

The Verdict

“This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.” (John 3:19-20)

As you read the word of God, may the Lord bless you with great understanding and wisdom to take seriously His words and to put into practice.

The chosen passage from the Gospel of John is a part of the discourse between Jesus and Nicodemus, a teacher of the law and member of the ruling council of the people of God. Jesus came down from heaven to save the world from sin and death. **“This was the true light that gives light to every man who comes into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognize Him. He came to that which was own, but His own did not receive Him. Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.” (John 1: 9-12)** Jesus represents the shining light that comes from God to overshadow the darkness on people’s lives. Yet, certain people love the darkness and hate the light:

1. The religious leaders: Nicodemus represents the ruling council or the religious leaders who love to be honoured by men. They are pumped up with pride as they are followed and obeyed by large group of people because of their religious position. And these leaders make religion a trial of rules and regulations instilled by men and claimed to be from God. They restrict people from food and many things with rules and guidelines: **“Do not handle! Do not touch!” (Colossians 2:21)** But such rules, **“These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.” (Colossians 2:22-23)** The followers of those religious leaders are burdened with many traditional assignments like washing of hands, pilgrimage, compulsory fasting, etc. But they are not restrained to the human instinct and sensuality. Indeed, these leaders satisfy the people by allowing them for:

a) Multiple marriage: Several religious leaders allow this matter and of course men by instinct are pleased. But, God has designed a husband for one wife. In a Christian family, the husband is the head and the wife is the body. **“In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church.” (Ephesians 5:28-29)** How would a husband as the head of the body can move from woman to woman or from one wife to another without neglecting and defiling his own body? **“A deacon (a man of God) must be the husband of one wife and must manage his children and his household well.” (1Timothy 3:12)**

b) Divorce: This is widely spread in the world. But Jesus said, **“Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.” (Matthew 19:6)** Many religions allow divorce. Men and women may run for divorce if they want to get rid of their partners. Marriage that is built on the assumption of possible separation is not a marriage or unity between two but just a contract. God has planned for a family to be built on love, the love of God that never fails, a persistent love that never ceases inspite of difficult times that partners may pass through. God wants man and woman to agree to live together not for a short time but as long as they live.

2. The evil doers: These kind of people do not accept Jesus because they are living in darkness. They hate the true light because they have certain lifestyle that is incompatible to the standard of Jesus, but they don’t want to give up. Being born by Spirit of God entails limitations that lead to a new style of living:

a) “Marriage should be honoured by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.” (Hebrews 13:4) Many couples live together outside marriage realm. They want to enjoy life but against God’s perspective. *Extra marital relationship is against God’s word. Hence, people with extra marital relations run away from the light of Jesus.*

b) “But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.” (1Peter 1:15-16) Now-a-days, immorality and homosexuality is accepted by the society. Man to man or woman to woman sexual relation is condoned. But to live in the light of the word God says, **“Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a mans commits outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body.” (1Corinthians 6:18-20)**

c) “But godliness with contentment is great gain. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.” (1Timothy 6:6,9) Materialism or the aim to acquire material possession is the focus of many people. There are those who collect wealth with all their might and desire to control others by it. But Jesus said, **“What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?” (Mark 8:36)** **“Do not store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:19-21)**

My dear and beloved: When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, **“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”** Will you follow Jesus? Will you say this prayer from your heart:

My Prayer: *Father, in the name of Jesus I ask forgiveness of my sins. Cleanse me, deliver me, and help me to walk in Your Light. This is my prayer in Jesus’ name, Amen.*