

Biblical Reflection 12:  
“What does the light of Jesus Christ mean to you?”

May 10, 2021



Sometimes, I feel like I am about to swallowed up by all the darkness, sadness, and suffering in the world. No matter how positive, upbeat, or hopeful I try to be, the world's problems and dangers seem so great, and so pervasive, that I want to despair. Jesus said, “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12). But so what? What difference does Jesus make when people are being cruelly oppressed, innocent people brutalized, and millions being driven into poverty and despair?

He makes all the difference in the world.

In John's Gospel, John wanted his readers to know from the very beginning how important Jesus is to those who are suffering in a dark and broken world. He said: “In him [the Word] was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it” (John 1:4-5, NRSV)

Without God's light, there is only darkness. In Jesus, we see that God has not abandoned us in our suffering. Through Jesus's life, sacrificial death, and resurrection, we understand that no matter how dark the darkness gets, there is something stronger than the evil that surrounds us.

The wicked will try to convince us that their power is greater than God's, and their darkness is actually light, and that their lies are the truth. They will flee from the true light for fear of being exposed. They may deliberately try to extinguish the light through violence. They may also try to keep the light from shining at all by blocking access to the truth and spinning false narratives.

Yet, they will not succeed. Darkness cannot overcome the light. Oppressors can suppress and control the vulnerable and those who are weaker than they; but, if the oppressed know the truth, they cannot be forced to believe the lie. Once they have seen the light of God, they will never accept the darkness as truth. What's more, no amount of darkness or evil can take away the life that comes through faith in Jesus Christ.

As John has testified, “The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). And, “to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God” (John 1:12).

In the light of Jesus, the oppressed can see more clearly how dark the darkness truly is, and how beautiful and life-giving are God's love and grace. When they truly see Jesus for who he is, they will run for the light all the more. They will clutch onto the eternal life that is found only in him, as a man dying of thirst readily drinks from a cup of water generously offered to

him by a friend, or as a starving woman cradles a bowl of rice like a precious child when a caring person sacrificially shares their food, or as children collapse into the loving arms of their mothers or fathers after a terrifying experience of being lost or left alone in the dark.

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).

With Christ's love,

Dr. Tim

ဦးထင်ကျော်