

What Christ Offers, What We Offer

November 22, 2020

DAY 1: Jesus is the light of the world

*2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the **light** of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*

1. Paul refers back to Genesis 1, where God said, "Let there be light" in the middle of darkness. The God who can make light in the universe can make light shine somewhere else as well!

2. Where else does God shine His light?

3. This light Jesus shines in our heart. What is this light Paul is talking about?

4. What is the significance of the phrase, "in the face of Christ"?

John 8:12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

5. What does Jesus mean by light?

6. What does Jesus mean by "...of the world"?

7. What does it mean to "walk in darkness"?

8. What does it mean to "have the light of life"?

9. When you think about Jesus shining His light in you what comes to mind?

DAY 2: "You are the light of the world"

Matthew 5:13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

1. Jesus makes a difference in people's lives, often through ordinary followers of His, like you and me. Salt adds flavor to food, and it acts as a preservative.
2. If you are a disciple of Christ, this verse is for you. Think about your relationships. What could being "salt" in your relationships mean? How might you be salt?

Matthew 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

3. In addition to being salt, disciples are also light! What is the point Jesus is making about you being light?

*Matthew 5:16 In the same way, **let** your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*

4. Jesus' light in His followers *will* shine if we "let" it.
5. What does Jesus say people need to see about you?
6. There are different kinds of "deeds" can see in you.
 - a. **Actions**: serving, helping, leading, integrity, honesty,
 - b. **Attitudes**: hopeful, helpful, humble, eager to help,
 - c. **Relationships**: encouraging, listening, taking the initiative to get to know people, asking them questions,
7. Think of some of the people in your world? How might your light shine with them? What ideas come to mind?

DAY 3: Jesus offers real life!

1. For the past two days, we've seen how Jesus offers people **light**, and wants to shine His light through us!

2. Over the next two days we'll see how Jesus offers people **real life**, and wants to use us to offer life to people who live in the shadow of death.

Isaiah 9:2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

John 6:35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

3. What everyone desires is real life. What is real life? It is that elusive "it" we all chase. "If we just had '____(it)____' then we'd be satisfied/happy/content/at peace."

4. Jesus enters into an extended discourse with His followers. We pick up near the end of His teaching...

John 6:63 "The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.⁶⁴ Yet there are some of you who do not believe."

5. How can a person experience real life?

a. Not by human effort. "The flesh (human effort) counts for nothing (won't happen)."

b. The Holy Spirit is the One who gives people real life.

c. Jesus' own words are life-giving!

6. In John 6 the disciples of Jesus had heard some hard to understand teaching from Jesus. Some of them considered it too hard, and left. But the original twelve disciples did not leave. When Jesus asked them what they were going to do Peter answered for the group.

John 6:68 Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.⁶⁹ We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

7. "Eternal" life is both quantitative and qualitative. It is quantitative in time and length, but it is also qualitative in the kind of life offered—full and complete.

8. What strikes you about today's devotional?

DAY 4: Jesus uses us to offer people life!

*John 6:57 Just as the living Father sent me and **I live** because of the Father, **so the one who feeds on me will live** because of me.*

1. Someone, “the living Father”, outside of Jesus gives Him life. Someone, this Jesus outside of me gives me life.

*John 17:3 Now this is eternal **life**: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.*

The life Jesus offers us is found in relationship with Him.

2. In turn, Jesus offers life to others through His people involvement with people.

3. In each of the verses below, jot down how relating and communicating with others can be used of God to give them a taste of real life.

Proverbs 18:21 The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

Psalms 126:1 When the LORD brought back the captives to Zion, we were like men who dreamed. ² Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."

Proverbs 12:18 Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

Proverbs 15:4 The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.

Proverbs 31:26 She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.

Isaiah 50:4 The Sovereign LORD has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught.

2 Samuel 23:2 "The Spirit of the LORD spoke through me; his word was on my tongue.

4. God wants to use you to give others a taste of real life that He can give them. It happens in relationship.

DAY 5: Life-giving care requires initiative

Luke 19:10 "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

1. We are on mission. Consider these three facets:

- a. Our mission is lost people.
- b. It is our job to seek them.
- c. It is Jesus' job to save them.

2. To care about people "generically" is worthless. To say, "I'm a caring person" is worthless. Care must be expressed and demonstrated. Care is "on the move." Until care becomes "specific" it is not care. Care takes the initiative.

3. I belong to a masters swim team that meets at 6:30, three mornings a week. Because of Covid, we show up 10 minutes early for our swim time, waiting in the dark to get checked in and our temperature taken. We wait in two lines, properly socially distanced and wearing a mask.

For the most part you may hear a couple of ladies quietly chit chat. Occasionally two guys talk about how cold it is at 6:30 a.m. One day I looked at the 30 of us standing in our two lines, in the darkness and cold, with virtually no connection. Seconds ticked by, tick, tock, tick, tock, tick, tock. Silence. Quiet. Tick, tock, tick, tock. Darkness. Nothing. Tick, tock, tick, tock.

There was very little "life" going on. Virtually no connection, no care, no initiative, no interest in someone else, each wrapped in a self-made cocoon.

4. It is in such circumstances that the child of God has great opportunity! The life of Jesus lives in you. He not only is interested in those people but He loves them. The life of Jesus in me wants to shine through me.

5. In the "darkness" people carry secret and hidden questions. Do I matter? Do I matter to anyone? Does anybody care about me? Do I have anything of interest as a person to someone else?

6. Taking the initiative with people in conversation communicates some invisible messages:

- You matter.
- I care.
- You have something important to say

7. This is not rocket science. It is simply a matter of being other-centered. Here are some tools:

- Taking an interest,
- Asking questions,
- Listening without pushback.
- Offering follow-up questions to what the person said.

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations ...

8. What strikes you from today's devotional?