

## 1 Peter 2:4-10 Part F

**1Pe 2:9 (NKJV) But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; <sup>10</sup> who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.**

In v9 Peter says that believers, those that he calls God's "**own special people**" have been "**called...out of darkness into His marvelous light**". Now, it is important to understand exactly what this idea of "**darkness**" means. Obviously, physical darkness is always present in the absence of physical light. However, we also know that light actually dispels darkness. If someone was in a completely dark room and a light was turned on, the darkness would be completely dispelled. Unless they are asleep, no one wants to be in complete darkness. It is my understanding that for those who are lost and without Christ that they will spend eternity, not just in a place of indescribable torment, but also in a place of total, complete, and absolute darkness. They will not be able to see anyone or anything, not even their hand in front of their face. Have you ever been in a place where it was so dark that you could not see your hand in front of your face? Well, just imagine having to live in that condition forever. It will be the most frightening place imaginable – to be surrounded by nothing visible, completely alone in the greatest place of darkness ever created. Listen to what Peter says about this everlasting place of darkness in [2 Peter 2:9 and 17](#),

**2Pe 2:4 (NKJV) For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;**

**2Pe 2:17 (NKJV) These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.**

If you were to ask the average unbeliever on the street today whether or not they were living in "**darkness**", they would think that you were somewhat confused. If I just casually told someone that their heart was very systemically dark, deluded, deceived, and dead, they would probably hate me. Yet that is exactly the condition of the man or woman who is lost. The Bible says emphatically that their "**heart is deceitful**". [Jeremiah 17:9](#) does not spare anyone when it says,

**Jer 17:9 (NKJV) "The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked; who can know it?**

If I spoke to a lost person and communicated to them that their entire life was being controlled by Satan, by darkness, by complete ignorance, they would think that I was the greatest fool on the planet. For them there is a difference between the man in a dark suit with a nice flannel tie who works on Wall Street, eats the best delicacies of the world, versus the man who lives in the African bush half naked, eats dried corn all the time, and who goes to see witchdoctors. What they fail to understand is that in the Lake of Fire that none of that will make any difference whatsoever. It is how Satan's lies and deception work. He could care less about lifestyle or educational levels or anything else for that matter, just as long as he can keep the lost man lost and deceived. To the contrary, proud and unregenerate men believe that they are living in the most intellectually enlightened age of all time and that they are at the pinnacle of knowledge and wisdom. They find nothing wrong with their heart at all. They actually perceive that

people who call themselves Christians are the most pitiful of all peoples on the earth and are highly delusional in their perspective on eternity.

The problem, however, is that this word “**darkness**” has nothing initially to do with someone’s intellect, but is a word that deals primarily with both spiritual and moral darkness. The Greek word for “**darkness**” is “*skotos*” and in this context it clearly implies that an individual is in a state of complete spiritual ignorance and error that will eventually lead them into worldly sin and misery, and eventually into eternal misery and damnation.<sup>1</sup> [John 3:19](#) says,

**Jn 3:19 (NKJV) And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.**

In [Galatians 1:4](#) Paul, speaking of Jesus Christ, says,

**Gal 1:4 (NKJV) who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,**

The particular Greek word for “**evil age**” is the word “*aion*” and is often translated as “**world**”. I have always loved the definition of this word that Dr. Trench gives for it when he says that “*aion*” means

*“...all that floating mass of thoughts, opinions, maxims, speculations, hopes, impulses, aims, aspirations, at any time current in the world, which it may be impossible to seize and accurately define, but which constitutes a most real and effective power, being the moral or immoral atmosphere which at every moment of our lives we inhale, again inevitably to exhale.”*<sup>2</sup>

[Ephesians 2:2](#) says,

**Eph 2:2 (NKJV) in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,**

I.e., the world is a system that is constantly being manipulated and controlled by Satan. He is constantly injecting false ideas, thoughts, impulses, goals, feelings, sentiments, views, attitudes, outlooks, theories, plans, philosophies, schemes, speculations, assumptions, and suppositions into every single area of life so that he can control how a man thinks and perceives God. The entire world is being manipulated by the supreme worker of darkness – Satan himself. [1 John 5:19](#) says,

