

"On them has a light shone"

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 24 December 2024

Preacher: Ife Ojetayo

[0:00] Long ago, at many times, and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets.

! But in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also He created the world.

Hebrews 1, verse 1 and 2. And the prophet Isaiah says this, The people who walk in darkness have seen a great light.

Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has a light shone. Here we see wonderfully good news evoked in these two passages that were written almost a millennium apart.

But both passages have the person of our Lord Jesus Christ as the focal point, as its subject. He is the heir of all things, through whom the world was created.

[1:09] Please don't mind the children. Let them make noise if they want to. That's perfectly fine. Jesus Christ is the heir of all things, through whom the world was created.

He is the light shone in the darkness. I'll just try to speak over them, so just pay attention to me. He is the light shone in the darkness. And we, we are the recipients of this wondrous work of God's salvation.

Indeed, none of us were there when the event of the incarnation occurred. But that does not make it any less our story. It is for us.

Not just descendants of Abraham by blood. But for the whole world. The descendants of the first Adam. It is for us, all of us, that this promise belongs.

We were all in darkness. Deep darkness, Isaiah tells us. But thanks be to God. The light has shone out of darkness.

[2:21] And what's more? It has shone in our hearts, St. Paul says, To give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. When Jesus appeared, the heavens opened to declare the mystery and miracle of the incarnation.

Armies of angels appeared in the skies to shepherds by night. To marvel and to proclaim. That's what the angels were doing. They were marveling at this thing that has happened.

And proclaiming that God has come to dwell with man. That the infinite, transcendent creator of the stars would contain himself in a woman's womb.

Is a mystery beyond our comprehension. But that he did, and that he was born of the Blessed Virgin, as promised from of old, is what we celebrate today.

It is a fact of history. And that which we commemorate today is the event that all of human history has been looking towards since our fall and separation from God in the garden.

[3:39] He who called Adam and Eve in the garden, is the same one who promised that he would heal that which date broken. He is the same God who promised that he would come to rescue us from bondage.

The bondage of sin and death to which we've enslaved ourselves. God became man. He took on our mortality. He took on our mortality.

In order to raise us up to immortality. To be restored. To be restored in fellowship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

That's what the incarnation is about. He came to make all things new. St. Paul tells us in Hebrews, He is the radiance of the glory of God.

And the exact imprint of his nature. If you have any doubt what he's saying there, he's saying what we confess in the Nicene Creed. That Jesus Christ is very God and very God.

[4:48] And St. Paul goes on to say, He opposed the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty and I, having become as much superior to angels as the name that he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

He says, this is our God, our Savior, our Redeemer, our Rescuer. He is the radiance of the glory of God. The exact imprint of his nature. He's greater than angels.

He's greater than the prophets. And this is what St. John means when he opens his gospel. By saying the word he was in the beginning.

He is the word with God. In the beginning with God. Being very God of very God himself. All things were made through him.

And without him was not anything made that was made. Imagine. Just try. You can't. You can't. But try anyway to wrap your minds around the mystery and the wonder of that statement.

[6:00] God became man. In him was life. It has always been so. In him was life.

And the life was the light of men. We rebelled against the source of life. We thumbed our noses and shook our fist at his majesty.

We walked away from him in our sin. And we all did. But yet he sought us out. As he promised he will. And all of that promises to Abraham.

And to David. And to the saints in the Old Testament. Is fulfilled. On the night. Of his birth. The light shines in the darkness.

And the darkness has not overcome it. He is the true light. Which gives light to everyone. And he is coming to the world.

[7:09] What does this mean then? For you and I. That this light. The true light has come into the world. Imagine that some of you are believers in Jesus Christ.

Not some. I think most of you here this evening. Are believers in Jesus Christ. I don't want to assume that it's all of you. But I think most of you are. But what does that mean? Those of you who have grabbed.

Grabbed old of God. The Father. The Son. And the Holy Spirit. Those of you who have come by faith in Jesus Christ. Into fellowship with him.

We have just gone through Advent. Advent. We are beneficiaries.

We are beneficiaries. To remember that great truth. That light has come into the world. That we are recipients of that light. And not to give in. Or not to exchange the light.

[8:32] To go back into the darkness. That's part of the lesson of Christmas. As we enter this Christmas. As we enter this Christmas tide. It is for us to remember.

That we have the light. With Jesus Christ himself. It is. It is not. It is unfortunate. But it is.

It is natural. That the fallen world. Will do what. Fallen humanity has always done. Will. Bastardize. And poison. The truth. Of who God is. And even that we have done. With this holiday of Christmas. Often times. The focal point of Christmas. Is everything but Christ.

For brothers and sisters in Christ. Will you make that the focus. Of your celebration. This Christmas tide. Will you make Christ. And the good news.

[9:30] That has come into the world. At his birth. The focal point of your celebration. Of course. Celebrate. With all the traditions. That you have. And all the things that you do.

Enter into that. But you know. The deeper truth. That the world does not. You are the recipients. Of that great good news. That the world does not have.

You have the light of Christ. Do not put it under. A table. Do not hide it under a basket. Let it shine. Let it shine. And let it shine primarily. In your proclamation.

Of that good news. Live it out. But say it out. To your family and friends. Proclaim. That Christ the Lord has come. And then invite others.

To come with you. As the shepherds did. As the wise men from the east did. To come to this great God. Who has come. To make tabernacle among us.

[10:29] To come and worship. As you marvel. As you think about this great mystery. I hope that it will lead you. First and foremost. To worship. And as you worship.

I hope that you will remember then. As well. That this child. Who was born. Who became man. Who tabernacled among us. Came for specific purpose.

He came. To battle. Sin and death. In the background. Of that crib.

That manger. In the background of it. Was the cross. And he came. And he lived a life. That you and I could not live.

And then he died. The death. That we should have died. God. God. Became man. That he might save us.

[11:28] He became mortal. That he might raise us. To immortality. He came to dwell. Among us. That we.

Then may. Have fellowship. With God. Renewed fellowship. Again. This is the good news. Of Christmas. Brothers and sisters. In Christ. May this good news.

Be yours. As you. Along with your family. This Christmas tide. Celebrate the world. Becoming flesh. And dwelling among us. And may you. Proclaim.

With Saint John. The apostle. Because you have indeed. Seen his glory. The glory. As of the only son. From the father. Full of grace. And truth. If you receive.

Jesus Christ. You have seen his glory. It's not just. John's. To say here. It is yours. And mine. To say as well. You'll receive.

[12:24] His grace. And his truth. Be faithful witness. To that. Great event. Be faithful witness.

Just like. John the Baptist. And Saint John is here. Proclaim it. Live it out. Rejoice in it. And worship. There's God. Who has come to set us free.

In the name of the Father. And of the Son. And of the Holy Spirit. Amen. I'm going to be a little bit I'm going to be a little bit I'm going to be a little bit