

John 1.5

Darkness and Light

Amington (Online)

Christmas Day 2020

Darkness

I've heard a number of people say they can't wait for 2020 to end and 2021 to begin. I can understand that; we often see 1 January as a fresh start – which is much needed after the year we've had!

The problem is, the problems won't go away. Brexit will bite. The virus and its new strain will still be rampant. The vaccines will take months to roll out – and we don't yet know if they work on the new strain. To be honest, 2021 could be even worse than 2020.

What a depressing message for Christmas morning. Except, it's only depressing if we put our hope *in the wrong thing*. If we put our hope in politicians, scientists, even in a vaccine – we will be disappointed. That is like turning on a torch on 1 January and expecting the battery to last all year... it ain't gonna happen!

I hope as much as you that 2021 *will* be a better year – but it might not be. The darkness is real, and the darkness is strong.

Light

But what I can say for certain about 2021, is that Jesus will be with us, and *his* light won't run out after a few days. Whatever happens – or doesn't happen, whatever changes – or doesn't change – Jesus will be with us. And *his* light... well, the darkness can't handle it.

In Greek the word at the end of John 1.5 means 'understood' *and* 'overcome': **The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not understood it, and the darkness has not overcome it.** If you want to put your hope in something for 2021, please don't put it in Boris or in SAGE or in Oxford's vaccine or in anything but this one thing: Jesus, the true light that **shines in the darkness.**

On Sunday Ruth is going to talk to us about being a people of 'one thing'. **One thing I do**, Paul says: **forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal** (Philippians 3.13-14). The goal, the prize, is the gift God has won for us and offers us in Jesus. **One thing I do**, Paul says.

Friends, this Christmas and New Year, may we be a people of 'one thing': Jesus Christ, the *only* light the darkness doesn't understand, the *only* light the darkness cannot overcome. Put your hope in *him*, and he will not disappoint. Merry Christmas and God bless you.