

Title: Communion in Light of THE LIGHT
Date: January 6, 2019
Subject: Celebrating communion because Jesus is the Light
Scripture:

Call to worship – The people who lived before Christ lived in a dark time. They longed for light from God. Centuries passed without any word from God. One of the last messages before the gap contained this cryptic hope. “The sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings” (Malachi 4:2). The words were reminders of what had been foretold earlier. “I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob” (Numbers 24:17). “There will be no more gloom for those in distress... The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death, a light has dawned” (Isaiah 9:1, 2). Fast forward to mere months before the birth of Jesus when the father of John the Baptizer uttered these words -- “The tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace” (Luke 1: 78, 79).

At Christmas we celebrated the moment when God acted, when Jesus came to earth as the hope people could touch, the song people could hear, the light people could see, “the light of the world by darkness slain.”

Cong. --- In Christ Alone

Family time

Worship through giving

Jesus boldly and emphatically stated, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). “I have come as a light to shine in this dark world, so that all who put their trust in me will no longer remain in the dark” (John 12:46, Living)

Video --- Light Shines

“For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.” (2 Corinthians 4:6).

Augustine was a church leader in the late 300's and early 400's. People continue to look to him for spiritual insight. Here's his take on what it meant for God to become human. “The Word of the Father, by whom all time was created, was made flesh and was born in time for us. He, without whose divine permission no day completes its course, wished to have one day for his human birth. In the bosom of his Father He existed before all the cycles of ages; born of an earthly mother, He entered upon the course of the years on this day. The Maker of man became man that He, the Bread, might be hungry; that He, the Fountain, might thirst; that

He, the Light, might sleep; that He, the Way, might be wearied by the journey; that He, the Truth, might be accused by false witnesses; that He, the Judge of the living and the dead, might be brought to trial by a mortal judge; that He, Justice, might be condemned by the unjust; that He, the Life might die. He did this although He who submitted to such great evils for our sake had done no evil and although we, who were the recipients of so much good at His hands had done nothing to merit these benefits.”

We have done nothing to merit the benefits Christ brings. What can we do? Worship the one who is the Maker, the Bread, the Fountain, the Judge, Justice, the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Light of the world.

Cong. Here I Am to Worship

Scripture on the human condition as sinners. “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). “You were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature” (Colossians 2:13).

(Pass out paper – pens in chairs in front of you). To remind ourselves of what we’ve been saved from and to magnify our appreciation for the Lord extending forgiveness we’re going to write our sins on the paper. It’s not meant to relive our sins. Write down some of your sinful attitudes, actions and thoughts that alienated you from the Lord. They may be sins you committed before you entered a relationship with Christ or sins you may have gotten into if not for your relationship with Christ. You can also write down sins you’ve committed since becoming a follower of Christ. Completely private.

Here’s a sampling of what the Bible refers to as sin: “The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, and debauchery; idolatry and sorcery; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage; selfish ambition, divisions, factions, and envy; drunkenness, carousing, and the like” (Galatians 5:19-21). “lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, without love of good, traitorous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God” (2 Timothy 3:2-4). “Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking” (Ephesians 5:4). “Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my concerns. See if there is any offensive way in me” (Psalm 139:23, 24).

Pause as people write.

Listen to these promises from God about what he has done with our sins when we place our trust in Christ.

“Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered” (Psalm 32:1). “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool” (Isaiah 1:18). “I have swept away your offense like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist” (Isaiah 44:22). “I blot out your transgressions and remember them no more” (Isaiah 43:25). “As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us” (Psalm 103:12).

To demonstrate the fact of the removal of our sin, burn sins.

Our Savior, on the night before he was crucified for our sins, to take our punishment and penalty, said this:

“While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.” Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom” (Matthew 26:26-29).

Did you catch the part where Jesus mentioned the purpose of his death? “for... the... forgiveness... of... sins.” We are no longer under the penalty or burden of trying to pay for our sins.

Cong. You Are My King

Bread

Intro

Prayer

Distribution

Scripture during. “He was despised and rejected by mankind... a man of suffering,... and familiar with pain... he was despised, and we held him in low esteem... Surely he took up our pain... and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted... But he was pierced for our transgressions,... he was crushed for our iniquities;... the punishment that brought us peace was on him,... and by his wounds we are healed... We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way;... and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all... he bore the sin of many,... and made intercession for the transgressors” (Isaiah 53:3-6). “Christ died for our sins” (1 Corinthians 15:3). “All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives the forgiveness of sins” (Acts 10:43). “All are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus” (Romans 3:24). “The gift of God is

eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23). “God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins” (Colossians 2:13).

Cong. 192, The Old Rugged Cross – 1, 2, 3
82 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

Cup

Intro

Prayer

Distribution – the cups will be collected after the song.

Scripture during. “The law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness...Christ has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself...Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people” (Hebrews 9:22, 27, 28). “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed” (1 Peter 2:24). “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us” (2 Corinthians 5:21). “This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins” (1 John 4:10). “Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29). ““Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.” And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin” (Hebrews 10:17, 18). “Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered” (Psalm 32:1).

Cong. By His Wounds

Pick up cup.

Scripture during. “Count yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin control your mortal body so that you obey its desires. Do not present the parts of your body to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and present the parts of your body to Him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace” (Romans 6:11-14). “Put to death whatever belongs to your earthly nature” (Colossians 3:5). “Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace” (2 Timothy 2:22). “Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature” (Romans 13:14). “Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:1, 2). “Since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken,

let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe” (Hebrews 12:28). “You have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God” (Hebrews 12:22-24).

Cong. I Will Rise

Prayer. “Keep your servants also from willful sins; may they not rule over us... May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer” (Psalm 19:13, 14). “To Him who loves us and has released us from our sins by His blood, who has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father—to Him be the glory and power forever and ever! Amen” (Revelation 1:5, 6).

Postlude