**1Jn 5:19 (NKJV) We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.**

The NASB and ESV says “**lies in the power of the evil one**”. The NIV says “**under the control of the evil one**”. Now, as a believer, the good news is that we know that Satan cannot overcome us, that he cannot control us and dominate our lives. There are so many verses related to God’s victory in the believer’s life that it would be difficult to know where to start. For instance, [1 John 5:4](#) says,

**1Jn 5:4 (NKJV) For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith.**

So, back to the discussion of “**darkness**”, on a purely human level spiritual darkness is a form of ignorance and eventually a defiant stubbornness. Light and truth is clearly something that the lost individual does not understand, does not know, and cannot know on his own. For some people, they

have been enlightened, heard the truth, heard the gospel, and even seen visible evidences of God's work in different ways. For others, the darkness in their life has so overtaken them that they simply refuse to even consider it. I was recently asked to speak to someone and was talking to a kind of middle person who was asking me to do this and they said to me, "*Make sure that you do not talk to them about God because they will shut you out immediately*". I thought to myself, "*Well, what do you want me to talk to them about – baseball, the weather, the price of gas?*" What good does it do for us to avoid talking about God with someone? For the person with that "*don't talk to me about God*" attitude, it is not just a mere ignorance, but it is something that has evolved into a very personal opposition to God's truth and to the spiritual light that He has provided. Men who are walking in darkness hate the light. [John 3:20](#) says,

**Jn 3:20 (NKJV) For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.**

I love what Nicodemus told Jesus in [John 3:2](#).

**Jn 3:2 (NKJV) This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."**

He just could not ignore what his eyes saw. He just could not do it. For him it would have been intellectual suicide. He could not fit Jesus into his theology, but he still understood that Jesus was doing things that no one else could do. However, some people are simply determined that they are going to ignore the spiritual realities God has presented to all men. It is the idea "Do not bother me with the facts". The tragedy of it all is that once a person tries to liberate themselves from both God and His righteous demands on their life, at that moment they are brought into a bondage to Satan that is far worse than anything that God would ever do to them. It is a bondage that will lead them into sin and into eternal death.

When the word "**darkness**" is used in the New Testament, it always depicts an unalterable and permanent reality. It is the idea that evil is real and has great power and is always subjecting people to its control and dominance without them even knowing it. Listen to how Jesus characterized this in [Luke 22:53](#) when He said,

**Lk 22:53 (NKJV) When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."**

Jesus fully understood all that was taking place in the unseen world – both good and evil. I have said it often, but what a person cannot see is greater than what they can see. Everything that we can see, literally everything, is going to pass away. The invisible God of creation is the greatest reality of all, the One who is in utter and complete control of all things. The rulers of the world believe that they are strong and powerful and control everything – but they do not control anything. They are Satan's puppets and God's tools to accomplish His perfect will. God sets up kingdoms. God establishes kings. The book of Daniel is the Old Testament book that speaks so clearly of this – that God is in control of kingdoms and powers and kings and authorities. In [Colossians 1:13](#), Paul said these words because he also understood the reality of spiritual power and spiritual evil in the kingdom of darkness.

Col 1:13 (NKJV) **He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,**

We have been rescued from, released from, liberated from, saved from, and freed from this great “**power of darkness**”. This is no small issue for an individual simply because those who are under the “**power of darkness**” have no way of liberating themselves from it, and to make matters worse, they do not even believe that they are living in that darkness. No matter who the individual may be, if they are outside of God’s salvation, then they are constantly being influenced and impacted by what Paul called in [Ephesians 6:12](#) as the “**rulers of the darkness**”.<sup>3</sup>

Eph 6:12 (NKJV) **For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.**

In [Matthew 13:19](#) in the Parable of the Soils, Jesus describes exactly what happens so often.

