

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18TH

DAILY READING ASSIGNMENT: **John 2-4 • "DIFFICULT TRUTH"**

SCRIPTURE John 3:19-21

OBSERVATION

Think of words used to describe someone who is confused or misunderstands that which you are trying to explain. You may say their view is clouded [especially if you're speaking to a teenager], or that a particular person is nice but a bit dim.

On the other hand, what's a common way to describe that moment someone suddenly gets it? His or her face lights up. What about when you have a brilliant idea – the light bulb clicks on. And how were those poor kids supposed to get out of the TV set in the 1980's film *Poltergeist*. Come on, say it with me: Children, come to the light!

The metaphor is clear – darkness denotes confusion, misunderstanding, ignorance, sneakiness and evil. Light indicates the opposite: clarity, understanding, wisdom, honesty and truth.

So, what do we do when we can't see? We turn on a light. You aren't going to stumble around in darkness tripping over furniture when you can just flip a switch and illuminate the room. You're certainly not going to drive at midnight with the headlights off [unless you're in Alaska in July, but you get the point]. That would be dangerous--to you as well as others.

Jesus tells Nicodemus, "Light has come into this world." [v.19] Why? To illuminate what is going on – people are sinning left and right. And they don't want their behavior exposed.

Jesus is the light of the world [John 8:12]. As he explains to Nicodemus, those who commit evil acts love the darkness, and for obvious reasons – it covers their actions. The trouble is that their evil actions lead to their own self destruction--which is why Jesus shines the light of truth. He does so not to embarrass us or to humiliate us but to SAVE us...from ourselves!

Jesus invites us to live in the light of truth. When we do we are able live openly, allow others to see plainly God at work, and take our light into the darkness.

APPLICATION

It's becoming increasingly difficult in our culture to acknowledge evil -- even when we see the results of evil all around us. To speak of evil as a spiritual reality is offensive, insensitive, intolerant, or even fanatical. And yet we deal with its effects everyday--on our relationships, our families, our finances, our health, our communities, our schools, our choices...

Though speaking of evil as a spiritual reality is unpalatable for many people, the simple truth is that we don't define evil – God does.

Living under cover of darkness makes it too easy to maintain unhealthy habits, harmful behaviors, and negative attitudes. Darkness perpetuates depression, loneliness, and hopelessness. Living in the Light brings hope, healing, and encouragement. It allows others to see clearly what God has done, is doing, and will continue to do. When we cut through the red tape of political correctness and the deceit of tolerance and go directly to the original source of truth (scripture), evil becomes pretty simple to define and recognize.

We learned today that Jesus is the Light of the world. We learned yesterday that Jesus is the Word [John 1:1]. To live in Christ the Light, is to know Christ, the Word. We have easy access to both. Take full advantage of this each day.

PRAYER

Dear Father, thank you for sending me Light and Truth – your Son. Forgive me for those times when I hide in darkness, or when I attempt to cover over sinful actions. I pray today my actions would be worthy of being illuminated and that I may be a beacon of hope to those around me. And may you receive the credit, and all glory. Amen.

S.O.A.P. Entry Author: Kelly Ellis