

## **Light; Love; Life by Rodney and Sarah Bowen**

### Light

In the Bible light is a symbol of truth and purity. Light is connected with what is real and good; while darkness is a symbol of blindness, sin, and being without God. "God is light, in Him there is no darkness at all" (1st John 1:5).

Why is God like light?

- He is open not secret, he wants us to know him John 17:3
- He is illuminating, glorious, and beautiful Psalms 104:1, 2
- Like the sun, He is our source of life Genesis 1:1-3; James 1:17
- He is pure, true, and holy 1st Peter 1:15, 16

God sent Jesus (His son) as a light to the world to show clearly who He is. Jesus showed God's light perfectly in the way that he lived and treated others. Jesus said "I am the light of the world, whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). If we want light in our lives we have to follow the example of Jesus. This means that we have to adopt his attitude and way of life; God's word (The Bible) shows us how to do this. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" (Psalms 119:105).

### Love

Just as God is the creator of light, he is also the source of love. John, one of Jesus' Apostles, tells us: "Dear friends, let us love one another, because Love comes from God; and everyone who loves has received the new Life from God and knows God. He who does not love has not learnt to know God; for God is Love." (1 John 4:7-9, 20th Century N.T.). John's beautiful words show us that "God is love." God shows His love through His actions, especially in the way that He sent His only son, Jesus Christ, to save us. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

God shows us that true love is not just an emotional thing, but that it's active and seen in the way we treat others. God's love shines through perfectly in Jesus' life. "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers" (1st John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:4). Jesus example of selfless love is the goal of all of His followers. He showed us that if we really love God we will do the things He asks us to. Jesus also taught us that we have to show love to everyone, even when it might be the last thing that we want to do (Matthew 5:46-48). "Let us not love with words or tongue, but with actions and in truth" (1st John 3:18; Matthew 25:34-46; James 1:22; 1st Corinthians 13:4-13).

### Life

As the Creator, God is the source of all life; therefore it is only right to look to Him to show us the best way to live. The Bible gives us heaps of practical advice on ways that we should live and treat other people (Matthew Ch's 5-7; Romans 12:9-21; Proverbs 2:1-15). Once again the best example of how to live can be seen in the life of Jesus Christ. In fact he is the only way to eternal life. "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His son. He who has the son has life; he who does not have the son of God does not have life" (1st John 5:11-12; see also John 17:3).

God gives us the choice between following His son and having eternal life; and living our own way and being forgotten. Jesus dedicated his life to obeying his Father (John 5:19; 6:38). He gave himself completely to doing God's will rather than following his human desires, even going so far as giving his life for us. In the same way we have to surrender our lives to God and do what He wants us to. One important step towards this is baptism. At baptism we symbolically "die" to our old way of life (Romans 6). We join ourselves to Jesus, becoming part of God's family, and publicly declare our intention to live our lives in dedication to God. Then by God's grace, we can look forward to the blessing of eternal life in the service of God, the source of all life. "This day...I have set before you life and death...Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to His voice and hold fast to Him. For the LORD is your life" (Deuteronomy 30:19-20).

The choice that is before us is, light or darkness; love or hate; life or death.