

Mind the Light

by Erlo Stegen

We must walk in the light to have fellowship with God and be a true reflection of his holiness.

Duration: 1:00:15

Scripture: Exodus 33:20, Isaiah 6:1-5, Matthew 4:16, Romans 13:11, Ephesians 5:11, Ephesians 5:14, 1 John 1:5

Topics: "Light Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of examining one's own life and the impact they have on others. He urges listeners to consider whether they are living according to the Bible and if they are shining the light of God's holiness in the world. The preacher acknowledges the darkness and immorality present in the world but encourages believers to be lighthouses and spread the gospel. He shares a personal experience of a powerful repentance moment and highlights the urgency of repentance and turning away from sin. The sermon also touches on the issue of people not listening and falling asleep in church, leading to spiritual death. The preacher warns against the influence of false teachings, such as the denial of hell, and emphasizes the richness of Africa, not in material wealth but in spiritual potential.

Transcript

Be with us now, Lord Jesus. Thank you for this opportunity you've given us. Speak to us in your grace.

Amen. Now before we get to reading the letter, I'd just like to read our text. From the first book of John.

The first epistle of John. The first chapter. And verse five.

For this is the message we have heard from him and announced to you, that God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another.

I have a letter here from one of the brethren. Greetings Reverend Stegan and all the members at CFT and of CFT. I write this letter thanking God.

And then he mentions a few points which don't console all of us. And then she writes that there is a certain dream which is troubling her. This was written on the second of September, which is before this conference.

This is my dream. She dreamt that there was a creche being built in the place where she lives. What makes me say that there are creches in our area.

Now why should we build another creche? Because there are so many. The problem is that those creches that are there allow all different religions. The only problem is that Christianity is the only religion which is not promoted.

It is just dragged down and criticized. Have you listened properly? It is for all the religions. But Christianity is not represented there.

And they play the fool with Christianity. Talk evil about it. That is here in South Africa.

And you who are part of the electorate, you voters, who did you vote for? And what are those that you voted for doing and introducing? We members of CFT have problems regarding our children because they are not taught the gospel of Christ. And that causes friction between us and our children. Just recently the Muslims have built one right here in our area where I live.

And the Muslims, they promote the religion in our area by getting all the people together and also the children and then providing for their needs. That is a concern to us Christians for truth. Now that was before this conference started.

There is hardly a village or town anymore where you don't find a mosque. So we are faced with many things. Now Islam is something that doesn't even have any life in it.

They don't have Jesus as we do. And yet what they do seems to surpass what Christians do. I was once challenged by a Muslim priest.

And he was going for me. And I just kept quiet. I thought it's best if he speaks first.

I thought I'd speak at the end. And he spoke for hours. At the end I said, I hear what you say.

But I've got one problem. Now I said, look, I believe that you Muslims are only allowed to have four wives. Now you whites must listen carefully, especially you girls.

Because it seems as if the white girls love having... Many white young girls like to marry Muslims. Muslims. You won't be the only one.

There will be three beside you. If you want to share your husband with another woman. Well, it's up to you.

You've got to choose. I don't tell people whom they should get married. But I'm just warning you.

Don't be so foolish. I said, well, the Quran says you're only allowed to have four wives. But here in Durban, I hear there's a very well-known Muslim who's got 20 wives.

How do you explain that? You must be clever. He said, remember the Quran says you're not allowed to have more than four wives under one roof. He said, look, so you build your house and you only have four wives in your house.

The other 16 you keep in a compound. And the agreement is such that she is your wife as long as she is in your house, under your roof. The moment she walks out of that house, you're divorced, she's no longer your wife.

So listen carefully because this will give you ammunition when you're challenged by them and they tell you things. Then at least you know a bit better. So when you don't want the one wife anymore, all you need to do is send her out of the house.

She walks out the door. Then you're effectively divorced and then you can bring in the next one. And you're married with her.

And then laughed. He also smiled. I think he himself realized that it's not really the right thing.

I then said, but what does Muhammad say about all this? Then he laughed. He said, well, Muhammad is dead, so he doesn't see it. If you want to be a Muslim and accept their faith, do you really want to accept something that is dead? But our Christ is alive.

But what I don't... But I don't understand how when they serve something that is dead and we've got something that's alive, we serve the almighty God. How is it that their cause spreads better than ours? We are faced by many challenges. Islam is just one of them.

