

# The gifts of life and light

Christ Church: 30<sup>th</sup> December 2018 10.00 am.

John 1:1-14 page 1063

'In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind' (v4).  
'Light' comes seven times in vv4-9. This is one of the great themes of John's Gospel.

## Famous evangelists

### *Who would you list as great evangelists, living or dead?*

Billy Graham? J John? How about Her Majesty the Queen (for her Christmas speeches), St John (for our reading), the Wesley brothers ('light and life to all he brings' in Hark the herald....)

An evangelist proclaims the 'evangel' = 'good news'.

## The darkness

We cannot understand light until we appreciate darkness.  
The light shines in the darkness (v5).  
No understanding 'Messiah' until we appreciate 'mess'.  
Picture of total darkness at night in rural Scotland.

We sometimes talk about the:

- World – the culture around us without God
- Flesh – the self-centred, godless bias in us all
- Devil – the utter evil totally opposed to God's rule

In this context we in Christ Church need to identify three groups of people:

## 1: Evangelists

Eg. John the Evangelist

- You: is God gifting you as an evangelist?
- Others: can you see this gift in anyone you know?
- Church: can we identify the one or two evangelists we should have?

## 2: Witnesses

Eg. John the Baptist (vv7,8). All of us as:

- Role models: at work, in marriages or singleness, in our Christian involvement
- Giving explanation of our faith: at work, to our children, to our neighbours (1 Peter 3:15)
- Together as Christ Church: our activity in our parish, our activities such as Messy Church, Little Acorns, Shack

## 3: Receivers

Eg. those in v12

If this is where you stand, the need is to receive and believe this gift of life and light offered freely to you. But, beware, for many in Jesus' time did not receive him (v11).

Once received you then become a witness.

## The light

So to John 8:12

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

And in John 1:9

'The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.'

How will you respond today and then for the coming year?

- as an evangelist for the light?
- as a witness to the light?
- as a receiver of the light? ... Or as an ignorer of the light?