

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: Bright Lights in a Dark World

SERMON REFERENCE: 1 Peter 3:13-16

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2316

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The first century world was very dark.
 - i) When Peter wrote the Scripture that we will study today, the Christians were despised.
 - ii) The Christians at that time were accused of insurrection and subversion because they would not bow down and call Caesar “Lord.”
 - iii) Christians were looked upon as an economic threat because there was a great business in idolatry.
 - iv) The lifestyle of Christians condemned others.
 - v) Christians were accused of incest because they called one another brother and sister, including their spouses.
 - vi) They were accused of cannibalism because they said that they were eating and drinking the body and blood of Jesus Christ at the Lord’s Supper.
- b) 1 Peter 3:13-16
 - i) The word “followers” in verse 13 is the word from which we get our word “zealot.”
- c) We find ourselves living in a time where there are those who want to terrorize us.
 - i) Our response is not to just hunker down and close up shop.
 - ii) There has never been a greater day, a greater age, or a greater time to preach the Gospel of Christ than in this day and age.
 - (1) We should be armed with the glorious Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with a mighty demonstration of love.
 - (a) But we cannot be silent.
- d) The time has come for us to speak, and Peter tells us in this passage of Scripture:
 - i) That we need to be real.
 - (1) We need to be followers of that which is good and not some sort of plastic mentality of Christianity.
 - ii) That we need to be ready.
 - (1) 1 Peter 3:15
 - (a) When was the last time someone asked you about your faith?
- e) Today’s message will look at six things, found in these verses in 1 Peter, that we need to be in this dark day in which we’re living.

2) WE MUST ENTHRONE CHRIST AS LORD (1 PETER 3:15)

- a) 1 Peter 3:15
 - i) The word “sanctify” means to set Him aside as special, above all, and as reigning Lord.
- b) Is Jesus Christ Lord in your life?
 - i) This does not mean, “Do you admit that He is Lord?”
 - ii) Have you ever bowed the knee to Him?

- iii) Charles Spurgeon, a preacher of yesteryear, said that if someone professes to be a Christian and says that they know what God wants them to do but they don't intend to do it, then it is our duty to tell that person that he is not saved.
 - iv) The apostles preached the Lordship of Christ.
 - (1) The word "Savior" is found only twice in the book of Acts.
 - (2) The title "Lord" is mentioned 92 times.
 - v) We often hear people say that we need to accept Christ as our Savior.
 - (1) We cannot have what He gives unless we accept who He is, and He is Lord.
 - vi) This question is not asking if you're a member of a church or if you've been baptized or if you know the plan of salvation.
 - (1) You're not saved by the plan of salvation but by the man of salvation, and His name is Jesus.
 - c) Some people think that salvation means calling upon the Lord Jesus Christ to meet their needs and looking to Him to take care of them while they go back to their old lifestyle.
 - i) They in essence are telling the Lord Jesus to take His hands off their life.
 - (1) This is not salvation.
 - d) Has there been a radical change in your life?
 - i) Is Jesus Christ the Lord of your life?
- 3) WE MUST BE READY WITH AN ANSWER (1 PETER 3:15)
 - a) 1 Peter 3:15
 - b) If you have a changed life, then people will come to you and ask you what the reason is for your hope.
 - i) On the day of Pentecost, the people asked, "What meaneth this?"
 - (1) Acts 2:12
 - ii) The people at Pentecost then asked, "What must we do?"
 - (1) Acts 2:37
 - (2) The reason many people today don't ask, "What must we do?" is because they haven't seen anything that is different.
 - iii) On the day of Pentecost, there was something that was unexplainable.
 - (1) Is there something about your life that is unexplainable?
 - (2) Can your life be explained apart from Jesus Christ?
 - c) We are to be ready to give an answer for the reason for our hope.
 - d) In 1 Peter 3:15, the word for "to give an answer" is the word from which we get our word "apologetics."
 - i) The word "apologetics" is a courtroom word that means "to give a defense of your faith."
 - ii) Can you defend your faith?
 - (1) Many people today are asking why an all-powerful, all-loving and all-knowing God allows bad and tragic things to happen to people.
 - (a) This is their argument:

- (i) If God were all good, then He would destroy evil.
 - (ii) If God were all powerful, then He could destroy evil.
 - (iii) But evil is not destroyed; hence, there is no such God.
 - (2) There is an answer in the Word of God to this question:
 - (a) Matthew 22:36-37
 - (i) This is the bottom line and sums it all up.
 - (b) The faith of Jesus Christ is built on love and life, not hate and death.
 - (c) God made man a free creature.
 - (i) God wanted man to love Him and to love one another.
 - (ii) Forced love is a contradiction in terms.
 - (iii) For a person to be able to love, he has to be able not to love.
 - (iv) If we were created where we could only love and do nothing else, then it wouldn't be love at all.
 - 1. We would just simply be machines.
 - (v) God gave man the freedom of choice.
 - (d) We cannot choose to love unless we can choose not to love.
 - (e) Love is the highest good.
 - (f) For God to take away our choice would be for God to destroy the highest good.
 - (i) If God were to do that and destroy evil (which would be to destroy choice), then that act itself would be evil.
 - (g) God does not destroy evil; He defeats evil by putting His Son upon a cross.
 - (i) John 15:13
- 4) WE MUST PRACTICE GENUINE HUMILITY (1 PETER 3:15)
- a) There is no time to strut in arrogance.
 - b) 1 Peter 3:15
 - i) Meekness is not weakness.
 - (1) It is strength under control.
 - ii) Fear is not trembling at what is happening around us.
 - (1) It speaks of a holy reverence for Almighty God.
 - c) America will not be won by arguments alone or by the ballot box.
 - i) There are many people who think of Christians as arrogant.
 - ii) Many people will call us hate mongers and will think of us as intolerant.
 - iii) We must be careful not to use angry rhetoric when we respond to others.
 - iv) James 1:19-20
 - (1) Our anger and wrath do not bring about God's righteousness.
 - (a) The Lord Jesus showed anger against those who were persecuting helpless people.
 - (b) He showed anger toward the religious hypocrites of His day.
 - (c) But to those who were victims of sin, He showed love.
 - d) We need to be ready to give an answer, but to also show love in genuine humility.

