

**EASTER SUNDAY SERMON - PASTOR GREG**  
**9.04.2023**

**LIGHT LOVE LIFE.** The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed! Let us pray: Lord Jesus Christ let your light ever shine on us. Let your love ever dwell within us. Let your life for ever and ever. Amen.

**LIGHT:** The storms come and the power goes out and we rush for the candles and torches. A little child asks for the light to stay on as she goes to sleep. We are walking through a park at night time and we hear a noise. Darkness often brings apprehension and fear. In the beginning there was darkness and then God spoke: Genesis 1: *God said, "Let there be light and there was light.* Light overcame the darkness and soon there was a wonderful and tremendous abundance of life. But darkness came upon God's good creation when Adam and Eve sinned. That darkness dwells in the hearts of all people so once again God acted:

*John 1: Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it.* The Christmas story speaks of hope, of life and light. Indeed, the One who was proclaimed as IMMANUEL is also the LIGHT of God:

John 8:12: *When Jesus again spoke to the people, he said, "I am the Light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.* As we are baptised and trust in Jesus Christ for our salvation, the darkness in our hearts is overcome and now we live in the light of God. And we are called to live in that light- to walk in the ways of Jesus Christ and to do all we can to avoid returning to the darkness: Eph 5:8: *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light for the fruit of the light consist in all goodness, righteousness and truth and find out what pleases to the Lord.* And when we fail- we have the wonderful and certain privilege of returning to God to ask for forgiveness.

**LOVE:** Not only is God light HE is also LOVE: 1 John 4:16: *God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God and God lives in him.* This is what Jesus is known for- the love that he showed as he lived and died on the cross: John 15:12: *My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.* And how are we to love? The modern western world has a very strange understanding of love. More often than not, lust is shown as love. Commitment goes out the window and anything goes. But that is not the love that God shows to us and it is not the love that we are called to live out: 1 Cor 13: *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes and always perseveres.* We could read that passage again and replace the word, 'love' with 'I'. I am patient? I am kind? I do not envy? This puts a very different perspective on these familiar words doesn't it? And then we could replace the word 'love' with the name 'Jesus'. Jesus is patient. Jesus is kind. Jesus keeps no record of wrongs. This is true because Jesus is love.

Light and love and now **LIFE!**

Before God spoke there was only God but then He spoke creation into being and created and indeed sustains all life: Gen 2: *The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.* Made in the image of God- male and female- made to be in a wonderful and committed and safe and loving relationship with God and to work with God caring for His good creation. But darkness, sin and the devil are never far away and so the life filled people of God became as dry bones, very dry bones as we heard a few weeks ago in *Ezekiel 37*. But even those dry bones- those dead in their transgression and sins could be made alive through the living and powerful word of God. And as with God, so also with the Eternal Son of God:

*John 1: Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it.*

*John 11: 25: Jesus said to (Mary), "I AM the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"*

*John 11:43: When he had said this, Jesus called out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out" The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take of the grave clothes and let him go."*

This is the Easter story- life from death, light overcoming the darkness and God's love overcoming evil. Because of Jesus Christ and his death, resurrection and ascension we live TODAY in his light and life and love. And we will live forever in his light, life and love. The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed! Amen.