

Christmas Shines in the Darkest of Places

Isaiah 9:2-3a, 6-7

I. _____ begins in the dark

A. The reality of darkness

Children frequently fear the dark--we keep closet doors shut at night.

As adults we fear the dark as well. Such fear is called nyctophobia.

Our fears and anxieties are _____ of another kind – no closet door shut them out.

B. The _____ of God's Word

1. Trouble inside

"_____ has become my closest companion." [Psalm 88:18]

2. Inside trouble--our _____ problem

The poetry of the _____ nail the bad news – this darkness, fog, and gloom

"Long lay the world/In sin and error _____"

The _____ focus of Advent: longing for the first and second comings of the Lord

C. Advent begins in the dark – it is about longing for the coming of the Lord

Advent anticipates the light, but does not rush out of the darkness

1. Vs. _____

2. Vs. _____ through busyness and entertainment

D. Light at the end of _____

Glimmers of light scattered throughout the Old Testament

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone...." [Isaiah 9:2]

"The _____ shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death" [Zechariah's prophecy, Luke 1:78b-79a]

II. Light from the _____

A. The birth of Jesus was in "the _____ mid-winter"--close to the winter solstice

B. Jesus is the Light of the World (John 8:12; 12"46]

"I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness."

[John 12:46]

C. Jesus went through deep darkness to bring us into the light

Darkness at _____ on the cross [Matthew 27:45-46]

III. Light in this present darkness – the Son is the _____ of night

A. Run toward the Light--like the _____ and the _____

B. _____ down before the Light

C. _____ in the Light

"The unfolding of your Word brings light" [Psalm 119:130]

D. _____ the Light

Our Savior continues to light up dark places

"He comes to make His blessings flow/Far as the curse is found"