There's also AIDS. I just earlier on spoke to Bongani Zondi, who's in Mpumalanga. They had our mission near Malalan.

He was telling me that they had visited many places, also many schools that they had visited for the first time. When they got to the one school, they were told that certain policemen had passed away. They got to another school and they were told that a certain nursing sister had died.

At another school they said, one of our teachers has just died. People are dying like flies. They were warned very often.

I personally warned people over and over again. But the problem is people come to church, they sit and they fall asleep, they don't listen. And that is the result.

It's a pity when you tell someone something so clearly and he doesn't listen. We don't just stand here in God's place for the sake of it. You should listen and take note of what is said.

We don't just stand here in God's place for the sake of it. You should listen and take note of what is said. You also heard about the Jehovah's Witnesses.

In Zulu they call them the people who say there is no hell. Why do they want to convert us if there is no hell? Let us enjoy life. Because there is nothing on the other side.

And then there is the world that we are faced with. The things of the world. We always hear that Africa is so poor.

In fact, it is not poor, it is rich. Why do I say so? I am telling you, there is a threshold. 200 rand.

From 200 to 4,000 rand. I am telling you, in Zulu there is no hell. There is no hell.

4,000 rand. If you want to eat, you should eat. You should eat and drink.

So that you can have food. If you are not hungry, you don't have to eat. If you are hungry, you should eat.

If you are not rich, you should eat. If you are poor, you should eat. If you are rich, you should eat.

I was told these days that to stretch your hair costs between 200 Rand up to 4,000 Rand. You can't tell me that you are poor if you can afford that and you spend your money on that on these worldly things while there are others who are desperately poor who you could be helping. Now you can do what you like but I'm asking you this question.

The world is dying. You should be a lighthouse. Is we know there are people that are dying and some are dying because of poverty but if you can't even be responsible with your money and you can't even do things properly in that way how can you do other things properly and how will you manage eternity? Jesus says we are light.

We are lighthouse. We should be shining for the world to see. We heard these days that there were such people in the past who made false fires in the wrong places and luring the ships to divert them onto the rocks.

And then there were other lighthouses and lights that shone from the tops of the churches. That is actually what a church should be. It should be a lighthouse.

And then they started building the lighthouses with a revolving light that the light would only be seen every five seconds and by that the captain could recognize that that was the genuine light. That he didn't confuse the lighthouse light with other lights. Now I read here that God is light.

This is the message we have heard from him and announced to you that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say we are fellowship with him and yet walk in darkness we lie and do not practice the truth. And if we walk in the light we are fellowship with one another.

I would like to speak about the light. So take heed of the light. I would like to cry it out and shout it out.

Mind the light. Mind the light. Mind the light Christian.

The Christians are the children of the light and yet there are no greater fools than the Christians. Mind the light. That should beam out of your life.

A certain woman, her name was Kate Walker. For 35 years she kept the light burning in the lighthouse near New York. Robbins Reef Lighthouse.

With Atlantic flows into New York. After nearly four decades the government pensioned her after her work of having kept the lighthouse going. And she moved to Staten Island where she could see the light flashing across the dark waters.

Kate confessed that it was often hard and lonely at the lighthouse for those many years. But she was faithful. She faithfully tended the light of the lighthouse.

Because of a promise she had made to Jake. Jake had been her husband. Before Jake died he had said to his wife Kate, said Kate mind the light.

And for 35 years that woman was faithful because of her husband's words to her. Kate mind the light. Often it was difficult.

If you do one thing over and over again it becomes monotonous. Yet she was faithful. And she was often alone and lonely.

But because of what her husband had said, mind the light. For they had lived close to the lighthouse, Kate and her husband and two children. Because of their work many ships entered the harbour safely and many lives were saved.

This should be a challenge to all of us for Jesus also said to us that we should be the light. Not mind your hair, not mind your clothing, not mind your shoes, mind the light. Take note of that, that we don't mind many other things, we should mind the light.

I said don't mind your hair, I include the men as well, don't mind your nose and your toes, mind the light. I think that the light goes together with holiness. If it says God is light, that is associated with his holiness.

That's why we are also called children of the light. For we are born of God. The Germans say that the apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

That means the son is like the father, the children are like the parents. If you think what my parents are, my children, they are a picture of what you are Mr and Mrs. We are called children of the light. Remember you mothers.

