

**“TURN ON THE LIGHT”****PASTOR MIKE CORWIN****3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT****TEXT: JOHN 3:16-21****GOD’S WORD: JOHN 1:1-9****I – TURN ON THE LIGHT:**

As you can imagine, I was exposed to a wide range of people and circumstances in my previous calling. Some were mundane and some were exciting, but some were just plain weird! As I was working on today’s message, one of those families came to mind. They lived in a good home, in a good neighborhood, and were people of adequate means. They were normal in every way, except for one little quirk...they lived in the dark. When the sun went down, their house grew dark. They stumbled around stubbing their toes, knocking things over, and bumping in to each other because they were in the dark. I don’t know whether they thought they were ninjas or bats, but they existed only with natural light by day or night.

I don’t mean to sound like I’m making fun of them, but there is this wonderful thing called “electricity,” DUH! There was this invention called the electric light invented by a good Ohio boy in 1879. You might have heard of him...Thomas Alva Edison? It profoundly changed human existence. This home was equipped with this wonderful invention. They had lamps and lights, they just chose to live in the dark. They lived this way because they refused to “TURN ON THE LIGHT.”

I don’t understand this concept at all. Why would you live in the dark when all you had to do is flip a switch? Why trip through the woods in the night without turning on a flashlight? Why drive down a dark street without turning on your headlights? Why would you do any of this when all you had to do to escape the darkness and find your way is “TURN ON THE LIGHT?”

**II – SPIRITUAL DARKNESS:**

All of this is physical darkness, but there’s another kind of darkness that people live in too. There’s a spiritual darkness. The darkness that John is talking about in his opening verses you

heard read this morning is not a physical darkness, it's a spiritual darkness. Just as the darkness of night can overcome us and make us trip, stumble, and fall, the darkness of life can do the same thing. This is the darkness that draws us away from God. The darkness of sin.

There is all kinds of darkness that overcomes our spirits. Some stumble through addiction. Be it to drugs, alcohol, sex, pornography, gambling, shopping, or anything else that clamors to draw us away from God. Some have been tripped up by the darkness of greed and power as they clamor to gain more and more at the expense of others. I have seen people living in the darkness of abuse as they use violence and manipulation to accomplish their goals. Some are lost in the darkness of self-absorption as they think only about themselves and no one else. There is devastating darkness that overcomes us because of violent crimes such as murder, rape, and robbery. Obviously the perpetrators of such acts are walking in darkness, but the victims can be plunged into darkness too. People with diseases such as cancer, diabetes, heart, stroke, Parkinson's, and the list could go on and on, can be overtaken by the darkness of depression because of their circumstances. Those who live in poverty and oppression can suffer the same darkness of the spirit as they are plunged in to it.

Some people are born in to the darkness and never escape. Like the people I ran in to who stumbled through their house, some people stumble through this life because they choose to, while others do it because they have never found a way out of the darkness. They live this way from the moment of birth until the final darkness of all overcomes them...the darkness of death.

### **III – TEXT:**

The sorry part of it all is that no one has to live in the darkness. Spiritual darkness can be overcome the same way as physical darkness. All you have to do is TURN ON THE LIGHT.

That's the message we see in this morning's text from the Gospel of John.

### **John 3:16-21 (NLT)**

<sup>16</sup> “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him. <sup>18</sup> “There is no judgment against anyone who believes in him. But anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God's one and only Son. <sup>19</sup> And the judgment is based on this fact: God's light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil. <sup>20</sup> All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be

exposed. <sup>21</sup> But those who do what is right come to the light so others can see that they are doing what God wants.”

In these six verses John sums up the entire message of his Gospel. There are those who say the entire Gospel is summed up in just the one, verse 16, the one everyone can quote from memory. “FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON AND WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE.”

John tells us in that one verse, and then explains it in the other five verses, which God has seen the darkness and out of his love he has provided a way out of the darkness, all we have to do is TURN ON THE LIGHT.

God sent the Light. A Light so glorious that it can never be extinguished by the darkness. He sent it because his greatest desire is that everyone will come to the light and find their Salvation. God’s purpose in sending the light, his Son, was not to burn the world, not to blind the world...it was to save the world. God’s attitude towards us is positive, it’s an attitude of love. God calls us all to come to the light.

All you have to do is TURN ON THE LIGHT. You do this when you believe. When you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, when you believe that he was sent to be the sacrifice for your sins, when you believe that he died on a cross, was dead and buried, and was resurrected to lead the way to eternal life for all, when you accept Jesus into your heart and call him Lord and Savior. Then you’ve TURNED ON THE LIGHT.

Unfortunately some people love the darkness better than the light. Some will never turn it on because they’re afraid they’ll be exposed. Some never turn it on because they are afraid of what they’ll see. They will someday be swallowed up by eternal darkness as they are completely cut off from the fellowship and presence of God for all of eternity. But those who choose Jesus will be in the light forever.

#### **IV - LIVE IN THE LIGHT:**

God created a world of light. The very first command he gave at the creation was “Let there be light.” Even at night he set up the stars and moon as light sources. He placed man and woman in that lighted atmosphere and in a very short time they plunged into darkness with disobedience and sin. A darkness that has existed in every subsequent generation until now and which will continue until the end of the world. But God had a plan. From the very beginning of time there was a light. A light that helped create the world that we all messed up and a light that was sent to earth to do away with the darkness that had invaded that creation.

