

Answers to Sermon Notes

“Love and Light, Part II”

John 3:16-21

11/20/22

- 1) Today we complete our short examination of the mission of God in this world and our place in it.
 - a) There are three specific questions we are seeking to answer:
 - i) What is the mission of God in this world?
 - ii) Am I a recipient of it?
 - iii) Am I a participant in it?

- 2) Last week we saw that the mission of God is represented in the gift of God: his Son.
 - a) This gift is of both love (vs. 16-18) and light (vs. 19-21)
 - i) The love of God is expressed in the giving of God’s one and only Son to suffer the torments of hell for the world (mankind), even when mankind was passionately against him.
 - (1) To receive this love is to see it clearly in the context of our great need and to embrace it through ongoing repentance of sin and faith in him.
 - (2) To participate in this mission of love is to see others in their need for salvation and sacrificially take steps toward meeting that need.
 - (a) Sharing the message of his love in Christ even if they be passionately against him.
 - ii) Today we move on to examine the mission/gift of God as a mission/gift of light.

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. ²¹ But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.”

- 3) As a way of understanding the connection of the light of God to the mission of God, and what that means for us, I thought it might be most effective to simply walk through a series of exegetical assertions.
 - a) Assertion 1: The love of God, Son of God, and light of God are here as a chord of three strands.
 - i) Not identical to each other, but inseparable from each other.
 - (1) Such that when Jesus refers to the light’s coming into the world, he is referring to himself.
 - (a) After all, Jesus did say that he was the light of the world. (John 8:12)
 - (b) And that this light was the light of life.
 - b) Assertion 2: When Jesus refers here to the light of God, he is referring to the revelation/teaching/word of God, which he also embodies.
 - i) John made this clear at the beginning of his gospel. (John 1:1-5)

- ii) Once again linking word, light and life.
- c) Assertion 3: When we say, then, that the mission of God in this world is of both love and light, both of these are centered in the Son.
 - i) He is the preeminent gift of God's love.
 - ii) He is the preeminent gift of God's light.
- d) Assertion 4: The decision of man to either receive or reject the mission/gift of God will be the same for both the love and the light.
 - i) You cannot embrace the one without embracing the other, for in seeking to embrace either one you must embrace Christ who is both.
- e) Assertion 5: To genuinely receive this gift of God is to receive the fullness of both the love and the light in the Son.
 - i) To receive part of the love is not to receive the love.
 - (1) We cannot receive him as a partial Savior. (**Gal. 5:2-6**)
 - ii) To receive part of the light is not to receive the light.
 - (1) We cannot receive him as a partial Lord. (Prov. 30:5-6, Mt. 4:4, II Tim. 3:16-17, Rev. 22:18-19, **Belgic Confession Article 7**)
- f) Assertion 6: Those who have truly embraced the love of God in Christ distinguish themselves by unreservedly coming to the light of God in Christ. (vs. 22-21)
 - i) Those who have not, do not.
 - (1) Particularly the portion of the light that reveals their works to be evil.

Conclusions:

1. The mission of God in this world is the development of a people who are uniquely his, through their full embrace of both the love and light of God in Christ. (**I Peter 2:1-12**)
2. Recipients of the mission of God fully embrace both the love and the light of God in Christ, distinguishing themselves by their unreserved coming to the light, and being formed according to it.
3. Participants in the mission of God fully declare both the love and the light of God.
 - i. Championing the message that God's Son is the complete and only Savior.
 - ii. AND championing the message that God's Word is the complete and only Light.
4. Anything less than this is not true participation in the mission of God in this world. (**Mt. 28:18-20**)