

**Shine your light - Luke 11 v33-36****Cavy Bap - 18-9-2016**

2

**Luke 11:33-36 - The Lamp of the Body**

Jesus speaking to the crowds: <sup>33</sup> No one lights a lamp and puts it in a place where it will be hidden, or under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, so that those who come in may see the light. <sup>34</sup> Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are healthy (generous), your whole body also is full of light. But when they are unhealthy (stingy), your body also is full of darkness. <sup>35</sup> See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness. <sup>36</sup> Therefore, if your whole body is full of light, and no part of it dark, it will be just as full of light as when a lamp shines its light on you.

>> **Other texts related to Luke 11:33-36... (use as we go)**

Matt 6:22-23 - Treasures in Heaven

Luke 8:16-18 - A Lamp on a Stand

Matt 5:14-16 - Salt and Light

John 8:12 - Jesus, the light of the world

Revelation 18:23 - The doom of Babylon

**Introduction**

3

The Bible has a lot of imagery using light and darkness. For example in the first beginning, Genesis 1:1-5 tells us that 'The earth was formless and empty and dark. And God said let there be light, and this created day time'. In the second beginning, John 1:1-9 tells us that Jesus, was a 'light shining in the darkness, but the darkness never understood it. Jesus, the true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world'. A little bit later in John 8:12, Jesus announces 'I am the light of the world, follow me out of darkness into the light'. And just when you think you've got all sussed, Jesus tells us in Matt 5:14-16 that 'you / we are the light of the world, and we're to shine our light'. That was just a sample, there are lots more...

4

**Light is part of science**

Light itself is part of science, described by science. We talk about wavelengths, particles (different models), intensity / brightness, energy etc (have you bought a light bulb lately story?).

Light has interesting properties... for example reflection onto and off a surface (mirror)... or

5

refraction through a transparent material. Most of you have seen this... a glass prism dispersing light into colour.



Light refracts through a prism, producing the rainbow colours: ROYGBIV. The angle of refraction is determined by the wavelength of each colour. I think we can see 2 things here: (i) Light is made up of many different colours, and (ii) Colours show themselves in different ways.

This picture was used on the record cover of Pink Floyd's 1973 album called 'Dark Side of the Moon'. According to Wikipedia, they wanted a 'simple and bold design'. I think they got it. This rock album was one of the most influential and top selling albums ever made, selling around 45 million copies, staying in the Billboard top LPs for 741 weeks from 1973 to 1988. Incidentally the

colour 'indigo' is missing from this picture. Apparently some modern colour scientists regard indigo as simply a variation of blue, not a separate colour.

I think refraction is responsible for fishermen stories about the 'the big one that got away'. When Paul Caldwell is winding a fish in, he sees a refracted image through the water... it looks huge...!

#### 6 **Light is a metaphor**

Light is also a metaphor or picture of something that is good. In the Bible, light is used a lot in this way. For example, 'light shining into darkness', is a picture of something good overcoming something bad, or incomplete. The word 'light' is used to give a sense of goodness, direction, revelation, cleanliness, purity, life, joy, happiness etc. On the other hand the word 'dark' is used to give a sense of badness, confusion, hiddenness, sin, death, evil, sadness, fear etc.

However, the 'light and dark' words have at times been misused, in a cultural or racial sense. The sense of superiority or inferiority felt by people of different skin colour has connections with 'light and dark'. For example, 'white skin' has been associated with 'light', seen to be good and pure. While, 'black skin' has been associated with 'darkness', somehow bad or inferior. We experienced this many times living in South Asia. 'Lighter' skinned people are more sought after and valuable for marriage. (Claire's Bangla teacher - education vs colour). I remember a Bangladeshi Christian cook who thought that angels would have white skin because 'white = pure and holy'. There are lots of skin whitening products eg: Tibetan Snow & Fair & Lovely. Women wear talcum powder on their faces. Photos are sometimes overexposed to give a paler complexion. The terrible misuse of 'light and dark', wrapped up with white colonialism, has been very sinful.

#### **Luke 11:33-36 - The Lamp of the Body**

7 Let's look at today's passage and a few related verses. The context here is one of friction. Prior to this the people asked for a sign - Perhaps Jesus is not good enough? After this, Jesus rips into the religious experts... Roly's doing that passage next week. I'm sticking with the light passages today.

Jesus speaking to the crowds: <sup>33</sup>“No one lights a lamp and puts it in a place where it will be hidden, or under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, so that those who come in may see the light.

This talks mostly about 'revelation vs hiddenness'. The lamp reveals our surroundings, a situation, a direction, a pathway. People see the light, it's not hidden. In Luke 8:17, after an identical light verse, Jesus, goes much further 'For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open'. This warns us that light will reveal our hidden behaviour. Can you imagine your worst moments, like a good family fight, being shown to the church on the data projector? Any volunteers? I see a hand... (Politician - Colin Craig).

8 <sup>34</sup>Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are healthy (generous), your whole body also is full of light. But when they are unhealthy (stingy), your body also is full of darkness.

What did Jesus mean when he said 'Your eye is the lamp of your body'? Perhaps: (i) Your eye lets in light from outside, like a camera lens; or (ii) The eye guides your body's movement, like a torch. My pick is # (i) Your eye lets in light from outside, like a camera lens. When your eye is healthy, like a good camera lens, in focus, with the right aperture and shutter speed, lots of light comes in and creates a good picture. On the other hand, when your eye is stingy, and you're squinting, like a scratched camera lens, or maybe the cap it still on the camera, then only distorted light comes in, creating a bad picture. Photo examples on screen - going from blurry to focused.

