

SERMON SERIES: *The True Light Has Come*

SERMON TITLE: *Jesus: The Light of New Creation*

SCRIPTURE: John 1:1-5,12-13, 1 Corinthians 15, John 5:29, Romans 8:19,21,22, Revelation 21:2-5,8, 2 Peter 3:9, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

#1 Just as Jesus was the agent through which God made creation, he is also the agent through which God would make a RENEWED CREATION.

- Just as God worked through Jesus in Genesis 1 to bring the world from a state “formlessness, emptiness, and darkness” to a state of order and fullness, God, with arrival of Jesus in the world, was once again working through Jesus to bring the world out of state of emptiness and darkness into a state of order and fullness.
- This time around, the emptiness and darkness that God through Christ would work to overcome was not literal, physical darkness but rather the darkness of evil, sin, and death and the emptiness it creates in the world and in people’s hearts.
- God would not start from scratch and create an entirely new world and human race by scrapping the first, but rather, he would take the world and the human race and make them new.
- Jesus’s birth was the very first rays of light signaling that the long darkness of night was on its way out for good and God’s restoration project was about to begin.
- The baby in the manger was not just how individual sinners were going to be made right with God but also how God was going to put the entire world right.

#2 Jesus’s resurrection was the OFFICIAL LAUNCH of God’s renewed creation.

- The Apostle Paul called Jesus the “firstfruits” of God’s renewed creation (1 Corinthians 15).
- What God did to Jesus’s dead body, that is healed it, made it new, and raised it to life to never suffer or die again, God was going to do to other dead things.

#3 Jesus will renew those individuals that have BELIEVED IN and RECEIVED him.

- Like Jesus, they will be healed, raised to new life, never to suffer and die again.
- Those who have rejected Jesus will also be resurrected. However, they will be resurrected to a life of condemnation (John 5:29).
 - They will not be renewed, but rather, continue to fall apart and unravel and disintegrate more deeply into the darkness of evil for all of eternity.

#4 Jesus will renew the NONHUMAN creation.

- Due to our poor stewardship of God's good nonhuman creation, the Apostle Paul states in Romans 8:22 that the nonhuman creation is "groaning."
- Creation is eagerly waiting for the "sons of God" to be revealed (Romans 8:19).
 - Who are they?
 - Individuals who have believed in and received Jesus as Savior and Lord, and as result, have been adopted into God's family.
 - What does it mean for these individuals to be revealed?
 - It means for them to be resurrected and renewed so that they are now what God always intended for them to be...his perfect image bearers that are capable of ruling over the world with righteousness, justice, and peace.
 - When God renews his people ("sons of God"), their rule will no longer corrupt creation but rather liberate creation to become all that God designed it to be!
- Those who reject Christ will be eternally quarantined in a place that Revelation 21:8 describes as a lake which burns with fire and brimstone.
- Revelation 21:2-5

APPLICATION

1. God is not dragging his feet (2 Peter 3:9).
2. God is renewing individuals inwardly leading to our behavior change (John 1:12-13).

3. God's Spirit at work inside of individual human hearts is evidence that God's renewal project is progressing and a guarantee that God will bring it to completion (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).
4. As we wait for Jesus to return and make all things new, we get to choose our perspective (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In your own words, explain what it means to believe in and receive Jesus. Be courageous and share your explanation with your group.
2. Have you believed in and received Jesus? If so, how and when? If not, what is keeping you from doing so?
3. When you think about life in a resurrected body, with the resurrected Jesus, in the resurrected world, what excites you the most?
4. Do you struggle with the Bible's teaching on Hell? Why or why not?
5. How is God currently changing you?
6. What has your focus been on lately? Has it been on God's renewal project or something else? List some practical ways that you can keep your focus on God's renewal project this week.
7. What might it look like for us to live as God's future people now?
8. Name one person in your life that you would like to see believe in and receive Jesus. What is one practical step you can take in the next month to be a witness to this person? As a group, pray for the people mentioned.
9. As we wrap up the true light sermon series, what is one major takeaway for you?