

The Feast of the Nativity of our Lord
St. John 1:1-14
December 25th, 2017
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

The Light Shines in the Darkness

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

O Lord, send out Thy Light and Thy Truth, let them lead us. O Lord, open Thou my lips, that my mouth may show forth Thy praise. O Lord, graciously preserve me, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Today, we do NOT celebrate the birthday of + Jesus as if He is getting a year older. There is no need to put candles on a cake and sing “Happy Birthday” to + Jesus. This shows a PROFOUND lack of knowledge as to what this day is all about. What is this day all about? What is the “reason for the season”? This is revealed in the Gospel reading for today. “The Light shines in the darkness.”

This day is about the Lord God coming down out of Heaven to dwell with His people as one of His people. God takes on our flesh. God becomes man. God chooses to dwell with us. God deigns to fill this world of sin and darkness, with light and life. The birth of our Lord + Jesus is the birth of God in the flesh.

Why does God choose to dwell in our flesh? Why does He want to live in this world full of sin? Why would He want to endure the pain and suffering that we do every day of our life? A couple of reasons. First, because He loves us. He created us. We were His very special creation. All the rest of creation was created out of nothing, by His Word. But we were created from the dust of the Earth by the Lord God’s very own hands. Then He breathed into us the breath of life—from His very own Spirit of Life. Even women were made in a special way to be a perfect helpmate to their husbands within the union of man and wife; the two becoming one. She was made from his rib; she was made out of man, and given the same special treatment as man was given in his creation. This is how much God loves us as His own creation, which He made alive with His very breath. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

But, Adam and Eve, our first parents, destroyed the life that was gifted to them when they broke the ONE commandment that our Lord God had given them: to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In that day, they and all the children that they would bear would be born dead—spiritually dead—and would also die a physical death. By the sin of Adam, because he did nothing to stop his wife Eve, and even participated in her sin, all mankind died, and lived in darkness. This is the second reason that our Lord God chose to dwell with us, and share in our sorrows and woe. For, His creation was trapped in their sin. We are trapped in our sin. It has corrupted our very nature. Every inclination of mankind is toward evil. The notion that mankind is basically good is nonsense. This is the belief of someone who has not been paying attention. Ironically, these are the same people who complain about nobody doing anything about all the bad stuff in this life.

This world is filled with bad stuff and evil acts, because this world sits in darkness. Most sinful actions happen when people think nobody is watching. At night, when it is dark, most crime happens, because people are asleep and not paying attention, and criminals take advantage of that. Sin prefers darkness, it does not like the light. Light exposes sin. Light reveals the criminal. But, because of our sin, and our love for sin; because we could not do anything but live in darkness; because we could not do anything to save ourselves, the Light of Christ came to us. And when the Light of the world came to dwell with us, the world hated Him, because it loved the darkness.

They hated Him enough to kill Him on an accursed tree. Our Lord God knew that this would happen to Him if He descended from His throne in Heaven and chose to dwell with us. He knew that the corruption of this world would cause His most beloved creation to murder Him on a tree. But, our Lord God chose to dwell with us anyway. He chose to be born of a virgin. He chose to be laid in a manger. He chose to endure the suffering and pain of this world, because He loved us so much. He knew the darkness would not comprehend Him. He knew the darkness would hate Him. He knew the darkness would kill Him. But He also knew this was the only way to bring light and life back into the world. He had to come and fix the problem, because mankind—we—could not fix it.

This is what Christmas is all about: The Lord + Jesus Christ—the God of all creation, the maker of Heaven and Earth—coming to dwell with us as one of us. Therefore, it is a PROFOUND ignorance to slap candles on a cake and sing “Happy Birthday” to + Jesus as if He is getting another year older. He was not just born as another human boy. He was born for a special purpose. He was born to suffer and die, in order to redeem us from sin, death, and the power of the devil. He was born to bring light into this dark world.

The Light shines in the darkness! The Lord has come! Our Savior is born! He lies in a manger now, but He will redeem us on the tree of the holy cross. Think about that for a minute. The creator of the world; the One through Whom everything is made; the One without Whom nothing was made of all the things that are made; the creator and ruler of Heaven and Earth, lies in a manger. He is unable to anything by Himself. He cannot feed Himself. He cannot change His own diapers. He cannot clothe Himself. He cannot keep Himself warm. He is at the complete mercy of His very own creation.

This is how much He humbles Himself on your behalf. This is how much He loves you. He chose to be this tiny, helpless baby for you. He chose to be born as a part of His creation, in order that He might redeem you from sin and death—take you out of darkness and fill you with light. He chose to be born and be helpless, so that He might help lift us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Today, we do NOT celebrate the birthday of + Jesus. We celebrate the birth of the Lord God in our flesh. The Lord has done a marvelous thing, let us rejoice and sing of His wondrous deed. He has lifted us out of darkness and brought us into the light, so that we might see and believe that He is the Savior of the world, but especially He is our Savior and Redeemer. Therefore, we can now sing a new song. There is no need to sing “Happy Birthday” to + Jesus. We can now sing of the love of the heavenly Father Who sent His Son to be begotten of the Virgin Mary, to be our Redeemer for evermore and evermore. We can sing of our Savior Who is the Light of world, and shines as a beacon of hope to all those trapped in the darkness of sin in this life, so that they might have light and life in Him for all eternity. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory! I will extol Thee, O Lord, and I will praise Thy Name forever and ever. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.