Gracestoration
CUPbearers inc.
Update
"Restoring people in God's grace and making disciplers"
BOB AND DOTTIE (Connor) BINGHAM Bob, (303) 761-5005- Dottie, 303-667-2678 e-mail: info@shepherdinggrace.org **VOLUME 27.1 March 2020**

"ENLIGHTENMENT" THAT LEADS TO DARKNESS

"There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death" (Proverbs 14:12).

This proverb written so many years ago by King Solomon is certainly applicable today. For a little more than a century the intellectual prowess of mankind has been raised to the level of deity. Beginning with German rationalism and higher criticism in the late 1800s and early 1900s to the current information explosion, secular philosophies and globalism today have dulled convictions and overwhelmed the moral fiber and focus of Christians.

Satan's "Enlightening" Lie Led to Sin's Darkness.

Mankind from the fall of Adam to this present time has always tried to be as God or elevate himself to be God. Satan's lie to Eve was that she could be like God, *"knowing good and evil",* implying that she and Adam could live a fulfilled life independent of God. "*The serpent said to the woman, You surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil"* (Gen 3:4-5). Satan masquerades as an **angel of light** and exists to deceive and destroy. *"No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an **angel of light**. Therefore, it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds*" (2 Co 11:14-15).

Intellectual "Enlightenment"

Intellectual scholars, observing the cycles of nature, the state of mankind and their concept of primal cause and/or of God, developed within their own intellectual imaginations and philosophies regarding purpose and life. However, there are obvious patterns and mysteries to life and death that defy human understanding. These promote further curiosity and speculation that lead to developing even more comprehensive philosophies. This **intellectual "enlightenment" leads to spiritual darkness.**

However, The Apostle Paul states, *"To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, and to bring to **light** what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things*" (Eph 3:8-9).

Scientific "Enlightenment"

Others seeking to understand matter and the makeup of the universe take great effort to observe, experiment and test matter, its makeup and properties. Carrying out these studies ultimately leads to the attempt to discover the origin(s) of life and the universe. Often these efforts begin with the presupposition that there is no Creator God, but that life and matter developed randomly or adaptively from other forms of life and matter. Thus **scientific "enlightenment" leads to darkness**.

However, *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be **light**; and there was **light**"* (Gen 1:1-3).

Psychological "Enlightenment"

Attempts have been made to understand the cause of deviations from healthy human functions within an individual and to find ways to restore that one to reasonable health. However, the standard for health is based upon a norm that is determined through the averaging of many observable factors of a cross-section of the population. Psychology's restoration to health is very limited since it is dependent within oneself for the resources to be healed. Skill development, training and various kinds of drug therapies may be tried to bring an individual into a healthy balance. Thus, **Psychology's "enlightenment" leads to dumbed-down mental darkness.**

However, Jesus is God's provision for a healthy balanced life. *"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart **f**rom Me you can do nothing*" (Joh 15:4-5).

Spiritual "Enlightenment"
Religious extremists [cults], in the name of their "god", are committed to destroying those that they perceive are against their causes. Their methods for obtaining converts are brain washing, intimidation, terrorism and the annihilation of those who refuse to submit. **This cultic "enlightenment" is caused by spiritual darkness.**
However, the Apostle Paul, *"prays that the eyes of your heart may be **enlightened**, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe"* (Eph 1:18-19).

> ***"The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God…"***
> **(2 Co 4:4)**

TRUE ENLIGHTENMENT DISPELS DARKNESS through God's **Light of Life** for mankind – the Lord Jesus Christ. *"All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was **life,** and the **life** was the **Light of men**"* (Joh 1:3-4).

*For God, who said, "**Light** shall shine out of darkness, is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the **Light** of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ"* (2 Cor 4:4-6).

JESUS is the LIGHT of the WORLD
"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life" (Joh 8:12).
Nineteenth century songwriter Philip P. Bliss (associate of D. L. Moody), summed it up well in his famous hymn, *The Light of the World is Jesus:*
1-The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin; the light of the world is Jesus. Like sunshine at noonday His glory shone in; the light of the world is Jesus.
2-No darkness have we when in Jesus abide; the light of the world is Jesus, We walk in the Light when we follow our guide; the light of the world is Jesus.
3-No need of the sunlight in heaven, we're told; the Light of the world is Jesus. The LAMB is the LIGHT in the city of gold; the Light of the world is Jesus!

Then a reminder in John 12:35,36,46, Jesus continued: *"Walk while you have the **Light**, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. While you have the **Light**, believe in the **Light**, so that you may become **sons of Light**… I have come as **Light** into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness."*

> *"This is the judgment, that the **Light** has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the **Light**, for their deeds were evil."*
> (Joh 1:19)

Later, Jesus gave Paul this charge at the beginning of his ministry:
*". . . to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to **light** and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me"* (Acts 26:16-18).

Conclusion
". . . *Children of God* [be] *above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as **lights** in the world, holding fast the word of life"* (Phi 2:15-16).
*"Let your **light** shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven"* (Mat 5:16).

. . .TO WHOM BE THE GLORY FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN!

Deedra's Corner

I postponed my February trip to Cambodia due to the Coronavirus outbreak. I was not so concerned about contracting the virus as getting stuck in SE Asia if the virus continues to spread and airlines limit or cancel flights from certain countries. Please pray with me for those I love in Cambodia to learn to trust Jesus more and more.

The Lord continues to bless and encourage women that I have the privilege to disciple and mentor. Life is not always easy, but our Lord Jesus continues to show us his faithfulness.

My podcast, ***Beautiful Feet***, is now available. You can find it on iTunes or Spotify and CUPbearers Facebook page gets updated when a new podcast is published.