



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: Advent: The Light that Overcomes our Inner Chaos

Speaker: Steve Cuss, Pastor of Discovery Christian Church

Scripture: 1 John 3:19 - 20

¹⁹ This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence: ²⁰ If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

(NIV)

Sermon Outline:

Advent is a time of expectation and a time that we celebrate light. We experience and tend to think of darkness taking place outside of ourselves, but Advent is a time that invites us to examine our interior world.

What would it look like for our lives if we let God infiltrate our inner world?

For many of us, we are not living our lives according to the Gospel of Jesus but to according to our own gospels. These gospels, or messages we hear tell us things we need to do this in order to get something. These messages come in two parts: the first part is a path that you are told to walk, and the second part is the promise that you are given. If you want 'this', then you need to do 'this'. We are called today to take some time to think about the gospels we are putting our hope in.

The Gospel of Jesus is such that the path and the promise are the same. Jesus is the path AND the promise. The promise is what Jesus can give us: peace, freedom, and love. In the Gospel of Jesus, Jesus says we are not required to pay anything, but in every other gospel, there is a price that you must pay. The Gospel of Jesus is rooted in love and open to everyone. It is in Christ that you become a new creation.

Inner critic is the story you tell yourself when we you don't live up to your own expectations of yourself.

What questions do we need to answer to help us live out the Gospel of Jesus in our lives?

- What message does your inner critic send?
- How would you describe it to someone?

We are sons and daughters of God with full access to God. He tells us that we are fearfully and wonderfully made and there no condemnation for those of us who are in Him. God knows more about us than we know about ourselves.

What would our lives look like if we gave God prime real estate of our thinking and died to our inner critic?

What if I were at least as _____ (loving, forgiving, patient, kind, etc.) to myself as God is?

Where have you been talking back to God and negating the words that God has already spoken over you? Can you ask for forgiveness and grace to live into the loving affirmation God has already spoken over you?

Sermon Summary:

This Sunday, Steve Cuss, Pastor of Discovery Christian Church continues our Advent Series: The Light that Overcomes, Steve Cuss explores the ways to help us manage our anxiety and self-criticism so that we can connect more fully with God and His truth.

Sermon Questions:

1. How does this scripture connect for you the topic that was discussed today? What words resonate with you? Why?
2. In your family of origin did you grow up with words of affirmation from those around you or did you grow up listening to condemning words of your inner critic? How did your experience growing up affect the way you feel about yourself today? Are you still listening to that inner critic and its condemning words? Set aside time for

silence this week, offering this up to God in your time of prayer, asking for help with not listening to your inner critic.

3. In the present season in your life, what are the gospels that you believe in and are you chasing too many gospels? What paths are they taking you on, what are they promising you and what is the price that you are paying? Find time to journal about this asking God for guidance, wisdom and forgiveness.
4. What message does your inner critic send? Listening to your inner critic leads you on a path to nowhere. The Gospel of Jesus leads you into life and joy.
5. How would you describe this message to someone? Can you make time this week to share this with another brother or sister in Christ, or maybe your small group? There is power in saying this out loud to others, where those listening can share descriptive words after hearing what your inner critic says. They can then use affirming adjectives of the true gospel over you to help you remember that you are a child of God.
6. Do you believe that God knows you better than you know yourself? If so, why is it that the story we tell ourselves has more power than the story of God? Can you let God's voice be louder than your voice in order to hear him speaking to you? Journal your answer to these questions and either offer them up to God or discuss them with a trusted brother or sister in Christ or in your small group.