

Pastor Carl Rockrohr
Dennis Meyer Home-Going Service
John 1:1-5; 3:16; 20:30-31
October 2, 2023

No Darkness. Only Jesus' Life and Light.

30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. John 20:30-31

Prayer

Dear Doug, Dave, and Diann – Pat, Kirsten, Todd, Brice, Tracy, Barrett and Violet. God's peace, comfort and hope be with you everyday.

I knew Denny in several different contexts, but mostly I knew him as a man who loved to study and discuss God's Word. He attended as many Bible study classes as he could. He especially loved to study the writings by the Apostle John. Over the past year and a half, Denny studied in Zion's Bible classes the Revelation according to John; the letters 1,2 & 3 John; and we just started study of the Gospel of John.

I shape this sermon especially according to the opening verses the Gospel of John, which Denny told me were his favorite. He was very happy that we started studying the Gospel of John. He told me four weeks ago, "I am getting my own copy of John this time."

The passage I just read is towards the end of John's Gospel, chapter 20, and it is clearly his stated purpose for writing the Gospel. We noted this purpose statement as we began to look at the opening verses of the Gospel. Why know God's Word? Why read the Bible?

these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. John 20:31

Our comfort starts with the fact that the Savior Jesus Christ in whom we believe is God.

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. (John 1:1-2)

As we make our way through the ups and downs of life's days, weeks, months and years... how do we get through? What is consistent and reliable as the world changes in many ways, both good and bad? What about as we change? Sometimes the changes we face are good and helpful, but often the changes are not very helpful and it is a struggle to get through. Jesus, the Son of God, is called the Word of God. But not only Words, but Actions. In Jesus we see what God wants to tell us and then His action among us. Especially as Denny faced more health problems lately he was comforted that Jesus was the Word. Jesus is God.

This is God's design, that we rely upon Him: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Verse 3 states,

3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Scripture is clear that Father, Son and Holy Spirit were all present and all part of the creation of all things, the creation of the universe. Denny and I discussed a number of times the Scripture's teaching of God's creating activity vs. man's theory of evolution. We discussed recent news articles which showed evolutionists' changing positions, and how even among evolutionists new evidence is changing the theory of the big bang beginning.

John's Gospel clearly links the Word as the source of life, not randomness. God is in control, not chaos that somehow gets organized. We emphasize at Zion the importance that Jesus taught us to pray the Lord's Prayer... "You should pray like this..." Jesus said. "Our Father, who art in heaven..." Denny loved the congregation to sing the Lord's Prayer, he knew the prayer's significance: we rely upon God.

Jesus the Word of God, the Son of God, points us to pray to our Heavenly Father.

4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Escaping the darkness was important to Denny as to all Christians. If a person is not a Christian, there is a search for meaning, truth and especially for security. Where can I be safe? Where is there light and life, not darkness and death?

John's Gospel is crystal clear on this point – in the Word of God, the Son of God, we have life and light. Even if it looks like darkness and death – chaos – might overtake us, it cannot succeed because the Word is our life and light and He is in charge. This is a fundamental belief of all Christians – even if my body dies, death is not in charge, Jesus is in charge. Denny spoke this belief to me many times, Jesus is in charge.

It is important for us Christians to hear that the death of our bodies is only temporary and in no way does bodily death separate us from Jesus, from God the Father nor from God the Holy Spirit. To die in the Christian faith is to be with God. The word "perish" in English translations indicates separation from God, alienation from God. Dying in the faith is not "perishing." Dying in the faith is still to live.

Jesus Himself taught us this, as recorded in John 3:16

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Denny's confirmation verse has happened. He has everlasting life with Father, Son and Holy Spirit and all God's saints. Thank you Lord Jesus for all Your gifts to us.