we put so much effort into making sure that these candles are lit every time we come together to worship. Every time we come together we also bear witness to the promise that Christ gives to us. Where 2 or more are gathered, I will be there also. God is here. We symbolize our God's presence with these candles because God is Light.

God is warmth and Comfort. God brings focus. But God is also dangerous. God is not ours to control but rather to dwell with and respect.

You may have also noticed the glowing red of the Christ Candle. Red to symbolize that was shed and the love that is born for us. This candle is never put out. This candle brings with it the fact that our God is everlasting. That our God is the First and The Last, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. Our God that is the light that shines in the darkness, no matter what. This candle holds its shine every minute of every day because that is also when our Lord stands by us, dwells with us, and protects us.

Maybe by now you have turned your eyes upward. Just like the one hundred twenty first psalm written by King David

1 I lift up my eyes to the hills— where does my help come from?

2 My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.

3 He will not let your foot slip— he who watches over you will not slumber;

7 The Lord will keep you from all harm— he will watch over your life;

8 the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

Here in this window are more symbols of the presence of our God in and amidst every aspect of our lives. We lift our eyes to this view because this is our before position our God. We come before our God acknowledging our place before our creator, our provider of each day and each meal, and our restorer. All because just like that Dove, our God decided to become made know and came down to us, became the incarnation as we understand it in Jesus Christ. Bringing peace, bringing hope Bringing Love. Bringing to this shadowy and murky world a bright resounding vibrant light. This light is the City on the Hill as Jesus told in his parables. You cannot hide it, it shines for all people to behold, you but need to lift your eyes and there it is.

And you may have noticed one other thing behind the dove, another source of light for our lives. We know our God three but one, the Trinity. But as God exists as three and one God exists in an eternal perfectly loving relationship with Godself. Think about any relationship that you've ever had. When love is working correctly in that relationship everything goes great, smoothly, you're in harmony and you almost exist as one. But not always right. The Good news that we learn about God in the Trinity, the news that enlightens us is that God does not fight with Godself. God is in a perfect relationship with Godself. God is perfectly loving. And that Love extends to us in every part of our lives.

And yet so often we are blinded and struck down by the sins of the world. More and more we are hearing of the effects we have wrought on this world and tumults that are happening because of climate change. We hear again and again of people divided and in so much pain they see no other choice but to bring about more pain.

We see the hungry in neighborhood and on our streets and in our church. So much darkness swirls around us. But the Light endures. And the Darkness does not overcome it. We may lose sight of the light but it is always there. We sin but we exist in a purifying light that purges this stench of death from us. Time and time again we come into this light and we are cleansed by our God of Hope whose Love endures forever. We cannot stop our God, our light, from that work of loving the world.

I thought it all too fitting to point out the window that sits at the very top and the very back of our sanctuary as well. I have never seen that window open. Never seen the light shine unimpeded through it. All too often this is how we receive and even reflect the light of God, we put up those blinders, those shades, because we don't want that light as a part of our life. We don't want to see and feel the negatives that the light can seemingly have on our lives. We know that light will reveal things we don't want seen. And it's in our nature to hide from it. But we cannot stop this light.

There is one other source of light which touches us today. It might be a little hard for you to see right now but it's still there. But through the doors of this building shine a light that beckons us outward. We take heart knowing God is outside of this sanctuary as well. We are called by that light, by our God to go out into the world and reflect the eternal light that beams so brightly upon us. We are called to fight back the darkness. We are to walk in the light of Christ into this world and share this light that we know is hope and salvation. Amen