9

10 <sup>35</sup> See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness. <sup>36</sup> Therefore, if your whole body is full of light, and no part of it dark, it will be just as full of light as when a lamp shines its light on you.

This verse speaks of ‘inputs and outputs’. If we fill ourselves with light, then darkness is driven out. We receive a lot of inputs into our lives through our eyes mainly, followed by our ears, and to a lesser extent other senses. Good inputs result in good outputs. Light inputs focus on goodness, direction, revelation, cleanliness, purity, life, joy, happiness etc. We’ve all heard ‘garbage in = garbage out’. If our eyes and ears receive garbage inputs, then our outputs won’t be as light as they could be. They could in fact be somewhat dark, resulting in badness, confusion, hiddenness, sin, death, evil, sadness, fear etc. We have input choices to make - seeking light rather than darkness.

### **Matt 5:14-16 - Salt and Light**

11 Our passage, about ‘The Lamp of the Body’ is quite inwardly focused on receiving light. Let’s balance this with another light passage, which is more outwardly focused.

<sup>14</sup>“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

This passage has the same idea about ‘revelation vs hiddenness’ which we’ve just spoken about. A lamp is set up to be helpful...to reveal our surroundings, a situation, a direction, a pathway. But here, Jesus goes a lot further. We move from being told ‘[not to hide a light](#)’, to being told... ‘[You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden... let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds...](#)’ Wow, we’ve moved from being passive photographers receiving light through our correctly adjusted lens, to being the ‘[light of the world](#)’, shakers and movers. We’re to ‘make a difference’ (MAD), shining our light before others, doing and showing good deeds. We’re moving from idle speculation, theory and theology, to costly involvement in other people’s lives. Shining our light and doing good deeds is going to involve all sorts of good stuff - involving our interests, personalities, skills and faith.

Let’s not forget the last bit... Jesus’ expectation was that, when we shine our light before others, and they see our good deeds, they will ‘[glorify our Father in heaven](#)’. I think we shine our light and do good deeds for 2 reasons: (i) It’s the right thing to do. God wants us to be kind and decent people who are known for our love, justice and willingness to help others - especially the poor and needy, willing to be ‘along-siders’ and speaking on behalf of the underdog, but, also, Jesus tells us (ii) People will come to see, or learn that our motivation is from God, and God is to be thanked and worshipped not us. One of the great things about helping people, is that eventually either they or others will ask ‘why are doing this?’ The answer: ‘Because God loves me and God loves you’.

### 12 **Q+A - Expert panel about receiving light and shining light**

I think it helpful to learn from others in our community about their ‘light inputs and light outputs’. I invite our expert panel Paul Caldwell, Valma Craig and Colin Dobie to the stage.

>>> Q+A (i) intro vid + music (7 secs) - Sep 16 (use lots of volume)

I have 3 questions for the panel (1.5 to 2 mins max):

1. How do you fill your body with light?
2. How do you shine your light before others, and what have been the outcomes?
3. What is your favourite colour? >> Paul - green, Valma - purple, Colin - green.

Q+A (ii) end vid + music (12 secs) - Sep 16 (use lots of volume)

Let’s give our expert panel a round of applause as they depart.

## Two more things - a blessing & a warning

13

### John 8:12 - Jesus, the light of the world

<sup>12</sup> I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

A blessing: The ultimate source of light is Jesus. Follow Jesus and we'll receive that light.

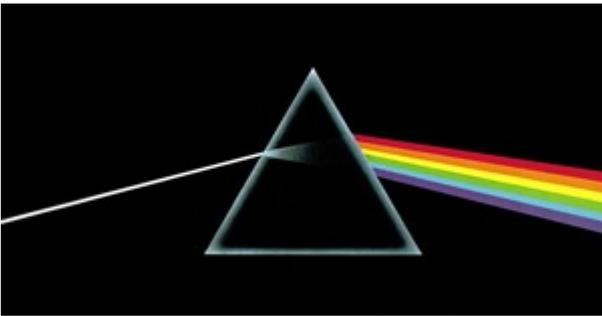
### Revelation 18:23 - The doom of Babylon

<sup>23</sup> The light of a lamp will never shine in you again. The voice of bridegroom and bride will never be heard in you again. Your merchants were the world's important people. By your magic spell all the nations were led astray.

A warning: In Revelation, some people have turned away from God. Their light has gone out. It's quite possible to walk out of God's light... we must be careful.

## Conclusion

14 Returning to the light refracting through a prism, producing the rainbow colours. Remember (i) Light is made up of many different colours, and (ii) Colours show themselves in different ways.



I think of us, you and me, as that prism. God's light shines into our lives, through our eyes (lamp of our body). Our bodies become full of light, pushing out darkness. And then, we shine our light before others. Each of us shows a different colour, according to our interests, personalities, skills and faith. Some are 'green' like Paul and Colin. Some are 'purple' like Valma. Perhaps some are 'yellow'. We need all the colours to make light... we need all of us to shine our light. Let's not miss any colours out. What colour do you shine?

End.