

The Message of Christmas is all about the fact that God considered a world that was full of darkness and said for the second time, “let there be light.”

- The first time, God spoke physical light into this dark planet. Genesis 1:3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.
- But this second time God sent a light into the world was to drive out the darkness of evil and sin.

Every year when we string up our lights and set up our nativity scene and we begin to talk about the story of Christmas, there are two characters in the Christmas story that we often forget and are very seldom mention at Christmas time.

We have the Baby Jesus / Mary / Joseph / Angels / The Sheppard's / Donkeys and Sheep / Wise Men / Camels, and we even have made up a few characters such as the little drummer boy.

Far too often we forget about the role of Simeon and Anna.

Luke 2:21-24 On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived. ²² When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.”

Before Joseph and Mary leave that day, they are approached by an old woman prophetess that had spent the last 77 years as widow in the temple worshipping, fasting, and praying! She approached Joseph, Mary and Jesus and began giving thanks to God for Him. She then began speaking about Jesus and the fact that He would bring redemption. (Luke 2:36-40)

As they entered the temple that day they were approached by a man named Simeon.

Luke 2:25-35 Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: ²⁹ "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. ³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all people, ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." ³³ The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

A Light for Revelation

Luke 2:32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

Simeon prophesied that Jesus would bring Salvation. He would be a light for revelation to the Gentiles! Jesus came to “Light Up the World!”

- **God promised in Isaiah 42:6-7 that the Messiah would be a light to us.** *⁶“I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, ⁷ to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.”*
- **Jesus is the true light that gives light to everyone.**
John 1:6-9 There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸ He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. ⁹ The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.

Living in the Revelation of the Light

1. Walk as Children of Light

*Ephesians 5:8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.
Live (Walk) as children of light*

- **Called out of darkness.** *1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*

- **Followers of Jesus will never walk in darkness again.** *John 8:12 Then Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

2. **Check Your Fruit**

Ephesians 5:9 (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth)

- Does your life reflect goodness, or does it reflect hatefulness and meanness?
- Does your life reflect righteousness or unrighteousness? Christ Jesus declares you righteous in Him, but are your actions in right standing with God or contrary to God's way?
- Are you living according to God's truth?

Next Life Step: This week I will be a produce inspector. I choose to walk in goodness, righteousness and truth.

3. **Find Out What Pleases the Lord**

Ephesians 5:10 and find out what pleases the Lord.

Now that you are Children of the light, find out what is acceptable to the Lord and what pleases God.

The Word of God is our standard. Our plumb line. Our instructions in what pleases the Lord.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Psalms 119:105-106 Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path. ¹⁰⁶ I have taken an oath and confirmed it, that I will follow your righteous laws.

4. **Have Nothing to Do with Deeds of Darkness**

Ephesians 5:11 Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.

KJV uses the word "fellowship" in verse 11

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

Have no fellowship means have no share in the darkened life-style, have nothing to do with deeds of darkness which are what? Unfruitful!

Ephesians 5:12-13 It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. ¹³ But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light.

Jesus brought light into a dark world.

John 1:9 The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.

Normally when light shines on our darkness we are condemned and judged. "Justice and Truth, "Judgment and Truth", but Jesus the Light brought "Grace and Truth." Grace upon Grace.

John 1:14 The Word became flesh (born as a baby in Bethlehem) and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

5. **Wake Up, Don't Sleep in the Light**

Ephesians 5:14 This is why it is said: "Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." The 5:14 Alarm!

We, the Church, should be walking in the Light and not "Sleeping" in the light!

- The world sleeps in the dark but too often the church is caught sleeping in the light.

6. **Let Your Light Shine**

The Light is here. Jesus is light, and He has come to light up the world, but we are now the light carriers.

Matthew 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Because of Jesus' Light of Life, you are now the light of the world.

Matthew 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.

You can't change that! You are the light of the world, sticking out like a town built on a hill, that cannot be hidden.

It's foolish to try to hide your light.

Matthew 5:15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

Every day we have a choice to make.

In One hand we have a lamp stand. / In the other hand we have a bowl or a basket.

Our problem is that we use the basket way too often.

- We have opportunities to put the lamp of Jesus on a lamp stand to Light Up the World, but sometimes we don't take those opportunities.
- And worst still, sometimes we take baskets and hid the light of Christ Jesus. He is shining ever so brightly; we just choose to hide that light with our deeds of darkness.

Luke 2:32, Jesus came to be “*a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.*” Let's continue to shine that light of revelation!

Next Life Step: This week I will assess my actions in public. Am I using the bowl or stand?

7. Dress for Success

Romans 13:12 *The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. (NIV)*

Every day, get up in the morning and put on the armor of light!

The light of revelation that Jesus gives us will be for defense and offence.

Next Life Steps: This week, every day when I awake, I will pray, “Lord today I put on my armor of light!”

A Light for Revelation That Brings Life

The Message of Christmas is all about God sending His son Jesus to be the true light to all, into a world that was full of darkness.

Jesus brought us the light of revelation and as stated in *John 1:4-5* *In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. This life of Jesus brings light! ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

John 8:12 *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”*

Here is our hope that we celebrate this Christmas! No matter how dark of a place we find ourselves in, when we choose to follow Jesus, we will NEVER walk in darkness.

We choose to walk in the revelation of the light as children of light!

WE HAVE THE LIGHT OF LIFE! We CHOOSE Life and Light.

Life App Group and Family Devotional Application

1. Practicing what we preach, by letting our light shine, who will you bring to “The Light of Christmas” (A Musical Drama and Worship Experience) Sunday, December 17, 2017 @ 9 am or 11 am?
2. Tell the story of the forgotten cast of Christmas - Simeon and Anna, Luke 2:21-35.
3. How do we know what pleases the Lord? How often do you study this resource?
4. What can you, or will you, do differently this year to put your light on a lamp stand and let it shine brighter than ever before?