

What Jesus Accomplished at the Cross (He accomplished EVERYTHING) He Delivered us from Darkness!

1. Review?
 - a. **Forgiveness**
 - b. **Expiated our sin**
 - c. **Secured Intimacy** – thoughts from Intimacy with God chapter. God isn't my refueling station so I can do stuff. If I'm living for the thrill of the "stuff" (ministry) and not for the intimacy with God, I have it backwards. I need to fall in love with God and not in how I can use Him for what I perceive are His purposes.
 - d. **Took our Sicknesses, Sorrows and Sin**

2. **Delivered us from Darkness**
 - a. We all understand what darkness is, because we experience it every day when the sun goes down. But we have no comprehension of it like they did in the first century, where there were no electric street lamps, floodlights, or flashlights.
 - b. **The closest thing I have ever got to experience with regard to 1st century darkness is going to a remote campground in Bryce Canyon, with no campfires, and groping my way to the restroom because I couldn't find our flashlight, and nearly tripping over 2 other families tents on the way. This was made worse by fact that I had altitude sickness and was going to the bathroom about every 20 minutes. I really began to understand what "groping in the darkness" felt like.**
 - c. Darkness for people in the age before gas lights and electricity was a problem. You spent your nights in your homes. You didn't go out into the darkness. You had a pot in your home that you did your business in, so you wouldn't have to go out into the darkness. Candles and oil lamps didn't do much good in the wind, and torches were dangerous. A city would essentially come to a halt at nighttime, because of darkness. And Jesus makes this comparison between darkness (evil) and light (Himself).

3. Jesus talked about darkness as a metaphor for evil.
 - a. John 3:19-21 *"This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. "For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. "But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."*
 - b. John 12:46 *"I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain (abide) in darkness."*
 - i. Criminals, evil doers who didn't want to be identified, did their deeds in the darkness, under it cover, so their deeds would be hidden. Darkness=secrecy.
 - ii. Jesus came to deliver us FROM darkness. (evil).

4. I recently went to a prayer conference in Cleveland for churches across the area that was to help us get insights into the reason why revival is taking so long in our region. The folks leading it had been to Uganda, where God has stirred the revival fires and literally transformed an entire country in just a few years.
 - a. They shared with us a definition of revival that fits into our topic today. **"Revival is when the grip of darkness over people and territories is broken or weakened and the Holy Spirit is allowed to gain more control bringing forth a greater manifestation of the Kingdom of God."**
 - b. They shared with us that revival is about transformation.
 - i. **Revival is about Transformation from Darkness to Light.**

- c. Uganda had Idi Amin, a ruthless dictator, who killed his own people by the hundreds of thousands. After he was removed, the country entered a brutal civil war in which children were forced into the fight, to even kill their own families. This was followed by an AIDS epidemic
 - i. A broken nation, with broken people was crushed under the darkness of evil in the worst kind imaginable. And then something happened. A group of pastors from across denominational lines got together and began to pray. They prayed that God would set their nation free from the darkness.
 - ii. Then in December 26, 2003, the largest prayer gathering in the history of Uganda was held. All through the night from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. 25,000 pastors mobilized three million Christians to pray in 50 stadiums -- one in each district of the nation.
 - iii. Today, observers say Uganda is one of the most transformed nations on the face of the earth. They have seen God transform the political system, the marketplace, and the church.
 - 1. At 8 A.M. in the State House, people pray. The Parliament doesn't want to discuss things until they pray. The judges don't want to judge until they pray. The police are faxing prayer requests to the judges. The crime rate is dropping down 70 percent in some communities. A major bank in the capital city of Kampala plays praise and worship music on all 11 floors.
 - 2. Because God is everywhere, people are dreaming spiritual dreams. *A local pastor said, "We've had Muslims and witch doctors come to our church saying, "I have never been to church in my life, but I had a dream. In my dream, I was putting on rags and rotten stuff. Somebody was telling me that I should come to church to get clean, white clothes. So I am here to find out if you give out clothes." They don't understand the dream. When you tell them the meaning of it, they burst into tears and give their lives to Jesus. People come to our intercessors, who spend the night in the church, and say, "I cannot sleep. Something is telling me that I must give my life to Jesus." These people end up receiving Christ in the middle of the night."*
 - 3. At one point, AIDS in Uganda was at 33.3 percent. The World Health Organization predicted that Uganda's economy would collapse by 1999 or 2000 because there would be only widows and orphans left. So people sought the Lord and prayed. Today, thanks to prayer, education, and abstinence campaigns, aids has dropped to 5 percent. It is the only African nation where AIDS is on the decline!
 - d. Let me repeat the definition of Revival: **“Revival is when the grip of darkness over people and territories is broken or weakened and the Holy Spirit is allowed to gain more control bringing forth a greater manifestation of the Kingdom of God.”**
 - e. *(Are we looking for the wrong evidences of revival? Are we looking for signs and wonders instead of transformation?)
5. So what is our trouble in America? What is our trouble in Northeastern Ohio? What is our trouble here in Madison? Why does such darkness persist?
- a. Could it be that the church is asleep in the darkness, instead of exposing the darkness?
 - b. Could it be that the church (that’s you and me) have permitted darkness in our own lives?
 - c. Could it be that the church (that’s you and me) have been walking in darkness as well?
6. **1 John 5:7-9** *“This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.”*
- a. Jesus came to deliver us from darkness...just as the skit demonstrated.
 - i. Darkness has shades, doesn’t it? Yet every shade is still darkness. It is the absence of light.