- i) It is possible to be so arrogant that we'll win the argument but lose the audience.
 - e) It is not the time to point fingers at everyone else.
 - i) 1 Peter 4:17
 - ii) All that has happened in America today has happened on our watch.
 - iii) We need to confess the sins of the church.
 - (1) We need to confess our laziness, our selfishness, our pride, and our refusal to live a separated life and to share the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 5) WE MUST LIVE A SUPERIOR LIFESTYLE (1 PETER 3:16)
- a) 1 Peter 3:16
 - i) We will be falsely accused, but it will be to their shame because our lifestyle will be superior.
 - b) We are to be blameless.
 - i) This does not mean sinless.
 - ii) 1 Peter 3:15 says that people will ask us questions about the hope that is in us because they can see something different about us.
 - c) 1 Peter 2:12
 - i) The word "conversation" here means "behavior."
 - ii) When the Lord Jesus comes again, they will have to say that Christians were living a superior lifestyle.
 - d) We need to out-love, out-live, out-give, out-pray and out-witness the people of this world.
 - i) Earn respect.
 - ii) Let them see your good works.
 - e) When Paul and Silas were in the Philippian jail, others around them were cursing and moaning.
 - i) Paul and Silas were praying.
 - ii) Paul and Silas were singing praises to God and giving God thanks.
 - iii) Everyone in the prison saw the difference.
 - (1) Acts 16:28-31
 - iv) There was something different about their lifestyle in the midst of tribulation.
 - (1) The Bible doesn't say that we won't have tribulation.
 - v) Paul and Silas were a bright light in a dark place, and that's the reason the jailer asked them what he must do to be saved.
 - (1) Acts 16:30-31
- 6) WE MUST DISPLAY GENUINE LOVE (1 PETER 4:8-9)
- a) 1 Peter 4:8-9
 - i) The word "charity" in this passage means "love."
 - b) Troubling circumstances and situations give us an opportunity to respond in love.

- c) As believers in Christ, we believe that abortion is the shedding of innocent blood.
 - i) But what are we doing for the unwed mother who needs help?
 - ii) We are to show them love.
 - d) There are many people whose homes have been severed by divorce.
 - i) We need to reach out to them and love them in the name of the Lord Jesus.
 - e) Pornography is horrible and vile.
 - i) It is antithetical to true love and is based on lust.
 - (1) Lust wants to get; love wants to give.
 - ii) Many people today are caught up in pornography.
 - (1) We should reach out to them in love and share with them where the answer is found, in the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - f) We should reach out in love to those who are caught in a lifestyle of perversion and demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ.
 - g) If we are to be bright lights in a dark world, then we need to be known not merely for what we're against but what we are for.
- 7) WE MUST ALWAYS HOLD ON TO HOPE (1 PETER 3:15)
- a) 1 Peter 3:15
 - i) The word "hope" here does not mean a mere wish or fond desire.
 - (1) It means rock-ribbed truth based on the Word of God.
 - (2) It is divine certainty based on the Word of God.
 - b) No matter how dark the day is, we are on the winning side.
 - i) Sin cannot win.
 - ii) Faith cannot fail.
 - iii) Have faith in God.
 - c) Our job is not ultimately to save America or to preserve our lifestyle or our freedoms.
 - i) We must do these things, but our main responsibility is to stand for Jesus Christ.
 - ii) We must put our hope, our faith and our prayers in something that cannot fail and in a Kingdom that cannot be shaken.
 - (1) That is our hope.
 - d) Statistics show that more souls are coming to Christ in this day and in this age than since the Lord Jesus walked this Earth.
 - e) Instead of hunkering down in a corner, we need to go out in the name of the Lord Jesus and be bright lights in this dark world.
 - i) God is our source of supply.
 - ii) The Holy Spirit is our ally.
 - iii) Jesus Christ is our Commander in Chief.
- 8) CONCLUSION
- a) Is Jesus Christ the Lord of your life?

- i) Why should souls around the world be coming to Jesus and you be left out?
- ii) The Lord Jesus died on the cross for you, and He rose again.
- b) Would you like to be saved?
 - i) You can be today.
- c) Pray to Him now and ask Him to come into your life.
- d) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16