



Christ is the World's Light

In 1969, Coca Cola faced a competitive market in other brands that were trying to imitate the Coca Cola taste. In light of this, the company began a new advertising campaign spearheaded by the slogan, “The Real Thing.” Even a new hit song was written to further encourage customers to distinguish imitative soft drinks from the original. Consumers pay extra money for authentic products and know that knock-off brands do not measure up in quality. If a company wishes for the consumer to know one thing, it is that nothing can satisfy like the original.

If Christian mission and ministry had a slogan, it would be, “Christ and none other.” It is a matter of life and death that the world finds the original source of abundant life in Christ. Imitative brands will not do and will leave us ultimately empty inside. The world searches for this kind of fulfillment. U2’s song, “Still Haven’t Found What I’m Looking For” voices this quest to find real and lasting truth. The words of St. Augustine ring true in the search: “Our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee.”

“Christ is the world’s light.” This light outshines all others because its source is of divine origin. It is the greatest light for a dark world, because God himself walked our sod in the person of Jesus. He lived alongside us as a man and knew the pains and trials that we face. As “our brother,” he knows our kind of darkness and goes to the Father on our behalf. John, in his gospel, tells us, “In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it” (John 1:4–5). Christ doesn’t bring a light; he is the light that the world needs – not another gimmick, or quick fix; Christ offers himself.

As well, Christ has come as the source of real peace. This peace runs deeper than other worldly offerings. Those brands ultimately falter in their promises and leave us empty again in the search. They are more concerned with quantity – another self-help book, more gratifying pleasures, more recognition, money, and friends. Christ is peace that meets us at the very core of who we are and transforms us from the inside out. He desires to leave us with a better, Christ-like quality of life.

Only he can give us this kind of life. As the source of life itself, Christ is the abundance that a dying world needs. The one who rescued life from the grips of death can alone lead others into resurrection renewal. Others will sell their own blueprints for living. Other paths will be marketed. But, true life cannot be bottled up and sold. There are no fast tracks to find true life. The bible warns us that, “We humans keep brainstorming options and plans, but God’s purpose prevails” Proverbs 19:21 (*The Message*). Life comes by way of the cross and Christ has gone there for us. We have only to receive him and we have all the richness of God’s provisions.

Are you settling for those imitations claiming to be “the real thing?” Hear the call to “Taste and see that the Lord is good” (Psalm 34:8). Try him and you’ll find complete satisfaction that only the “real thing” can offer. Christ is the true light, peace, and life – “Christ and none other.” You’ll be left wanting for nothing else.

© 2010 Mike Eller