- ii. But pure light is different. It is blinding when you look at it.
- b. Here are 7 areas of darkness that cover our nation. Some of which we are familiar with battling, and others that we have simply learned to live with and coexist with. It is the act of complicity with darkness (as 1 Jn 5:7 *If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth*) that should shake us to our core!
 - i. **Spiritual Forces** (these are real and they are problematic, but since battling spiritual forces is external, we prefer to focus our efforts against them).
 - ii. **The World System** (the world and the government make good scapegoats for us. They are a real force and a dangerous one as well. But again, it is easier to focus upon the world system as it takes the onus off of us)
 - iii. **Woundedness** – did you know your wounds are sources of darkness? They are open doors (like an open wound is to infection) to the work of the enemy? I have seen this first hand in my own life. I permitted my wounding from my childhood to infect my family because I didn't want to deal with the pain I had experienced and the unforgiveness that I was struggling with. Some of you have personally experienced the evil of woundedness of another or how your woundedness has hurt someone close to you. That is darkness. We must not remain in it!
 - iv. **Physical Oppression** – Slavery is a form of physical oppression, just as persecution can be.
 - 1. Economic oppression (like usury) is a source of darkness and smothers us. It is why the bible prohibits it.
 - 2. Emotional or physical abuse in a home is oppression. It is darkness.
 - v. **The Power of Sin** – did you know sin is a power? It isn't just something you do, it is a power?
 - 1. Jesus came to destroy its power. But it gets its power from the law.
 - 2. Sin has a power of its own. It becomes addictive and intoxicating. Sin can lead to other problems like spiritual blindness.
 - 3. Sin, if tolerated, leads so many other terrors, and opens doors to our lives in which darkness will only get darkness. That is why the bible talks about those (in Romans 1) who have their "minds darkened"
 - a. Romans 1:21-23 *For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures."*
 - vi. **Self-Life** (and self-reliance) – self help, doing in human strength what should only be done in the power of God.
 - 1. Self sufficiency one of the darkneses that envelopes America!
 - 2. We can do so much on our own that we don't even often pray about it, and worse yet, wouldn't know what it looked like if God actually did something in our midst. We are so enamored with our own ability and accomplishments.
 - 3. We often assume we know what God means instead of praying **deeply** about it.
 - 4. **Praying from our head** instead of entering the presence of God. *(**John Mulinde's experience of "I've failed."**)
 - 5. Hardness of our hearts! **Measure your self-life by your prayer life!**
 - vii. **Spiritual blindness** – BLINDNESS!
 - 1. We cannot see what the Word of God so plainly says because of pride, religious spirits (desire to control God), and self-righteousness.
 - 2. We would rather proclaim that we are "right" than **BE RIGHT**" with God.
 - 3. When the bible plainly says something, we explain it away, because we cannot understand it or lack the faith to grasp it.

