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Question 51 - What are the results and implications of illumination?

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101 MOST ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BIBLE

51. What are the results and implications of illumination?

A. Results

1. The unsaved are saved

"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Psa. 119:130).

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: . . . Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:22-23, 36-37).

2. The saved are strengthened

"The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. . . Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psa. 19:8; 119:105).

"For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life" (Prov. 6:23).

"But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor. 2:10).

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6).

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:2).

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts" (2 Peter 1:19).

B. Implications

1. The Holy Spirit looks for a certain amount of sincerity before he illuminates any human heart. We are quick to point out that sincerity is not enough to save anyone, which is true. However, it should be also noted that it is

equally impossible for God to save an insincere person. This is brought out in several passages:

“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (Jn. 4:24).

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Heb. 11:6).

Question: Why do many scientists still believe in atheistic evolution in spite of the growing evidence to the contrary? Simon Peter answers this question:

“Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.’ For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water” (2 Peter 3:3-6, NAS).

In other words, in his insincerity, the evolutionist has simply closed his mind to the scriptural teachings of special creation.

2. No Christian should ever look upon illumination as automatic. This is to say God has never promised to reveal precious and profound biblical truths to any believer who will not search the scriptures for himself or herself.
Note:

“But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Mt. 4:4).

“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11).

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15).

“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:2).

1. The Holy Spirit often seeks out the aid of a believer in performing his task of illuminating the hearts of others.

“Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend” (Prov. 27:17).

- a. As seen in the ministry of Ezra the prophet

“And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel. . . And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up: And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground . . . and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law . . .” (Neh. 8:1, 5-6, 7b).

b. As seen in the ministry of Philip

“And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus” (Acts 8:26-35).

c. As seen in the ministry of Paul

“And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ” (Acts 17:2-3).

d. As seen in the ministry of Aquila and Priscilla

“And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla

had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly” (Acts 18:24-26).

e. As seen in the ministry of Apollos

“And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ” (Acts 18:27-28).