Mt 13:19 (NKJV) **When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.**

I am personally convinced that very often people have been in our services, maybe visiting with someone, and they are not saved. They hear the Word of God being taught and the Holy Spirit challenges their life with that Word, but they fight it, resist it, and do everything possible to forget about it. In actuality, it is who Jesus calls “**the wicked one**” who actually is stealing the truth from their hearts and minds. [2 Corinthians 4:3-4](#) gives even more clarity to this issue of the truth being stolen by unseen forces of spiritual wickedness when it says,

2Co 4:3 (NKJV) **But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, <sup>4</sup> whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.**

Personally, I have come to the settled conclusion that Satan is perfectly and extremely comfortable in religion. He is right at home with religion. In fact, he knows that men are going to be seeking something to worship, so no better place than church – right? When they arrive at some dead religious venue with all of its religious trappings, everything that Satan offers to those who do not want to come to Christ suits their predispositions and desires. They are more than comfortable with some form of religion that suits their lifestyle. So, Satan literally will give them what they want – religion and all of its accoutrements, traditions, teachings, accessories, and trimmings. He will raise up false teachers who tickle the ears of those listening and tell them that they are saved. He will draw many into the religious venue and offer them salvation at no cost. Satan just loves religion.

It has to be appreciated that this “**darkness**” effects everyone, but it effects everyone differently. The individual who is living in darkness has no insight, no enlightenment, and no understanding of God’s realities to which they will one day give an account. The more disobedient someone is to God’s light and revelation, the greater their darkness becomes. In [Romans 1:21](#), notice how Paul explained this,

Ro 1:21 (NKJV) **because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.**

Darkness simply impacts everyone differently. There is intellectual darkness, moral darkness, the darkness of sin and unbelief. There is the darkness that knows what is right, but is not willing to do what is right. The list is really endless. In [John 1:4-5](#), John immediately opens his gospel with this staggering assessment of men in the world,

**Jn 1:4 (NKJV) In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.**

Listen to [Ephesians 4:17-18](#),

**Eph 4:17 (NKJV) This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, <sup>18</sup> having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;**

Jesus gave a very stern warning in [Luke 11:35](#) when He said the following,

**Lk 11:35 (NKJV) Therefore take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness.**

That is the exact problem that the lost man has. He believes that what he knows, what he thinks, and what he understands is right, but in reality he is living in total spiritual and moral darkness. The “**darkness**” that is being addressed is a domain, a dominion, an actual sphere of spiritual death that rules and controls the world of those who refuse to respond to God’s light. Notice what Jesus told Saul when he was on the road to Damascus. In [Acts 26:17-18](#) Paul is making his defense and says,

**Ac 26:17 (NKJV) I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, <sup>18</sup> to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.**

The problem that faces every man is that the Scriptures make spiritual “**light**” and “**darkness**” mutually exclusive of one another and it forces a man to make a decision for one or the other. Every man is either for God or against God. There is nothing in the middle. Jesus said it this way in [John 12:46](#),

**Jn 12:46 (NKJV) I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.**

[John 8:12](#) gives even more clarity. This is what Jesus said to His disciples after His encounter with the woman taken in adultery,

**Jn 8:12 (NKJV) Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."**

No one can have fellowship with God and continue to walk in darkness. [1 John 1:6](#) says,

**1Jn 1:6 (NKJV) If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.**

In [Matthew 6:22-23](#) in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus made this revealing statement when He said,

Mt 6:22 (NKJV) "**The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light.** <sup>23</sup> **But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!**

If someone's view of God is distorted because they are constantly giving themselves over to sinful and selfish inclinations, then anything that they hear about God will be uncomfortable to them. Every spiritual truth that they hear will eventually get tuned out so that they become comfortable in just ignoring God, in ignoring His truth. In that process, they will begin to create a god after their own image, after their own desires, after their own disobedience and sin. [Romans 1](#) is the epitome of this all too pervasive scenario that is constantly playing itself out in people's lives.

So, how do we overcome the "**darkness**"? It is with the light - next week's message.

## **ENDNOTES**

<sup>1</sup> Zodhiates, 1298.

<sup>2</sup> Wuest, 55.

<sup>3</sup> Harris, *skotos*, ep.

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