

THE DARKNESS CANNOT GRASP THE LIGHT

JOHN 8V21-42

Once more Jesus said to them, "I am going away, and you will look for me, and you will die in your sin. Where I go, you cannot come."²² This made the Jews ask, "Will he kill himself? Is that why he says, 'Where I go, you cannot come'?"

²³ But he continued, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. ²⁴ I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am he, you will indeed die in your sins."

²⁵ "Who are you?" they asked.

"Just what I have been telling you from the beginning," Jesus replied. ²⁶ "I have much to say in judgment of you. But he who sent me is trustworthy, and what I have heard from him I tell the world."

²⁷ They did not understand that he was telling them about his Father. ²⁸ So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. ²⁹ The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him." ³⁰ Even as he spoke, many believed in him.

³¹ To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³² Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."³³ They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?"³⁴ Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. ³⁵ Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. ³⁷ I know that you are Abraham's descendants. Yet you are looking for a way to kill me, because you have no room for my word. ³⁸ I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you are doing what you have heard from your father."³⁹ "Abraham is our father," they answered.

"If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would do what Abraham did. ⁴⁰ As it is, you are looking for a way to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. ⁴¹ You are doing the works of your own father."⁴² "We are not illegitimate children," they protested. "The only Father we have is God himself."

⁴² Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I have come here from God. I have not come on my own; God sent me."

"THE LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS AND THE DARKNESS CANNOT OVERCOME IT"

John 1v5

'*katalambuno*' - lay hold of, overcome, comprehend, apprehend, seize, grasp.

Jesus in Jerusalem.

The Light of the world

- cannot be grasped by those he came to.

"you are from below; I am from above."

*"I do nothing on my own;
but only what he has told me to do"*

"you will know the truth and the truth will set you free"

"everyone who sins is a slave to sin"

Identity

Who defines your identity?

- External labels: (nationality, ethnicity, age, gender, social class, education, employment...)

- Internal desires: "I am what I feel I want to be"

'gnostic spirituality then is not one of obedience and faith but rather breaking boundaries, rejecting definitions and transgressing limits. Answers are to be found within.

STAND FIRM

(it believes) The great quest of life is to discover who you really are – to ignore what those around you say
...flout any external authority.
To look inside, find your true self, and self-create.”
- Mark Sayers

- Heaven's truth:
our true identity is defined by God, our Creator & Father.

Freedom

“the darkness could not grasp it”

Our understanding of freedom, is linked to our view of identity

I am going away, you cannot come.
I am not of this world

Jesus' understanding of freedom is radically different from the world's

'It turned out 'any dream would do, provided it was *my dream*. The authority of the individual and the primacy of thinking for yourself were taken to a whole new level. 'Freedom' was the watchword. Freedom from authority. Freedom from 'nature'. Free to be me – whoever 'me' wants to be.' - Glynn Harrison

Freedom rooted in our desires - leads to slavery.

Freedom rooted in God's grace and mercy - leads to life

How then do we live as light confronting the darkness.

- Not neutral.
- Don't be grasped

Be on your guard, stand firm in faith, be courageous, be strong
1 Corin 16v13

3 ways to stand firm.

1. In faith

“If you do not stand firm in faith, you will not stand at all”

More deeply rooted in faith, not sight.
In heaven's reality, not shaped by the pressures around us.
Deepen our roots into relationship with God, through prayer.

2. Together

Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.

Colossians 4:12

3. In spiritual battle.

Our battle is not against flesh and blood.. Stand firm then - Eph 6v12

2018 - Year of Prayer:

Dig deeper roots,
build stronger friendships,
see darkness pushed back