

“Where Is Your Light?”

John 1:6–8, 19–23

December 17, 2017

Gracious God, let the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable to your sight, O LORD, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen

Today’s Scripture reading is a parallel to last Sunday’s reading, the Gospel of Mark 1:1–8. Imagine a scene in which Jesus is the main act and John the Baptist is the warm-up act. While I was pondering today’s reading all this past week, I thought of two important words in my mind: *prepare* and *light!* If John the Baptist were here, what would he really want to say to you? Prepare for what? What is the light in the world? Let us begin with the word *prepare*. What do you associate with the word *prepare*? If you were actively involved in Christian culture back in the 1970s, you may remember the Christian rock musical *Godspell*. When I was a college student, I had an opportunity to be part of this musical as one of the chorus singers. I want to show you a video clip from *Godspell*. I encourage you to think about what it means for you to *prepare*.

Video Clip, “Prepare Ye (The Way of the Lord)” is from the film adaptation of the off-Broadway musical Godspell created by John-Michael Tebelak.

What messages did you get out of this musical scene? People dared to jump into water. It was a water fountain, though. They shouted out joyfully—why? *Liberation!!* True joy, excitement, and transformation from bond agein whatever form. Someone is coming to liberate you in this season of Advent! Be prepared!

Last Sunday, I shared the story of my bringing my newborn baby Jacob home. I turned on my car's emergency blinkers to clear the path.

Youngjae and I also prepared his room with nice decorations. We were ready for his arrival!

Think about your acts to prepare a room for Christ in this special season.

Then, what things do you need to prepare before you accept your God?

Do you need emergency blinkers? No. In today's Scripture reading, John the Baptist came to testify about the light. This light will liberate you from the darkness!

John the Baptist emphasized that Jesus is the light. You do not need to remain in the dark. Please get out there and shine your

light! But how? *Repentance!!* Do not misunderstand me! Repentance is not about punishment but about your decision to turn to God. Be willing

to belong to God. What does this mean? Give up yourself and receive a new self!

Jesus says in the Gospel of Matthew 10:39, "Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it." C.S. Lewis

gives us some insight into this in his book *Mere Christianity*: "Until you have given up yourself to Him, you will not have a real self."¹

¹ C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001), 224.

To prepare a room for Christ inside you is like receiving a new light. This light is at first a faint gleam² of the heaven that is already inside you! Yes, John the Baptist asks you to accept Christ, the light, in your hearts.

Darkness cannot coexist with light. We believe that darkness is simply the state of the absence of light. Jesus Christ came to us as light, and we carry this light to bring light into the darkness of our lives and the world. This is our spiritual identity, our fundamental relationship with God, and our responsibility.

There is light that already is created in us, but because of our self-centeredness, we are left in the dark! That's why God sent His Only Son and why Christ is coming to be our light! When we accept Christ to be with us and in us, we will become millions of 'little Christs'³ that can brighten the darkness. The metaphor of darkness represents what separates us from the light and keeps us in darkness. *Claim the light in you!* We should remember that the powers of darkness, no matter how

²According to Google Dictionary, the verb "gleam" means to "shine brightly, especially with reflected light." The noun means "a faint or brief light, especially one reflected from something."

³ C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 225.

threatening, can never destroy the light. One of my friends found a relevant sentence in her fortune cookie. It says, “All the darkness in the world cannot put out a single candle.”

Darkness can be various forms of negative forces, such as uncertainty, anxiety, and fear in your lives. Trevor Hudson, author of *Pauses for Lent*, writes,

Darkness resides around and within us. We experience different kinds of darkness: the darkness of intense pain and suffering, the darkness of loneliness and grief, the darkness of evil and sin, and most especially the darkness of death itself. . . . When we follow Christ, his light penetrates our darkness. It illuminates our lives with his direction, delivers us from dark powers, and empowers us to live fuller, freer lives. Indeed, we become children of light in a darkened world!⁴

Someone is coming and is calling us to take the light and claim ourselves as “little Christs.” That light will be with us and walk with us. Let the light shine! Amen.

⁴ Trevor Hudson, *Pauses for Lent: 40 Words for 40 Days* (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2015) 19.