2021 08 29 Honouring the Light and Truth of God.

Song 2:8-13. Psalm 45: 1-2,6-9.

James 1:17-27. Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23.

Honour, light, truth, God – are these words nouns/names or verb/actions?

Honouring someone is an action, either inside our emotions and thoughts or by speech or building a statue.

Light is both a noun, a physical thing and also it is active. See the light – the light blinded me.

“God **is** light.” The light of the gospel of Jesus the Christ.

Truth is a reality, but is it a name for something or is it an active life sustaining force? “The truth will set you free.”

“God **is** truth.”

The record of Mark is that religious people came to Jesus, they were constantly trying to trap him into saying or doing or not doing something required by the religious law, so that they could charge him with blasphemy/ speaking against God.

It was not the Ten Commandments that they fussed about but the myriad of rules and expansions and religious observances that they were trying to catch him out on. These were the basis of their control and authority over the people. Any challenge to these were a challenge to their self-importance. This was what they called “honour”. “You love to receive honour from men - you standing in your robes making long prayers.”

Jesus followers were eating food but had not washed their hands in the specified manner – a bit like a surgeon following a routine before operating. We are now familiar with this in the covid disease pandemic.

Some passages in the Talmud indicate that failing to wash hands before a meal is a significant transgression. [One Talmudic sage even says](https://www.sefaria.org/Sotah.4b?lang=bi) that eating bread without washing is tantamount to having sex with a prostitute, while another says that acting contemptuously toward this ritual causes one to be uprooted from the world.

Our Lord Jesus always sees through the ‘self’ of such things. With some there is a genuine desire to honour God and this is the only way they have been taught since childhood. For others it is a way to control and build fear.

In our Christian practices when we take Communion we hear these words : “ examine yourself – if your conscience troubles you and you participate you eat and drink your own damnations.” What could these circumstances be?

His words were direct ‘Hypocrites” you honour God with your lips but your heart is far from God. You lay aside the commandments of God and follow your own human deceptions. Try to feel and look virtuous by your own human deceptions.

Food does not make you more virtuous – but the sin of gluttony makes you pay in your own body. Food is meant to go in our mouths , our body uses what it needs and gets ride of the rest. What comes out of the mouth – from the person we are and the thoughts and feelings we have, our attitudes – they defile us – lies, attitudes, gospel, these defile us. And if we claim the name of Jesus as Lord and Saviour they either defile or honour Him.

Our words honour God and ourselves when they flow from our trust in God. Even though we now only know God as if through a frosted glass window – we walk in that light and honour God even when sometimes our lives are damaged and sometimes blessed.

Germs and sickness do not defile us – they are part of this world but they do damage us if we are carless about our lives, what we eat and drink and do, no rest time or to much – if they are not from the truth they do not honour God.

The promises of the Old Testament/Agreement were real yet the early Christians had God direct company to face death and torture rather than deny Jesus – they were not protected as those of the OT, not in this physical world, God did not rescue them, yet infinitely greater is that Jesus suffered with them, in them. They were full of God’s presence.

Remember Saul/Paul when Jesus appeared to him, and said Saul, Saul why are you persecuting me?

Now we look to God as through a mirror darkened but then when we see Him face to face in death, we see God as He is. Look in the mirror and I see myself, yet look in the Mirror darkened, I see a shadow of God and life is alive and filled with truth and the light of God. We see Jesus in us, we know the Spirit of God’s Presence.

In the letter of James, he tells us of the good gifts that go into us, the Presence of the Spirit, the love of God comes into us – the Father of Lights/life and the darkness will never overcome the light.

Our God does not change and is worthy (as if we mere humans could judge) to receive is already Gods – honour, light, truth, glory, love, all that we are.

V18 God is the creator, God is purity, love justice, mercy – God willed us to be born – Gods will, God’s love conceived us in love. Some parents may be lacking in some way but God choose them because there was something in their DNA that He wanted to create us to be the person that God intended us to be. Psalm 139.

**V25b what is the law of liberty.**

Honouring is our part, our response to God’s truth and justice and mercy.

To honour is to acknowledge in some way the wonder of the other, to speak words, to see in our emotions, to feel inside us, to feel our emotions, to rejoice in our souls, to consider the greatness, the uniqueness of another, to give them a special place.

James is bringing out for us our Gods light and truth. It is not that God gives out light like the sun gives out light but the light comes from the fire/heat in the sun itself. In the same way, God is light, God is truth, God is love – we see the result of these in the actions that they produce – as we see the sun from the light is gives out from the power that is inside. All things exist and find their source in God, God created out of what did not exist. God spoke “let there be light” and God filled eternity with the light that came from Himself.

‘Let there be truth’ and Jesus the very essence of God, the outshining of God showed Himself. “I will ask the Father and He will send the Spirit of Truth and he will lead you into all truth. All of this is part of the One True God.

I have been reading these last few weeks of some of the heresies that have come forth out of these thoughts (Letters of 1,2,3 John and Jude) yet God made everything out of what did not exist and so all comes from God, is part of God and has its source in God but is NOT God. “the heavens declare the glory of the Lord and the earth shouts out His handywork.” One of the first instructions to us from God was to tend and care for the earth. There is a verse that tells us that if we do not praise God the very stones would cry out!

God created us as individuals yet of the same material – each of us is unique – “even the hairs of our head are numbered and the command of Jesus to us is a grouping of the Ten Commandments “love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind and your neighbour as yourself (walk in their shoes).”

V26,27 “Honouring the light and truth of God”.

A practical summary from James 1:26,27. “if anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man’s religions worthless. Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself untainted by the world”.

Jesus said “If you give a little one of mine a cup of water in my name you do it unto me.”

We honour God by how we care for others.

“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His Glory blameless and with great joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.