

The Lakeview Lamp

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” – **Psalm 119:105**

Sept 6

2009

A Night of Darkness

Louis J. Sharp

We are thinking of the night of Jesus’ betrayal, by Judas Iscariot. What a terrible night of darkness that night was! Jesus had broken the news to His disciples: “*Verily, verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray Me. He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it ... He gave it to Judas Iscariot... then said, ‘What thou doest do it quickly.’ He then that received the sop went immediately out: and it was night*” (**John 13:21, 26-27, 30**). Yes, this is a brief description of a night of gloom and despair. Have you considered what Judas left when he went out that night?

First, he left his friends. Dark it is indeed for he who has no friends. We sometimes observe those who seem to be all alone. They have forfeited their friends for other things throughout their lives. These loners sometimes boast, “I need no friends. I can handle everything all by myself.” But the time will come when friends are very necessary to our well being. All of us need true friends.

Secondly, he lost all hope. Hope is so essential to our physical and mental health. It is that which keeps us keeping on! It is the blessed hope that we possess. The **Hebrew** writer describes it as “*an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast*” (**6:19**). The individual who has no hope is, indeed, one to be pitied. There was no hope left for Judas when he went out into the darkness of that night.

Thirdly, and worst of all, he left his Savior. How utterly hopeless we are without Christ. As we read of Judas’ action, we may ask, “How could he do it?” I suggest to you that Judas did it the same way that erring Christians have rejected Christ today. They simply turn their backs to Him and feel that they no longer have any need for Him. Because of their love for the world, and the things of this world (**I John 2:15-16**), they long for these things more than they long for Christ. How sad it is for those who once knew the Lord, and were faithfully serving Him, to turn again to the “*beggarly elements of this world*” (see **2 Peter 2:20-22**). The divine record declares it would be better for that man that he had never been born. Those who turn away from Christ emulate the deeds of Judas.

Finally, Judas committed suicide. Like Judas, many commit spiritual suicide day by day. In despair, Judas went out and hung himself. His vivid memory was that “*he had betrayed innocent blood*” (**Matthew 27:4**). How many are now “*crucifying the Son of God afresh,... putting Him to open shame*” (**Hebrews 6:6**)? Do not go as far as Judas did in destroying your last hope. Turn back to God, while time and opportunity are still yours. Repent, and pray God for forgiveness. He will Hear!!!

The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved

David McClister

“There was reclining on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23).

Most scholars agree that the otherwise anonymous “disciple whom Jesus loved” in John’s gospel is John himself. This would explain why an apostle as well known as John is not mentioned in that gospel, i.e., not mentioned as John. He is mentioned by this description instead. Also, Peter and John are often portrayed as associated together in several scenes (cf. **Acts 3:1; Matt 17:1;** etc.), but in John it is Peter and “the disciple whom Jesus loved.” It seems that John himself is this mysterious figure in the fourth gospel.

Why would John hide his name from the account and instead identify himself simply as “the disciple whom Jesus loved”?

Then again, why not? And wouldn’t you? If given the choice to be known by a quite common and ordinary name (like “John”), or to be known as one who was an especially close friend of Jesus, wouldn’t you rather be known by the latter? Is that not the very reason we adopt the name of Christ as our own (i.e., we call ourselves “Christians”) when we commit ourselves to follow Him? Are we not representatives of our Master to the world, and isn’t it appropriate that when the world observes us that they see us first as people joined to Christ? Shouldn’t our friendship with Jesus be the most important thing in our lives, and should it not be the defining trait about us? If you were to write a story in which you were one of the characters, and you had the option of identifying yourself by your common name or as a person who was endeared to Jesus, wouldn’t it be a wonderful thing to be able to present yourself to the world like that instead of as simply “John” or “James” or “Michael” or “Tom”?

When I run across John’s description of himself in the fourth gospel I am struck by John’s choice, and how significant it is. John could easily have identified himself as John, but that is not how he wanted the rest of the world to know him. “John” just did not say to others what was truly important to know about this man. So instead we read of “the disciple whom Jesus loved,” John’s own choice for the presentation of himself to his readers. —>

News and Notes

Members:

- * Virginia Bryant had a rough day Wednesday but is doing better now.
- * Estelle Hayes found out that due to her macular degeneration her eyesight cannot be improved with stronger glasses.
- * Cotton Read continues to have breathing problems but is some better.

Friends and Family:

- * No news known.

Absent: Vernon and Claudia Guest (ND), Johnson family (camping), Nicholson children (Natchez Trace).

New Reports: Gary Hunt (NY), Chad Lynn (WV).

A similar mentality ought to exist in every disciple of Jesus. We are Christians first, and we are David, Fred, Jane, Mary, Joe, and Kate (etc.) second. What we need to show to the world around us is our relationship with Christ. If they can see that first and most clearly, then we should be happy to be known simply as “Christians,” people who love the Lord and whom the Lord loves.



*“I shall give thanks to You with
uprightness of heart, when I learn Your
righteous judgments.”* – **Psalm 119:7**