

① [The work of Christ, who is the light]

In the New Testament, Jesus is called by various names. When someone counted how many names he is called, they found there are 187. Some well-known ones are "Word, Light, Gate, Shepherd, Sheep, Lamb, Way, Truth, Life, Resurrection, Teacher, Physician, Ransom, Vine, Bread of Life, Advocate, Wisdom, King, High Priest, Cornerstone, Bridegroom..." and so on. St. Basil the Great wrote in the 4th century:

●The Bible does not give the Lord Christ a single name, nor does it give Him only names that reveal His divinity or greatness. ... Countless names are given according to the manifold grace of Christ poured out upon us. At times He is called Shepherd, at times King. He is also called Physician, Bridegroom, Way, Gate, Fountain, Bread, Axe, and Rock. These names do not indicate Christ's essence, but rather the diversity of His work—that is, the saving acts performed according to the individual needs of those who seek Him, out of His compassion for the humanity He created."

Christ performs every act of salvation, which is why it is His name. Here, Jesus called Himself the light. What is the work of light? Light makes things visible, warms us, nurtures living things, sterilizes, and tells us time. Jesus is the same.

(1) "Makes God and oneself visible" When illuminated by the light that is Jesus, we come to understand the meaning of our birth and how we should live. At the same time, our own sin becomes visible. Just as opening a window and letting in outside light makes the dust and dirt throughout a room clearly visible. Paul too, illuminated by this heavenly light, came to know his sin and understand Christ.

(2) "It warms us." Through Jesus' words, we know God's love, and our hearts are warmed.

(3) "It nurtures humanity." Those illuminated by Jesus rise from death to life. As it says, "The life was the light of men" (John 1:4), because the light that is Jesus possesses life. By this light, we live.

(4) "Purifies" The light of Jesus neutralizes the devil's lies and the serpent's (Satan's) poison, cleansing us. Ignatius of the 2nd century said, "The Eucharist is the antidote to death."

(5) "Reveals the time" Jesus' words show us what time it is for us to act now, and where this world is headed.

② [This world is a darkness]

"Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

(John 8:12) The Lord says this world is darkness. Elsewhere, the Lord clearly states that this world is darkness: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:4-5) and "Walk while you have the light, lest the darkness overtake you." (John 12:35) This world cannot understand Christ. It does not accept Him. Furthermore, darkness does not remain still; it seeks to swallow up the children of light. " (John 12:35). It is clearly written that this world is darkness. This world cannot understand Christ. It does not accept Him. Moreover, darkness does not remain still; it pursues the children of light, seeking to swallow them up. If a person does not choose to believe in Christ, darkness will rule over that person.

Chesterton said this: "It is not that a man who does not believe in God believes nothing. On the contrary, he comes to believe anything." In this world, there are false lights, false messiahs, and false teachers. Those who do not believe in the true light come to believe in darkness and increasingly embrace it. Therefore, such a person grows ever darker.

Jesus often lamented concerning His disciples: "Do you still not understand? Do you not perceive? Is your heart hardened? Do you have eyes but fail to see? Have you ears but fail to hear?" (Mark 8:17-18) This happened because the first Adam believed the devil's lie: "God knows that when you eat it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Genesis 3:4) Then, "the eyes of both were opened, and they knew they were naked. " (Genesis 3:7). Thus, "the opening of their eyes was the first step in the Fall." However, their eyes opened only to this world of darkness; they became blind to God and His kingdom. Since then, humanity has constantly pursued this world (darkness) and ceased seeking God or His kingdom. That is precisely why Christ came as the light to illuminate this world and bring healing.

③ **【Those who follow Christ will see, and eventually become light】**

The things of this world can be seen by the light of the created sun, but the things of God cannot be seen unless they are illuminated by divine light.

●In the monastery's First Hour (6 a.m. prayer), the prayer reads: "Christ, the true light, who enlightens and purifies all who come into the world. May the light of your face shine upon us, that we may see the light we cannot approach."

To have our eyes opened to the kingdom of God and to God Himself, it is absolutely essential to be illuminated by the light of God, which is Christ. This is an uncreated light invisible to the eye. How exactly are we illuminated? It's simple. If you wish to be illuminated by the sun's light, you must go out into the sunlight. If you stay in the shade of a tree or inside a house, you cannot receive the light. In the same way, if you want to be illuminated by Christ, you must stand before Christ. Specifically, this means opening the Bible, praying, coming to church, partaking of

the Lord's Supper. Go to all things that are called Christ. Those who open the Bible are like people opening the door to heaven, letting in God's light. Those who do not open the Bible are like people who never open their windows all year long; their hearts become stagnant with dust and grime, becoming a nest of confusion and sickness. Those who spend much time in fellowship with Christ, being illuminated by Him for long periods, will, strangely enough, begin to see the kingdom of God.

The other day, I told this story to the five-year-olds at the nursery school. Let me share it with you all too. They listened with eyes wide as saucers. Please listen with a child's heart.

●The world God created was initially very beautiful, free from sickness, death, or war, where everyone lived in harmony. The devil found this unbearable. The devil is always a liar. So the devil created the "Devil's Mirror." Whatever was reflected in it appeared as a lie. The devil went around showing it to people. Then, God appeared mean, and the people around him appeared as liars. Seeing this, the devil laughed so hard he held his stomach, but then he slipped and dropped the mirror. The mirror shattered into pieces. The wind blew, and many people got shards of the devil's mirror in their eyes. Thus, many people began to doubt others, fear them, and stop trusting. War began. Seeing this, God was troubled and sent His own Son into the world. "My Son is just like me. If people see Him, they will know that God is good and that humans are wonderful too." That is how Jesus came into the world as a mirror reflecting God. Those who saw Jesus learned that God is truly kind and loves people. But the devil, jealous of this, taught lies to the powerful, leading them to crucify and kill Jesus. Thus, the "Mirror of God" shattered into pieces. Yet the wind blew, and fragments of God's mirror entered the eyes of many people. Then people's eyes were opened, and even more could see God's love.

Where Christ is, there is light; where He is not, there is darkness. If Christ dwells always in our hearts, we will become light. Let us keep His words in our hearts and partake of the Lord's Supper to be illuminated. Even Paul, who persecuted Christians, had his eyes opened and declared: "But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For Christ's sake I have lost everything, and I consider it all rubbish." (Philippians 3:8) Those illuminated by Christ's light see this world as rubbish and the kingdom of God as far more glorious. May you too be illuminated by Christ and see clearly.