

John 5:35

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

Analysis

Jesus characterizes John as 'a burning and a shining light'—burning with Holy Spirit fire, shining with reflected glory. The past tense 'ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light' indicates their initial enthusiasm had waned. Popular enthusiasm for prophets often proves superficial, fading when their message confronts sin or demands change.

Historical Context

John's ministry enjoyed temporary popularity (Matthew 3:5-6) before his imprisonment and execution. The religious leaders' initial interest gave way to skepticism when he endorsed Jesus and challenged their authority.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. Why does initial religious enthusiasm often fade when God's message becomes demanding?

2. How do we distinguish between being a 'light' that attracts attention versus one that leads to Christ?

Interlinear Text

ἐκεῖνος	ἦν	ό	λύχνος	ό	καιόμενος	καὶ	φαίνων
He	was	G3588	light	G3588	a burning	and	a shining
G1565	G2258		G3088		G2545	G2532	G5316
ὑμεῖς	δὲ	ἡθελήσατε	αγαλλιασθῆναι	πρὸς	ἄραν	ἐν	τῷ
ye	and	were willing	to rejoice	for	a season	in	G3588
G5210	G1161	G2309	G21	G4314	G5610	G1722	
φωτὶ	αὐτοῦ						
light	his						
G5457	G846						

Additional Cross-References

2 Peter 1:19 (Light): 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:

Matthew 11:11 (Parallel theme): Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.