

Matthew 4:12-23

Our theme for this Sunday is "Led by the Light". Led by the Light of God. Led by the Light of Jesus.

Today, I would like to talk a little bit about "just what is the light of Jesus"? What is the light of Jesus?

Now, God has given us this whole creation - at least in part, as a way of understanding God. So, when I was thinking about the light of Jesus - I started thinking about the amazing properties of sunlight - or pure white light.

Now, when the pure light of sunlight hits a prism - it divides into all of the colors of the rainbow. Personally I find this an astounding property of nature - that God would build such an amazing wonder at the very heart of creation. All of life is sustained by the light of the sun. SO, pure white light can be divided into all of the colors of the rainbow - and all of the spectrums in between those colors. Everything from violet to blue to cyan to green to yellow, orange, red - and all of the colors in between.

Now I want to present you with a new idea - it is simple but powerful - so just consider it for awhile. Here it is:

It seems to me that there are a lot of areas in our life and in our world that come in a whole range of different variations - much like the many different colors present in light. You have different kinds of people - not just black or white or brown - but different cultures and different languages - different values, different understandings.

They are all one thing - they are all people - but we divide them out into all of these different spectrums. You've got your radicals, your apathetic - you've got your friendly and unfriendly - you've got your intense people and your more flighty people. You've got skinny and heavy. Liberals and conservatives - and every type of opinion in between.

You've got this whole spectrum of people. And you and I tend to divide them out and say "This one is good". This one is bad. Which usually means that you agree with this one or you disagree with that one. And yet, they are all one. God has made them all - and populated your world and your life with them.

And when we consider what is the light of Jesus - I believe the light of Jesus might be to say - not only are these one people - created by God. But they are One people, loved by God and forgiven by God.

Yes, some of them may seem more foolish than others. They don't do things the way that you would. Maybe they have more brokenness in their lives - or maybe they think differently or they are not as smart as you. But they are still ONE. They are among the visible spectrum of light - or people - that God has given you to understand, to forgive, and even to love, with the love of God.

So, that's one area of life that God has divided into multiple spectrums - what are some other areas? How about age? Throughout your life, you will experience many different ages. You will be a baby. You will be a child. You will be a young adult - middle age - and you may even get to be an older age.

Each of these ages has its different color as it were. It's different experiences. It's different learnings. It's different risks. It's different blessings and it's different negatives. Think about what it is like to be 5 years old. Or 13 years old. Or 19 years old. Or 30 years old - Or 50 years old - Or 65 - Or 85. Each age has its strength or wisdom. Each age has its experiences. And yet, it is all one life.

The same thing is true when you see a 15 year old. You cannot expect them to have the wisdom or insight of a 50 year old. And yet, they have an unlimited energy. They

are just where they are supposed to be. All of the colors, all of the ages have their own unique purpose and place in life.

And here is an interesting fact: Did you know that the spectrum of light goes beyond what is visible. As a matter of fact the visible spectrum of light is only a small part of all of the wavelengths.

So, if we take this idea one step further - even death - and our movement into eternity is but one more transition of moving from the visible to the invisible.

What are some other spectrums that we divide out? How about the many different countries and all of their histories and cultures - friends or enemies to our country. And yet, they are all a part of the world God has given us - to understand, to forgive, and to love, with the love of God.

How about mental health or mental illness? There is the full spectrum from you or me as well-balanced people to the other end of the spectrum like the guy who shot the congresswoman in Arizona. Even he is a part of the larger humanity - and the broad range of people in our world.

Now, you may feel like we have strayed from what is the light of God or the light of Jesus - and yet, I believe that this understanding that all is One and all is forgiven

and actually extends into the limitless - is central to the lesson that Jesus gives us by dying on the cross. In the cross of Christ, all the world is condemned, and all the world is saved. And through Jesus we are given the limitlessness of eternity.

May Jesus guide you by His light - and give you His understanding - and His grace.

Amen