

Notes for Brian's Sermon at Brentwood Presbyterian Church

Sun, Mar 11, 2018 – Lent 4

Do You Live in the Light?
(Psalm 107:17-22 & John 3:14-21)



**But those who do what is true come to the light,
so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds
have been done in God.
(John 3:21)**

Overview

There are two insights that I want to emphasize this morning in engaging with the witness of this passage from John – the first is that our faith is about doing things – doing what is true in ways that can be seen – the second is the awareness that these things are done in and for God – we belong body and soul, in the deepest and most life-giving sense you can imagine by those words, to our Creator and Redeemer – everything we do is done in God, whether we recognize it or not – the challenge we face week by week as we gather together in worship, learning, and fellowship, is how can we grow in faithfulness to that reality? – how can we be that kind of light in the world?

Provocative Points to Ponder

- I went looking for an image of light in the midst of darkness – what drew me to this one was the multiple beams of light and the fogginess of the darkness – let me play with those ideas a bit
- Most of the images that I found had a single person with a flashlight in various dark settings, all of which seem very threatening – but the language of our text this morning is plural – John is talking about a community in which together we can encourage and correct each other in doing what is true, what is right, what is clearly done in and with God – we do not face the darkneses in our lives alone, however often and deeply that feeling of isolation arises for us – we face them with God and with each other – and because of God, there is a steadfast love that always embraces and tenderly holds us through out most fearful experiences – embraces and holds us so that we can do what is true for the world – bless it with God's light that shines through us – God is always seeking to restore us as beacons of God's grace for the world
- The fogginess made me think of driving – several people this week have commented to me that they no longer like driving at night – I am hanging around with that age demographic – I'm still OK with driving at night, but add fog and it's a different story – I think most of the darkneses that touch our souls have that element of fogginess in them – there's a liquidity to the air around us that increases the sense of being disoriented and lost – this kind of darkness can be terrifying – and in the midst of that terror, we often lose sight of the presence of God and others
- That dark terror can often be broken by a simple word or touch of care – a deed done in God – a deed done in grateful response to God loving and saving the world in Jesus Christ - a light shining through the darkness that the darkness cannot put out – when the lights of home shine through the foggy darkness – hopefully, the lights we shine here in this community into the communities that this church serves are felt in that way

So, what do we do with this?

The answer to our sermon question this morning is yes, we do live in God's light – the challenge is what we are going to do in gratitude – where this week can we let our light shine through deeds of hope and compassion? – maybe you know where that light is needed – maybe it's a matter of paying attention to those opportunities God will open up for you this week – regardless, know that the light is God's and that it will never go out

Your Notes