

From darkness to Light

The winter drags on, but we are beginning to get the light back at last. It always makes me feel more energetic, and it's easier to get up in the mornings!

Light is important Christian symbol; it represents holiness, joy and the scattering of the darkness that all faiths instinctively associate with evil. Many of you may recognise these opening words of a contemporary hymn writer, Graham Kendrick, from his famous hymn, *Shine, Jesus, shine*:

‘Lord, the light of love is shining,
in the midst of the darkness, shining..’

Perhaps he was thinking of Jesus own saying from the gospel of St John: *I am the light of the world*. Or perhaps some familiar words from the Christmas Gospel, referring to Jesus: *...and the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*’ The use of candles in Christian services at Christmas and Easter especially, tries to express that.

In contrast, I find the content of some rock videos quite disturbing, such you encounter on MTV and similar channels. There seems to be a great emphasis on darkness and death, a fascination with the darker side of our nature. Some of it is just plain silly, and some of it is about adolescent rebellion, the exploration of sexuality, and the attraction of power. But it concerns me when people get fascinated by those videos’ very self-centred messages, and gravitate to them uncritically.

Daily, we have to choose between good and evil, light and darkness. Even Jesus knew this battle within himself, as we learn from the gospel stories of his temptation in the desert, something we shall hear about at the beginning of Lent.

I encourage you to choose for the light of the world, Jesus Christ, whenever you are tempted. For in that choice lies the light of eternal life and the joy of knowing God.

Blessings

Stephen