

The False Light

by W.R. Inge

The false light is a deception that seeks to be God and is characterized by self-seeking and selfishness, leading to false liberty and disregard for order.

Scripture: John 8:12, 2 Corinthians 11:14, Galatians 5:13, Philippians 2:5, 1 John 2:9

Topics: "False Idolatry", "Christian Humility"

Description

W.R. Inge delves into the concept of the False Light, contrasting it with the true light which is of God and seeks goodness for its own sake. The false light deceives and seeks self-interest, aspiring to be like God without understanding the humility and selflessness required. It rejects the life of Christ and promotes a false sense of liberty, leading to disregard for virtues and a focus on self-gratification. Inge warns against the dangers of the false light, equating it to Lucifer and Antichrist, emphasizing the importance of living a just life modeled after Christ.

Transcript

Now I must tell you what the False Light is, and what belongs to it. All that is contrary to the true light belongs to the false. It belongs of necessity to the true light that it never seeks to deceive, nor consents that anyone should be injured or deceived; and it cannot be deceived itself. But the false light both deceives others, and is deceived itself. Even as God deceives no man, and wills not that any should be deceived, so it is with His true light. The true light is God or Divine, but the false light is nature or natural.

It belongeth to God, that He is neither this nor that, and that He requires nothing in the man whom He has made to be partaker in the Divine nature, except goodness as goodness and for the sake of goodness. This is the token of the true light. But it belongs to the creature, and to nature, to be something, this or that, and to intend and seek something, this or that, and not simply what is good without asking *Why*. And as God and the true light are without all self-will, selfishness, and self-Seeking, so the "I, Me, and Mine" belong to the false light, which in everything seeks itself and its own ends, and not goodness for the sake of goodness.

This is the character of the natural or carnal man in each of us. Now observe how it first comes to be deceived. It does not desire or choose goodness for its own sake, but desires and chooses itself and its own ends rather than the highest good; and this is an error and the first deception. Secondly, it fancies itself to be God, when it is nothing but nature. And because it feigns itself to be God, it takes to itself what belongs to God; and not that which belongs to God when He is made man, or when He dwells in a Godlike

man; but that which belongs to God as He is in eternity without the creature.

God, they say, and say truly, needs nothing, is free, exempt from toil, apart by Himself, above all things: He is unchangeable, immoveable, and whatever He does is well done. "so will I be," says the false light. "The more like one is to God, the better one is; I therefore will be like God and will be God, and will sit and stand at His right hand." This is what Lucifer the Evil Spirit also said. Now God in eternity is without contradiction, suffering, and grief, and nothing can injure or grieve Him.

But with God as He is made man it is otherwise. The false light thinks itself to be above all works, words, customs, laws, and order, and above the life which Christ led in the body which He possessed in His human nature. It also claims to be unmoved by any works of the creatures; it cares not whether they be good or bad, for God or against Him; it keeps itself aloof from all things, and deems it fitting that all creatures should serve it. Further, it says that it has risen beyond the life of Christ according to the flesh, and that outward things can no longer touch or pain it, even as it was with Christ after the Resurrection.

Many other strange and false notions it cherishes. Moreover, this false light says that it has risen above conscience and the sense of sin, and that whatever it does is right. One of the so-called "Free Spirits" even said that if he had killed ten men, he would have as little sense of guilt as if he had killed a dog. This false light, in so far as it fancies itself to be God, is Lucifer, the Evil Spirit; but in so far as it makes of no account the life of Christ, it is Antichrist.

It says, indeed, that Christ was without sense of sin, and that therefore we should be so. We may reply that Satan also is without sense of sin, and is none the better for that. What is a sense of sin? It is when we perceive that man has turned away from God in his will, and that this is man's fault, not God's, for God is guiltless of sin. Now, who knows himself to be free from sin, save Christ only? Scarce will any other affirm this. So he who is without sense of sin is either Christ or the Evil Spirit.

But where the true light is, there is a true and just life such as God loves. And if a man's life is not perfect, as was that of Christ, still it is modelled and built on His, and His life is loved, together with modesty, order, and the other virtues, and all self-will, the "I, Me, and Mine," is lost; nothing is devised or sought for except goodness for its own sake. But where the false light is, men no longer regard the life of Christ and the virtues, but they seek and purpose what is convenient and pleasant to nature.

From this arises a false liberty, whereby men become regardless of everything. For the true light is the seed of God, and bringeth forth the fruits of God; but the false light is the seed of the Devil, and where it is sown, the fruits of the Devil, nay the very Devil himself, spring up. xl.

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