You carried their child for nine months, you brought it into this world, you brought it up. It's your child, your offspring. If then it's true that we are children of God, then surely we should be like him.

And if you tell me you are a child of God and you don't take after him, haven't got his image, let me tell you today you are a liar. God isn't your father, someone else. Maybe you call yourself born again, born again, and it means nothing.

You have got the name, but you are dead. We can't get away from the fact that the child takes after the parent. And if you are born again, you take care, you take after your heavenly father.

And if you are not like them, like him, look who's the other father, look at your deeds. Maybe the devil is your father. If we are God's children, then we'll be godly.

If God is our father, then we'll be godly. We should be children of the heavenly light, and that light should shine in our faces. Shine in our lives.

Do you hear that? I ask you, are you really a light? Are you a lighthouse? Is your light shining? Isaiah the prophet was a wonderful preacher, a king among the preachers. But one day he experienced God in his light and his holiness when he was in the temple. And the angels, the seraphims were calling out, holy, holy, holy.

And the foundations of the temple were shaken. And the prophet called out, he said, oh, woe to me, for I am a man of unclean lips and live among people of unclean lips. Have you been born of that heavenly God? Moses also met with God and he spoke to God and God spoke to him as to a friend.

As a friend to a friend. And then he said, oh God, show me your face. And God said, Moses, no one can see my face and live.

He says it's impossible. Do you realize who God is? Do you realize what his light is like? How bright it is? Have you ever caught just a glimpse of that heavenly light? We speak about it and yet we don't even know what it is. God's light is so great we cannot fathom it.

If we just look at the lightning, that's just his little stick. What is God and who is God himself? What is his light like? We so easily and so clearly say, we know God. Do you know him? Do you know his light? Do you know his holiness? And then you live the way you live.

Jesus came down from heaven and became man. And Jesus said, no one has seen God except the Son who came down. He is the one who sits at God's side.

And man who lives in sin, who is sinful, cannot stand in that light of God. He will never survive. Sinful man is in outer darkness.

They told me that in Cape Town a lighthouse was built. A very high lighthouse. When they built the lighthouse and put on the light, they realized that the ships were still in danger because they couldn't see the light.

Why? Why? Because they had built the lighthouse too far up, and when the clouds came, the lighthouse would be hidden in the clouds, and the ships wouldn't see the light. And then they built another lighthouse lower down. And if that is true, I say, well, that reminds me of what God did in Jesus Christ.

God is too high. And we in the darkness of our sin, we cannot see that light. And then Jesus came.

He lowered himself. He came down to our level so that we could be reconciled to God. In Ephesians it says that you were in the darkness.

You were once darkness. You were once darkness. But now you are the light to the Lord.

We need to be that light. God doesn't want us in the dark. Darkness cannot drive away darkness.

The blind cannot lead the blind. They'll both end up in a ditch. So the Bible says, Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.

Expose it. That we Christians are masters in covering sin. That is our downfall.

Maybe we confess our sins, but we don't expose sin where it is found. We keep quiet with it. We condone it.

There's sin in the church. We keep quiet about it. There's sin at school or at home or wherever.

We keep quiet with it. We cover it up. But the light brings everything to light, whatever it is.

If there's a snake or if there's even a needle, it brings it to light. The Bible says, Wake up, O sleeper. Rise from the dead.

And then Christ will shine in you. So if you don't walk in the light, that light that exposes everything, then you are dead. You are children of lies.

The Bible says, The people that lived in darkness have seen a great light. A great light. A great light.

But it's dark in the world. Who has seen a great light? That has revolutionized your life. The world is... The world is perishing.

But what are the Christians doing? Where are they? The Muslims, the Hindus, the Jehovah's Witnesses, they're all busy. Where are the Christians? Are they fast asleep? Why are the Christians sleeping? They're sleeping. Why are they sleeping? Why are they sleeping in Africa? Why are they sleeping? Why are they sleeping? Shouldn't we, if we are light, be able to make a difference here in this world and in our country? Just look how many we are.

Surely we should make an impression if we were all light. But sometimes the people right in our midst and next to us don't even get enlightened by us. And yet when we vote, we vote for the people who put out the light, who take prayer out of schools, and who are sympathetic to the other religions.

Now let's forget about the government. The government can't put out the light that's in your heart. What puts out the light in you? Just one thing.

