

Sermon: Christmas Day

Text: John 1:1-14 (v.4):” In him was life and that life was the light of men.”

Theme: Jesus: our life, our light

Goal: To assure that we have life and light only in Jesus, the Son of God, born at the first Christmas.

Dear friends in Christ,

### **Introduction:**

Christmas is the Feast of Lights! Shopping Centers, streets, stores, some of the houses are brightly decorated and even in our church we had a candlelight service at Christmas Eve yesterday. Lights are twinkling and making the eyes of the children and adults bright and shiny too. Why is this tradition?

Some say that Martin Luther walking once at Christmas Time outside – (and remember that in Germany, where he lived, Christmas time is in winter time with snow) – he saw a tree full of snow and the light was shining through the branches of the tree like little lights. Then he decided to take a tree to his house and decorated it with little candles – and so, this should be one of the origins of the Christmas tree with many lights!

But why the lights? Because Christmas is the Celebration of the true Light, who came down from heaven “**into the world to give light to every man**” (v.9). And all these lights are in honor of Christ, the Light of the World. Isn’t it so? ... Unfortunately in many cases it is not in honor of Christ, but it is a mere tradition. And sometimes those innumerable lights hinder people to see the true Light of the World. It’s not wrong to use the Christmas lights, but let us remember the True Light that was sent by God to us at the First Christmas.

## **I – Jesus our light.**

God knows that we need light. Without light we cannot survive. Without light there is no life.

It's significant that the Gospel of John begins with the same words of Genesis 1:1 at the beginning of the Bible: **“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”** And: **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Through him all things were made.”** This Word that was in the beginning is Jesus Christ, who was with God at the Creation and now is coming to the earth, born of the Virgin Mary. He is the same and eternal God at all the time.

And how was it in the beginning? **“The earth was formless and empty; darkness was over the surface of the deep.”** Then the first thing that God created was the light! **“And God said, ‘Let there be light’, and there was light. God saw that the light was good and he separated the light from the darkness.”** (Gen 1:2-4). There is no possibility to darkness and light to be in the same space, in the same place; one excluded the other! But it is good to note: Darkness can be as strong as it can, but a little light will make a great difference! And the light every time will overcome the darkness, but the darkness can never blow out the light!

Where light, there is no darkness! And where light, there is life!

As God worked at the beginning, overcoming the darkness with the light, so God handles us too. We can read in the book of prophet Isaiah (9:2,6): **“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,”** and this child is the Mighty God that came to us at the first Christmas, Jesus, the light of the world! As John says us in the Gospel: **“The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not overcome it.”**

Can you imagine the brilliant light that shone around the shepherds at the

fields of Bethlehem? It was the glory of the almighty Lord that came to them, to announce good news to them and to all the people: **“Today a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ, the Lord!”**

John, the baptist, came as a **“witness to the light”**. **“He himself was not the light”**, as some expected. **“He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, Jesus, so that through him all men might believe.”** But in chapter 5 of this Gospel, John is mentioned by Jesus as **“a lamp that burned and gave light”**. This reminds me of a professor of mine who told us once at the class that the only comparison that Jesus used for himself and for us too is about the light. He says: **“I am the light of the world”** ; and he says too: **“You are the light of the world.”** (Mat 5:14)) We are not the door, we are not the Good Shepherd, and we are not the Way. But we are lights for the word! Like the thousand of little lights that are used at that Christmas time, we are little lights shining in the darkness, testifying that the light of Christ is in us and is shining through us to the world. People cannot see Jesus Christ any more, but they can see the Christians, they can see us!

## **II – Jesus our life**

And where is light, there is life; and where is life, there is light. They cannot live without one another. It is said about Jesus: **“In him was life, and that life was the light of men.”**

He brought us the life of God, the eternal life. The apostle Paul tells us (Eph 2:1ff): **“As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world. But because his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace expressed in kindness to us in Christ Jesus.”**

The eyes of a dead person are not bright and shiny any more; but the eyes of living people are brightened, shining, as ours! Because Christ lives in

us. He is the Emmanuel – God with us! As Paul says to the Galatians (2:20): **“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”** - Therefore Christmas is the Feast of Life and the Feast of Lights!

Once I read that a rich man decided to build a school for blind people. But he argued: As they are blind, and cannot see, the building doesn't need windows. And so the building was completed, without windows. But when it was finished and the classes began, the teachers and the students felt themselves very uncomfortable and they began to become sick. Then all were convinced that the building needed windows to have light, natural light, the light of the sun. And it was remodel and all became happy and were able to study in that building – because there was light now!

### **Conclusion:**

Paul says to the Corinthians (2 Cor 4.6): **“For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.”**

A new creation began when Jesus was born. New life, new light came from God to the earth. And this light of Jesus is shining now in our hearts, since our baptism, giving us the eternal life with Jesus. Thanks God for one more Christmas that we are given: the Feast of Light, the Feast of Life. Amen.

Pastor Carlos Walter Winterle  
C. Town, December 24, 2011