

### 3-15-2023 – Darkness vs Light

Now that we again experience more daylight at one end of the day, let's look at "Darkness vs. Light". It seems so many days and times we face personal challenges to the point of wondering what will come next. It seems that Darkness has fallen upon us personally. Are we the only ones facing these foes or challenges? Certainly not! If it's not the extreme weather as so many are from the West Coast to the East, North, or South. Violence in many forms, unrest across our nation and the world, and seemingly constant conflicts around us and within us. "WHY" is the question, isn't it? That, unfortunately is the world we live in. It's fight of Good vs. Evil, Darkness vs. Light. While we may not be able to control the thoughts, words, or actions of others; we can control our own. Then, by doing so, would we not gain joy in doing good rather than evil, humility vs. worldliness, wisdom vs. ignorance, be in the light vs. darkness?

In the inspired word of God, the book of James 3:13-18, we see not only His guidance, but also encouragement for us all. <sup>13</sup>*Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that His works are done in the meekness of wisdom.* <sup>14</sup>*But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.* <sup>15</sup>*This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.* <sup>16</sup>*For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.* <sup>17</sup>*But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.* <sup>18</sup>*Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace."* We see further in James 4:1-10, where Pride promotes Strife. <sup>1</sup>*Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?* <sup>2</sup>*You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and do not obtain. You fight and war. Yes you do not have because you do not ask.* <sup>3</sup>*You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.* <sup>4</sup>*Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.* <sup>5</sup>*Or do you think that the scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?* <sup>6</sup>*But He gives more grace. Therefore, He says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."* (Proverbs 3:34) <sup>7</sup>*Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.* <sup>8</sup>*Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.* <sup>9</sup>*Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.* <sup>10</sup>*Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up."*

I know these words are harsh and good cause for self-reflection and remorse for past sins. But, most certainly there is hope, which I personally cling to for my past shortcomings in His sight, as well as others. In Ephesians 5:1-2,8-14 we see where there is light and His promise: <sup>1</sup>*Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.* <sup>2</sup>*And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God...* <sup>8</sup>*For at one time you were in darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light* <sup>9</sup>*(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true),*<sup>10</sup>*and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.* <sup>11</sup>*Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.* <sup>12</sup>*For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.* <sup>13</sup>*But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible,* <sup>14</sup>*for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore, it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."*

Then we also see Jesus' words in John 8:12 "... I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." So, as we venture on, let us all seek light and truth and resist evil in all its' many forms.

May the peace (and Light) of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.