Sin. The problem is you Christians, you live with sin in your life. You're not prepared to confess and part with that sin.

Shame! Shame! Shame! It's a shame. You Christians can't even get on with one another. You cannot and do not have any fellowship.

Why? You're jealous of one another. You hold grudges against each other. You even hate each other.

What a shame. It's a disgrace. They fight.

They can't be one. Oh you are not people of heaven. You're people of hell.

It's a disgrace, we want to preach, we want to testify, we want to do this and that for the Lord, and yet there's sin in our lives. We can't even get on with each other. They say of all the missionaries or preachers of the gospel, 60% of them can't even get on with each one another.

They can't live together. 60% of the missionaries. My, what has happened? In what state are we? I can only say fools we are.

You tell me about God. You don't know him. Your God must be the devil.

How do you know that holy and bright God, the God of light? And there are works of darkness in your life. When you say that you know him and do not walk in the light, you are a liar. And we should be a light.

We should be a bright light shining far into the distance that people even far away will recognize that light. We can't. It's time.

It's time that we test and search ourselves whether we are really light. Why is it so dark in the world? When we are there, I think it's time we should stop being Pharisees and Sadducees and hypocrites. We've got time to criticize each other.

We've got time to find fault with each other. We are like dogs biting each other and the hair gets away. We are.

I'm tempted to say that if you haven't repented yet, even though you may have called yourself a child of God, I'm tempted to ask you to come forward and that you come and you kneel down here. I remember in Lorenzo Marx, just after Samora Michelle's death, we had a service there in the stadium, in the Reds, a

service was there in that stadium, in the Red Square. It was wonderful to be able to stand there where the communists had always preached their gospel and said all their things and now we could stand there and preach the gospel.

I spoke about sin. I also spoke about Christians who allow sin in their lives. And then I invited them, I said I invite you to come forward so you can repent and separate from your sin.

And almost everyone got up and came forward. And the ministers, the ministers came. The ministers ran to the front and quickly started announcing and saying, no, no, this invitation is not for you church members.

You are Christians. It's not for you. It's for all the others that are heathens, that aren't Christians.

Everything is all right with you. You can sit. He is calling the heathen.

The next day I thought, well, they didn't understand it clearly. I've got to make it more plain. I said, I don't call the godless.

I call the children of God to repentance. You can. You have got sin in your life.

You know your sin. If you haven't, then go down on your knees and ask God that through the Holy Spirit, he'll expose sin in your life. Do you put any effort into God's cause? Do you mind the light? How many people? How many people have got converted through you? How many of you led to the Lord and you want to serve the Lord like that being the way you are? Do you want to continue just like that going through life with empty hands with no one that you can present to the Lord of here to come today? Would you stand before him empty handed? Now, I don't know whether I'm speaking to people that are just stone dead, that are just like a stone or a fly on the wall, or whether you do here.

But I say to you, woe to you, if you say you're a Christian, but you live a fruitless life. It's time for you to forget others and ask yourself and ask yourself before God and say, oh Lord, what is my life like? Do rivers of living water flow from my innermost being? When a jet flies through the sky, there's a paper trail behind it. Often you don't even see the aeroplane itself.

You just see that trail. Remember as you go through life, there's a trail that you leave behind as well. Is it a trail of darkness? Or is it a trail of God's holiness of his light? Jesus is returning soon.

We'll all stand before him. Woe to you if you haven't lived a life that is according to the Bible, where you are the light in this world. Ask yourself whether that light is shining.

That's why I say, mind the light. Heed the light. Is that light burning? Let us bow our heads.

Oh God, it's dark in this world. It's as if the devil has been let loose to do his work. It's as if there's a spirit of looseness, of prostitution that's been let loose.

Spirit of immorality. It's as if all hell has been let loose. Yet we find your children asleep.

Your children have allowed the devil to work in their hearts. Work, oh God. And for those, Lord, that have come forward to cry to you, be gracious to them.

Who were not afraid to stand up before people. Who came forward even before they were even told to come forward. Work in their hearts.

Lord, work in their hearts. Do a great work and change them. That each one will be a lighthouse.

That each one will shine with that heavenly light, that light which is indescribable. And Lord, that then as a result, the gospel may go throughout the world. And that it will be obvious and will be seen that here, these are the children of the light.

Amen.

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