

Readings:

John 6:63; 8:12; 17:8

Introduction

There are a number of titles of the Lord beginning with the letter "L", as well as attributes He has. For instance, He is:

- a) "Lord of the harvest" (Matt. 9:38); "Lion of the tribe of Juda" (Rev. 5:5); "Lamb of God" (Jn. 1:29); and "Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15).
- b) Some of His attributes are the "Altogether Lovely" (Song of Sol. 5:16), and the one who is "meek and lowly in heart" (Matt. 11:29).
- c) This consideration will be on Christ as the Light, but in a particular way.
 - i) We will consider Him as the Light who was God's spokesman on the religious distortions of the religious leaders.
 - ii) Being the "Light of men" (Jn. 1:4), He illuminated where distortions were made by man, and in love sought to correct them.
 1. The ancient world was no different from today in that there was an abundance of religious hypocrisy and the distortions of divine truth. Man sought to "adjust" God's laws (the foreshadowing of the activity of the beast (Dan. 7:25) to suit the changing cultural acceptances of man and the decisions made by the governments of men.
 2. When the Lord, as the Light, spoke the truth and exposed the distortions, it resulted in hatred.
 - (a) He Himself taught, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (Jn. 3:20).

Some Of The Distortions The Lord Exposed

(The speaker can take whichever ones of the following he feels guided to more fully consider)

- 1) The distortion of motives and the deliberate deception
 - a) Matthew gives several examples of this distortion when He recorded the laws of the kingdom and the misuse of the needs of the people who came to the temple (Matt. 6:1-5; 21:12-13). In this they were using the graciousness of God for their own material advantage (Jn. 2:13-16).
- 2) The distortion of true values and the resulting living for the now and not eternity
 - a) The Lord spoke against this when He told the people, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:19-21).
- 3) The distortion of proud imagination instead of walking humbly with God
 - a) How proud the Pharisees were of their traditions and scrupulousness to the law, therefore they would not eat with publicans and sinners and questioned the disciples on this matter. In His answer the Lord said, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matt. 9:11-12).
- 4) The distortion of failing to live according to the deeper meaning and spirit of the law
 - a) This was illustrated by the Lord in His answer to those who ridiculed the disciples for plucking the ears of corn (Mk. 2:23-27). Furthermore, they were adding their traditions to the law.

Christ As The Light and Man's Distortion Of The Truth

- 5) The distortion which made the law more important than life itself, and showing the true meaning of the sabbath
 - a) When they planted a man before Him on the sabbath day they asked the Lord the question, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days?" The Lord then showed their hypocrisy and the importance of life over tradition (Matt. 12:9-14). The same truth is taught in John 5:9-10 concerning the man who carried his bed on the sabbath after being healed by the Lord (Jn. 5:9-10; Lk. 13:14-16).
- 6) The distortion of twisting divine laws by pharisaical legalism
 - a) He scolded the scribes and Pharisees saying, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess" (Matt. 23:23-25).
- 7) Their distorted views on separation
 - a) Instead of being a witness to the truth of God and missionaries (Isa. 49:3, 6; Matt. 5:13-15, and the story of the good Samaritan), they had distorted separation and degraded it into isolation. The Lord showed this was wrong by speaking to the woman at the well (Jn. 4:7-27). The same evilness was shown when the men could not say, "Shibboleth" (Jud. 12:6), they were to be rejected by Israel.
- 8) Their distorted view that physical relationship meant spiritual relationship and freedom
 - a) Because the religious rulers professed to be free, the Lord said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you" (Jn. 8:31-37).
- 9) Their distorted view on true righteousness
 - a) A righteousness which is only in appearance will never satisfy God. To those who sought such an air of spirituality the Lord told the parable of the publican and the Pharisee who went to the temple to pray (Lk. 18:9-14; Matt. 15:7-9).

Being The Light He Could Do Nothing Else But Evaluate Perfectly

- 1) While the Lord will acknowledge the righteousness of the Pharisees, He will also point out the error of their attitudes and likens them to "whited sepulchres" (Matt. 23:27). He will call them "blind guides" (Matt. 23:16); "fools" (Matt. 23:17); "serpents" (Matt. 23:33); "hypocrites" (Matt. 23:27).
- 2) As the Light He brought out the ire in the religious community. This was seen when the religious leaders sent soldiers to take Him and the response of the religious leaders to the soldiers (Jn. 7:45-49). The same belittling of the Lord was seen in how they spoke of Him to the man who was born blind (Jn. 9:1-38).
- 3) He was angry at the stubborn refusal to acknowledge the truth as when in the synagogue. "When He had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, He saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other" (Mk. 3:1-5).

Sermon Outlines
Christ As The Light and Man's Distortion Of The Truth

Practical Application

When listening to these truths, is it possible that some of us may feel the Holy Spirit speaking to us about our own distortions?

- a) You are not alone, for we are all distorted to some degree in various things, then what can we do?
- b) Ask the Lord for help to be changed so that we are more like the Lord and truly be lights in the world.

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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