



Sermon, Sunday April 7, 2024 “From Darkness to Light”

SCRIPTURE: 1 Peter 2:1-10 ¹Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. ²Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— ³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. ⁴Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God’s sight, and ⁵like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶For it stands in scripture: “See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.” ⁷This honor, then, is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner,” ⁸and “A stone that makes them stumble and a rock that makes them fall.” They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. ⁹But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Introduction: Please experience the richness of the Bible.

Today is the 2nd Sunday of Easter. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ! Not many modern Christians read the Bible often. Of course, there are exceptions. Why do these things happen? It may be because we are busy with life, but I think the main reason is that the Bible feels distant to modern people.

The reason it is difficult for us to understand the Bible is because it contains many religious metaphors and symbols. These metaphors also appear in today’s text. In today’s text, expressions such as **“pure spiritual milk, a living stone, a spiritual house, spiritual sacrifice, holy priesthood, a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, darkness and marvelous light”**.

To us, these expressions seem to say something true, but they sound abstract. Also, they seem unrelated to our reality. However, these impressions stem from our ignorance and misunderstanding. Through today’s text, we can learn how early Christians lived in the rich power of the Word.

Verse 9 of today’s text says: **“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”**

I hope you will be blessed to deeply experience the richness of the Bible through today’s message.

Body: Darkness and His marvelous light.

Verse 9 of today’s text, which states that God led Christians from darkness to **“marvelous light,”** is an accurate expression of our spiritual existence. Apostle Peter asks us through this verse, **“Are you enjoying freedom in this worldly life and living in ‘marvelous light?’”**

What is the **“marvelous light”** mentioned by Apostle Peter?



To understand **‘marvelous light’**, we must first think about darkness without light. In the Four Gospels, we can see people who formed a hostile relationship with Jesus and did not understand His ministry. They are the scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees. All of them were exemplary people who followed the religious traditions of Judaism in a very exemplary manner.

However, they did not understand why Jesus was angry at people who healed sick people on the Sabbath and bought and sold things in God's holy temple. In other words, they did not understand why Jesus did not obey Jewish religious authority. Because they considered the law as an absolute rule of life. According to today's text, this kind of life and attitude is darkness.

The darkness mentioned in today's text is not simply a physical phenomenon. It means lifelessness, life diminished, or distorted. In our lives, we see people who look good on the outside but are dark on the inside. On the contrary, there are those who are shabby on the outside but shine with life on the inside. Please think about the scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees I mentioned above. They were sophisticated people who were envied and respected by many. However, although on the outside they looked like people living in a world of light, they were actually living in darkness.

To specifically understand the darkness we are talking about in today's text, we need to understand the era in which today's text was written. Although New Testament scholars differ in the date of the writing of 1 Peter, they all agree that 1 Peter was set against the backdrop of severe persecution of Christians by the Roman regime. At the time, there were two political reasons for the Roman government's persecution of Christianity. One was to strengthen the cult of the Roman emperor, and the other was to avoid criticism of the Roman regime by attacking Christianity.

In fact, the Roman civilization recorded in secular history and its world historical influence were enormous, but Peter clearly saw through the limitations of Roman civilization. He knew exactly the limits of the world. Peter says that the limit is darkness.

However, the limits of this world are not visible to many people. Because the world hides its limitations. The same thing happens today. We live without realizing the limitations of a world filled with material civilization, science and technology, and various philosophies and ideas.

However, during the Roman era, Christians were able to recognize the darkness of the world because they experienced the absolute light of life in Christ Jesus. We must know the darkness to feel the light, and only by experiencing the light can we see through the darkness.

So what is the **‘marvelous light’** that 1 Peter speaks of? Light is a metaphor for salvation. In other words, the fact that we entered the **‘marvelous light’** means that we experienced amazing salvation. Can we experience this marvelous light in our ordinary daily lives? What is your answer? My answer is **“Yes”**.

There are times in our lives when we meet people who see the world from a different perspective than us. When we get bored and complain about our repetitive daily life, some people find **‘the Life’** in the daily life we experience and become happy and grateful in it. The lives of these people bring positive changes to the lives of others.

Also, the **‘marvelous light’** that Apostle Peter speaks of in today's text is not natural light but **‘God's light.’** This refers to the life of God. What is important here is to recognize and experience what it means specifically to have entered the life of God. Today's text describes such a life as **“a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people.”** The point of these expressions is to be free from the stereotypes of the world that diminish our lives.

Apostle Paul expressed this life as a free being in **2 Corinthians 5:17**, **“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”** This verse means that if we are in Jesus, anything old has passed away and has no influence on us.



But many people still cling to the old things. Some people struggle with their shameful past, while others are proud of their past. Both ways destroy our lives.

However, the message that today's text gives us is clear. If we are now in Christ, we are in that life. Therefore, we no longer have anything to be ashamed of about the past, or conversely, we have nothing to be proud of. Because we feel and know that our present life in Jesus Christ is the highest peak of our lives. This kind of life is filled with the Holy Spirit. This is the life of living within the marvelous light that appears in today's text.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ!

Do you think my words about dwelling in the '**marvelous light**' are too idealistic and have nothing to do with the real world? Do you think I am saying this because I do not know the pain and difficulties that humans experience in life? Also, do my words to abide in the '**marvelous light**' sound like I am saying that if you have faith, everything can be solved?

I am not saying that you can easily overcome difficulties if you have faith. In fact, it takes time to get through the tunnel of pain. But what we must not forget is that even in various unfortunate situations, God's marvelous light does not leave us. The problem for us is that we are so distracted by what is happening to us that we cannot see the light of God. However, all misfortunes eventually pass.

Also, all happy things pass. When our bodies become weak and we reach the threshold of death, the achievements we have made in this world, good clothes, houses, delicious food, all become meaningless. The conditions for happiness in our lives fade with time.

Therefore, in any case, what is important is that our lives must be in God's marvelous light. This kind of life is about not losing sight of the fact that this moment is the peak of the life that God has allowed us. This is faith, spirituality, and the ability to live.

Conclusion: Praise God for His Grace

Now let's summarize today's message. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ! How can we live without losing sight of the fact that this moment is the peak of the life that God has allowed us to live? There is only one way. We must live by pursuing God's marvelous light to the end. This is why we regularly attend worship services, read the Bible, and pray.

We must also pursue God's marvelous light with sincerity. So what is it that you pursue with sincerity? Please consider the words "**You are a chosen race**" mentioned earlier. This means that we can now live as people chosen by God. There are people who can see the meaning of these words, and there are people who cannot.

Now we are worshipping at church. Some people feel how blessed this worship is, and some do not. If we know that some people may not be able to gather for worship for various reasons, we know that our worship is an event that could not have happened if God had not chosen us. Those who know this will feel their hearts warm at the words, "You are a chosen race." This heart-warming experience is living in the marvelous light of God.

Today, **1 Peter 2:9** says: "**But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.**" I hope that these words will warm our hearts and bless us. Amen!