- a. It is so much easier to say that the Apostles could do miracles because they were special, but God doesn't work that way anymore.
 - 4. We have spiritual blindness everywhere. We call evil good and good evil. The bible has a word for that... **Woe!**
 - 5. Isaiah 5:20 *“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!”*
 - 6. Yes, everyone of us is guilty of this! **While I do not want to label movies or books as bad or good, we ought to be thinking about the fact that we are light and should have nothing to do with darkness before we buy that movie ticket or read a book that we know crosses the line.**
 - a. In my generation, vampires were symbolic of evil and abstinence (waiting until you were married) was considered something virtuous. Now they are reversed. Vampires are proclaimed as heroes and teaching abstinence is outlawed in schooled and ridiculed by society. **That is darkness. Seductive darkness.**
 - b. It is insipid: While I can pat myself on the back and say I don't look at pornography, do I avert my eyes or change the channel on television when the scene gets steamy? **That's darkness. Seductive darkness.**
 - c. You might not rob banks, but do you pad your timecard at work, surf the internet on company time, take a longer than usual lunch and not take off your time for it? **That's darkness. Seductive darkness.**
 - d. You might not practice witchcraft, but do you read your horoscope? *Ah, what's so bad about that? It is an attempt, to determine or read your future apart from God. **That's darkness. Seductive darkness.**
 - e. Do I need to go on? (more listing?)
 - i. *“Do not bring any detestable objects in your home...”* (Dt. 7:26)
 - ii.
 - c. We have grown blind to the darkness that we live in and compromise with. God dwells in inapproachable light. He can have nothing to do with darkness. So why do we?
 - i. Have we grown so cold toward a Holy God whose holiness is so awesome and perfect that it required the brutal death of His only begotten Son? Have we forgotten how much the deliverance from darkness cost Jesus? Do we take His sacrifice so lightly?
 - ii. The people of Ephesus who burnt their books of magic, they TURNED from darkness: Acts 19:19-20 *“And many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and began burning them in the sight of everyone; and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing.”* That was transformation...revival!
7. **Eph 5:8-14** *“Therefore do not be partakers with them; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. **Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. For this reason it says, "Awake, sleeper,"***
- a. **Don't have anything to do with the deeds of darkness...don't have ANYTHING to do with the unfruitful deeds of darkness....DON'T HAVE anything TO DO with the unfruitful deeds of darkness. But expose them!**
8. Slumber:??
- a. **Quotation:** *“ . . . They were sleeping at the moment of the greatest spiritual conflict in the history of the world”*
 - b. When do you think this was occurring?

- c. It was in the garden of Gethsemane, and Jesus was warning them of the danger of apathy and comfort, which produces spiritual drowsiness.”– John MacArthur
 - d. Slumber in the church is the result of apathy, a lack of passion for the presence of God, from a lack of desperation to see the light overcome darkness. It comes about as a result of us compromising and coexisting with darkness.
 - i. Darkness blinds, deception distorts, we lose spiritual power.
9. *If my people, who are called by my name, humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.* (2 Chr. 7:14)
- a. ***Humbling ourselves by confession and repentance.*** Public or private. Public sin, needs to be confessed publicly, private sin, privately.
 - i. Transformation is the most significant evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit. Everything else can be faked. Signs, wonders, but a changed life from darkness to light...that is power.
 - ii. We have had some general repentance here in the past few weeks, I believe in response to a sense of the holiness of God. But I believe we have some specific repentance to do. God has already pointed out to you what you have compromised with. Index cards are in your bulletins. Write on it what it is...and bring it to the front. Put it at the foot of the cross here. Stop embracing and tolerating darkness any more! If God leads you to publicly declare what you are repenting of, then come to the microphone.
 - iii. We cannot treat the holiness of God with such disdain any longer!
 - iv. Jesus delivered us from darkness...Why would we want to stay in it? How could we remain in it?

Darkness Scriptures from the New Testament

- 1 John 1:5 "The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it."
"comprehend" means "overtake" or "associate" with.
- John 3:19-21 "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. "For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. "But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."
- John 12:35-36 "So Jesus said to them, "For a little while longer the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. "While you have the Light, believe in the, so that you may become sons of Light."
- John 12:46 "I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain (abide) in darkness."
- Acts 26:26-18 "...for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me."
- 1 Cor 4:5 "...wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God."
- 2 Cor 6:14 "Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?"
- Eph 5:8-14** "Therefore do not be partakers with them; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. For this reason it says, "Awake, sleeper,"
- Quotation: ". . . **They were sleeping at the moment of the greatest spiritual conflict in the history of the world**"
- When do you think this was occurring?
It was in the garden of Gethsemane, and Jesus was warning them of the danger of self-confidence, which produces spiritual drowsiness."— John MacArthur
- Eph 6:12 "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places."
- Col 1:12-13 "...giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son."
- 1 John 5:7-7** "This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."