

Handout: Chapter 13
Light Contrasted with Darkness

The night is nearly over, daylight is one the way; so let us throw off everything that belongs to the darkness and equip ourselves for the light. Let us live decently, as in the light of day; with no orgies or drunkenness, no promiscuity or licentiousness, and no wrangling or jealousy. 14 Let your armor be the Lord Jesus Christ, and stop worrying about how your disordered natural inclinations may be fulfilled. Romans 13:12-14

The theme of light vs. darkness in the New Testament is most often expressed 3 ways and “light” is both literal, as in Matthew 17:2, and symbolic, as in Matthew 4:16:

1. **Light as the sun:** The sun is the light of the universe and lights man’s way as he goes about his life daily and yearly. In the same way what shows the way to God can be compared to the “light” that is the sun. In the Old Testament the “light” that showed the way to God was the Covenant bond with the Patriarchs before Sinai and after Sinai the “light” was the Covenant expressed in the Law of Moses and in sacred Scripture—the Word, that lighted the way for man to find God (see Ps 119:105; Prov 4:18-19; 6:23; Ec 2:13; Rom 2:19). But in the Age of the Messiah, that “light” which shows the way for man to find God is Jesus Christ (Jn 1:9; 8:12; 12:35; 1 Jn 2:8-11), the “light of the world”.
2. **Light as life:** Life cannot exist without light and conversely the dark is symbolic of death. In this imagery darkness represents all that is associated with death, suffering and enslavement while light symbolizes life, liberation and salvation—especially the salvation and deliverance of the Messianic Age (see Job 30:26; Is 4:22-23; 9:1; 45:7; Matt 4:16; Lk 1:79). In the Messianic Age this “light” of life is even available to the Gentile nations of the earth (Lk 2:32; Acts 13:47) through Jesus Christ who is the true light of the world (Jn 1:9; Eph 5:14); and the Living Word of God (Jn 1:1-5).
3. **The contrast between good verses evil:** The battle is between Christ the good King and Satan and his forces of evil (Acts 26:18; 2 Cor 6:14-15; Col 1:12-13; 1 Pt 2:9). Each man and woman has to choose which King or empire they chose to serve: the Kingdom of Christ or Satan’s kingdom of Darkness (1 Thes 5:4ff; 1 Jn 1:6-7; 2:9-10). Christians who serve Christ the King are “children of the light” while those who reject Christ and thereby chose Satan are “children of darkness” (Jn 12:36; Lk 16:8; Eph 5:7-9; 1 The 5:5).

In 2 Corinthians 4:4 St Paul writes of *the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ*. It is Jesus who is the true “Light” for He is the one emissary of God who is “Light”: ***God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all*** (1 Jn 1:5) and in the Gospel of Matthew 5:14 Jesus describes His disciples as *the light of the world* because His “light” shines in their lives—as St. Peter writes of Christians in 1 Peter 2:9: *But you are a chosen race, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, a people to be a personal possession to sing the praises of God who called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.*