

The Festival of St. Patrick, Bishop and Confessor  
St. John 9:1-8  
March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

I AM the Light of the World

*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.

One of the major themes of the Gospel of the Apostle and Evangelist St. John, the writer of tonight's Gospel, was first introduced to us in the first chapter, and which we also heard about on the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord. In the first chapter of this Gospel St. John writes, that "a Light shines in the darkness." St. John throughout his Gospel makes this comparison of Light dispelling darkness. It is a reflection of the preaching of the Prophet Isaiah, who wrote, "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great Light."

This is our condition. The world is filled with darkness; the darkness of sin and death. The devil and his demons use the world to keep mankind in darkness. We are constantly hounded by the world with every sort of evil and temptation. Therefore, we are surrounded by darkness from the outside. The world around us keeps mankind in darkness. But, we are also filled with darkness on the inside. We are filled with sin and shame. Not only do we commit sins daily and often, but we are conceived and born in sin and darkness. Our first parents, Adam and Eve, ate the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and ever since then we now know that we are evil; in constant disobedience to the Law and will of the Lord God. We have inherited this original sin; it inheres in us as the Confessions say. We, and all of mankind, are trapped in darkness.

We remain in this state until our Lord + Jesus comes. He is the Light of the world. He is the Light that shines in the darkness. He is the beacon that drives away sin and death, for in His works—His perfect fulfilling of the Law of God and His sacrifice for us in our place on the tree of the holy cross—we have remission of our sins. It is only through the Christ that darkness can be driven away. It is only through the Light of the world that those who walked in darkness and shadow of death, can have light and life. He is the Light that shines in the darkness of this world and drives back sin, death, and the devil; all the powers of darkness in which we find ourselves surrounded and trapped.

In today's Gospel reading, the Apostle and Evangelist St. John records the healing of a man much like us; a man born blind. We, of course, are born spiritually blind. Apart from faith, which clings to the Christ and the promises and gifts that He wins for us by His works and merits, we continue to remain spiritually blind. Much of the world walks about in spiritual blindness; ignoring the works of the Christ; trying to claim salvation through their own measly works. Works done without faith in the merits of the Christ, avail for nothing. Therefore, much of the world, which has rejected the Light of the world,

remains in spiritual blindness.

The Apostles pose the question to the Lord + Jesus, "Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" The Jews believed, like many falsely do today, that bad things only happen to bad people. This would not have happened to this man if someone would not have sinned. His blindness must be a result of some punishment meted out against him, or his parents. It is because of this false notion that bad things only happen to bad people that many people wonder why bad things happen to them. The assumption is that they are good people, and that they do not deserve the bad thing that is happening to them. The question is put forth, which reflects the question of the Apostles in the Gospel reading, "Why do bad things happen to good people?"

The short answer is, "There are no good people." As was said before, we are all born in original sin. We are all filled with spiritual blindness and surrounded by darkness and sin all of our lives; from the time that we are conceived and born, we are sinful people. We truly do deserve the Lord God's temporal and eternal punishments. Why do bad things happen to us? Whose sin are we to blame, ours or our parents? It is the sin of our first parents, Adam and Eve, which is to be blamed. It is the sin that inheres in us that we justly deserve the Lord God's temporal and eternal punishments. It is on account of sin dwelling in the world that bad things happen to so-called "good" people. Bad things happen, because on account of sin in us, we are all bad people.

Therefore, this man, or his parents, have not committed some particular sin that caused him to be born blind. It is on account of sin dwelling in us that we are born and conceived in spiritual blindness, and he was born in physical blindness. The world has been plunged into darkness, so that the works of the Lord God can be revealed. This man is born blind, so that the Light of the world—our Lord + Jesus Christ—can reveal to all who witness this healing that He can defeat the powers of darkness. They have no power where He is present with His works and merits. The powers of sin and darkness cannot exist where the Lord + Jesus comes with His gifts and promises.

We who have walked in darkness, have seen a great Light. We have seen our sins forgiven on account of the Christ. He has removed the darkness that dwells within us through the means of grace; we are cleansed of our spiritual blindness through the waters of Holy Baptism, where our Lord + Jesus washes away our sins by His shed Blood. This man who walked in blindness from birth, and sat and begged, was also healed by washing. The Lord + Jesus anointed his eyes with clay made from His spittle, and his sight was restored when he washed off the clay in the pool of Siloam—the pool of waters to which he was "sent." He was washed and came back seeing. He saw the Light that removed his darkness.

Our Lord + Jesus was the Light that came into the world to remove the darkness that surrounds all of us. In Him is revealed the works of the Lord God. The works that are revealed in the Lord + Jesus are the works that win for us forgiveness, life and salvation. No other works will bring mankind any salvation. There is no salvation in any work that we do. Only the revealing, through faith, of the works of the Christ can salvation be given. Only through the works of the Christ can the spiritual darkness that surrounds us all be driven back, and we can be able to open our eyes and see the Christ. He drives out the darkness through the means of grace.

Through the preaching of the Gospel, through Holy Baptism, through the Lord's Supper, through the Absolution of our sins, and through the mutual conversation and consolation of the brethren the Holy Ghost drives sin and darkness out of us and fills us with the Light of the world. Our Lord + Jesus came into the world to remove the veil from our eyes, in order that we might see Him as our One and Only Savior from sin, death and the devil. After His ascension, He sent out His Apostles into all the world to baptize all nations in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. We have all been baptized into His Name. We have all been washed clean and free from all sins. We have been

clothed with the righteousness of the Christ. We have put on His works and His merits, so that the heavenly Father does look upon our sins, nor counts them against us, but He only sees in us the works of His Son, our Lord + Jesus, which we cling to in faith.

The Apostles also appointed others to take their place. They sent out others to use the means of grace to bring mankind out of darkness into the Light of the Christ. This has continued down through the ages, even until today. Today, we celebrate the Festival of St. Patrick, Bishop and Confessor. He brought the Light of the world—our Lord + Jesus—to the people of Ireland. He baptized them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, even as we have been baptized. He drove away the snakes of sin and darkness that plagued Ireland, and filled that country with the Light of the Christ. They saw a great Light, so that they no longer walked in darkness.

We here today have also seen a great Light. Through faith created in us by the Holy Ghost, we see that even though we were born in sin and spiritual blindness, through the works of the Christ, we no longer are troubled by darkness and blindness, wherever the Lord + Jesus Christ is present among us with His works and merits. When He is in our midst, no true evil can befall us. He promises that where two or three are gathered, He is here with us. He is here with us today driving out before us all the powers of spiritual darkness that plague us. On account of the faith which He created in us by the working of the Holy Ghost, we are not only now considered “good” people, but we are accounted as righteous in the Lord God’s sight. For through the waters of Holy Baptism, we have put on the works and merits of the Christ. We are no longer blind and covered in darkness, but we are clothed with the Light of the world; the Light that has come into the world to shine in the darkness. 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.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*