



LIFE GROUP SERMON NOTES

“Giver: The Light of the World”

Dr. Rice Brooks - Dec. 21, 2014

WARM-UP (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. *No right or wrong answers.*

- Where did you see the best fireworks show? What was the event?
- Where have you seen the prettiest sunset? Why were you there?
- Were you ever scared of a dark place? Where was it? How old were you?

WORD (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at <http://www.bethelworld.org/media/>

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:1-5 ESV)

The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:9-13 ESV)

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth... For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known. (John 1:14, 16-18 ESV)

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ... This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. (1 John 1:1-3, 5 ESV)

Jesus Christ is the light and life of the world. He is divine, the very Son of God, who has always existed. He became human and walked a sinless life 2000 years ago. He was known by many, especially his close disciples. He was unjustly condemned and crucified, but rose from the grave three days later. He appeared afterwards to his close followers, who not only encountered a resurrected Jesus, but also the Spirit of God. The Spirit caused them to be spiritually reborn bringing intimacy with God to each follower. The Spirit also empowered them to be witnesses to Jesus, testifying to all about who Jesus is and what he did. Because of Jesus and the Holy Spirit all who follow him have also become light in the midst of a spiritually dark world. This light and life from Jesus also transforms the hearts of its recipients so that they

are filled with love. God's love fills the hearts of his genuine followers, inspiring and enabling them to love others, even their enemies.

The world today is in need of this divine light, life, and love. Darkness only remains darkness in the absence of light. Everywhere the Gospel has gone in the last 2000 years it has brought light, life, and love. It only recedes when God's people hold back in their pursuit of God, righteousness, and truth. The great need in the world today is the same as it always has been. God's people are needed now as in every generation to be unashamed, bold witnesses in both word and deed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

PERSONAL APPLICATION (10-15 minutes)

Choose an item below to discuss, or introduce another related topic for discussion.

- Is there any darkness in your life that needs God's light, life, and love? What is it?
- Has God placed you in the midst of some darkness? How might God want you to be a source of light, life, and love in that place?
- What could hinder you from being a greater source of light, life, and love to others? How can you overcome those hindrances?

PRAYER (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Pray that God will reveal his light, life, and love in our hearts where we are still lacking.
- Pray that God will empower us, lead us, and counsel us to be bold witnesses in word and deed to the Gospel in our homes, neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces.
- Pray that God will open the hearts and minds of people with whom we share the Gospel, and move their wills to believe and turn to God.