

COMMUNION SERIES ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN
TO SEE – ISN'T ALWAYS – TO BELIEVE
John 11:45-57

What's the difference between a moth and a cockroach? One looks for the light, the other runs from it. While we know we didn't come from apes, we didn't come from insects either. But humans do behave like insects sometimes. We sometimes look for the light, or we are repelled by it.

In our story, a glorious burst of Light was seen in the resurrection of Lazarus. What can beat resurrecting a decaying man from death? Yet instead of celebrating that God was walking among them, many of the people refused to acknowledge the supernatural and divine; and opted for anything else than the simple, childlike faith that lets men discover the grace and forgiveness of God through Jesus Christ. See how this unfolds in our story:

1. Some people react to the Light by getting attracted to it – and come to faith in Christ: *v. 45 Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, put their faith in him.*

- Most likely these people would become, overtly or covertly, followers of Christ from thereon.

2. Some people react to the Light by running away from it and towards the darkness: *v. 46 But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.*

- These people thought they were doing themselves a favor by doing their human idols a favor. But in rejecting the Light, they had run away from the Truth, and robbed themselves of the only Hope they ever had. How do you think these people ended up?

3. Some people react to the Light by trying to put it out: [vv. 47-54]

- **Two lessons on unbelief:**

a) Unbelief is not always based on insufficient evidence. v. 48 *"Here is this Man performing many miraculous signs. If we let Him go on like this, everyone will believe in Him."*

b) Unbelief is often based on selfish interests. v. 48 *"... the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation"*

- **Two lessons about the will of God:**

a) Caiaphas (vv. 49-52): Sometimes God will use the unwilling, unbelieving and unsuspecting for His purposes – and they'll never even know it.

b) Jesus (vv. 53-54): Being practical is not being faithless. Whatever God has redeemed and sanctified in your life as a Christian, count them as gifts and use them wisely: common sense, business sense, education, experience, titles, material things, etc. That is neither faithless nor selfish. Just remember: gratitude and God.

4. Some people react to the Light with interest, but not faith: even devoutly religious people can be unbelieving: [vv. 55-57]

Final Thoughts:

Which one are you? Which one was the story of your life? Perhaps the saddest commentary is not about those violently opposed to Christ. It is those who are interested and curious, maybe even intellectually challenged – but that is where they are now, and intend to be. There cannot be any life more tragic than that.

If you have never come to a simple trust in what Jesus did on the cross for your redemption and forgiveness, now is the time. If you've been there and done that, then remember gratitude and God, as you participate in the Lord's Table today.