

Shine! This is what God is calling us to do and what we will focus on this year in 2022. We just finished celebrating Christmas and the fact that Love was born on that first Christmas day. God’s gift of love, Christ Jesus, brought light into a world filled with the darkness of sin and separation from God.

I think we can all agree that Jesus is the light of the world. We talked about Jesus being the light last week (see notes: 01-09-22_Shine_Jesus Is The Light of the World).

Jesus himself declared that he is the Light of the world. **John 8:12 ... “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”**

John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus and prepared the people for His arrival, and John was very clear that he was not the light. Jesus is the Light. John was only the witness to the light.

John 1:7-8 He (John) came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him (Jesus) all might believe. 8 He himself (John) was not the light; he came only as a witness to (Jesus) the light.

Now today we are going to talk about another truth in God’s word that states the **“You Are the Light of the World”**.

Matthew 5:14-16 “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. (More on this later) Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. (Here is our 2022 theme verse) 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

But wait a minute. How can we be the light if Jesus is the true light? We certainly don’t compare to Jesus as far as being light, do we? Jesus is the light, or is it we are the light? Both can’t be true, or can they be? We don’t want to just assume that we understand this, but we want to think it through and appreciate the miracle that Jesus is the Light and when we believe in him, we become the light too.

Believing in the Light Changes Us

In John 12, Jesus was explaining to his disciples that the day of his glorification was near, but would be preceded by His death. They had heard and believed that once the Messiah came, he would stay on the earth with them forever. Jesus said no, that’s not true, rather the Son of Man must be lifted up on the cross. He would not always be with them physically on the earth.

John 12:35 Then Jesus told them, “You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you.

The crucifixion and the days following would be dark days for the disciples, but darker days for the world who had lost their light and hope. **Whoever walks in the dark does not know where they are going.**

So sad, but there is a way to not walk in darkness again, but to continue to walk in the light.

John 12:36 Believe in the light while you have the light, Believe in Jesus! Receive the light of life that Jesus will provide as a result of his death and his resurrection from the dead.

Remember we said last week the gospel of John tells that Jesus brings life and what? LIGHT!

John 1:4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.

So, why believe in Jesus the light?

John 12:36 Believe in the light while you have the light, (WHY) so that you may become children of light.” When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them.

I believe that Jesus left them at that point for dramatic effect, to let them see what it was like to not have him with them. But don't miss what Jesus is saying... When we believe in Jesus the true light, we become CHILDREN OF LIGHT.

Remember what Jesus told the woman caught in adultery, after he forgave her, telling her to sin no more...

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.”**

When we become a follower of Jesus we won't walk in darkness, but WE WILL HAVE the light of life.

Just as Jesus breathes his Holy Spirit of Life into us at salvation, so he places his light in us.

In a sense, we are the candle, but not the flame. The flame, the light, is Christ Jesus, and He makes us shine! **EX:** Candle and Flame.

Shine and Live as Children of Light

John 12:36 Believe in the light while you have the light, so that you may become children of light.”

Paul explained it to the church of Ephesus this way...

Ephesians 5:8-9 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.

Live as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth).

- Notice verse 8 doesn't say, “You were once in darkness.” It says, “You were darkness”. You were a part of the darkness. But now, in Christ Jesus, you are light in the Lord.

It's easy to slip into saying, “We were once in darkness, but now we are in the light.” But the miracle of salvation is that we WERE DARKNESS, and now WE ARE LIGHT.

- **Ephesians 5:8** For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. **Live as children of light.** Some versions say, “Walk” as children of light. In other words, live it out, walk it out. I like the word children here because it implies action and endless energy! There is an implication to get up and get moving. Children are active. They get up and go and live a full life. We weren't meant to be stationary. We are meant to go and live as the light in a world that still struggles with darkness.
- The use of the word “children” not only emphasizes movement and action but is also reminds us that we are not in this alone. There are many children in this family. As a family we all shine our light and collectively our lights shine brighter than when we shine alone.

The Fruit of Light

Ephesians 5:8-9 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. **Live as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth).**

- The dark world should see the “goodness” of Jesus' light in our lives.
- They may not be able to see in our hearts to know that we have been declared righteous in Christ Jesus, but they should see our “righteousness” lived out in our lives.
- Also, they need to know that we, as light, live and makes decisions based on “truth”!

Ephesians 4:17-32 NLT tells us what it's like to Live as Children of Light rather than darkness.

Ephesians 4:17-24

17 With the Lord's authority I say this: **Live no longer as the Gentiles do, for they are hopelessly confused. 18** **Their minds are full of darkness;** they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him.

19 They have no sense of shame. They live for lustful pleasure and eagerly practice every kind of impurity.

20 But that isn't what you learned about Christ. 21 Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, 22 throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception.

23 Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes.

24 Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.

Next Step: This week I will finish reading Ephesians 4:17-32 and see the practical ways Paul tells us to live as children of light in verses 25-32.

Shine Like a Town on a Hill

Matthew 5:16 “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.

EX: I'll never forget the first time that I went to Columbia S.C. As we traveled up Hwy 321 there was a spot with a break on the pine trees and suddenly there it was! Columbia gleaming in the sunlight.

You are like that, a shiny town built on a hill! *A town set on a hill cannot be hidden.*

You have such great potential! You are full of the love and blessings of God. You have peace that passes understanding. You exhibit the fruit of the Spirit, and yes, you are different.

If the same Spirit that raised Jesus Christ from the dead dwells in you (**Romans 8:11**) and Jesus said that out of your heart would flow rivers of living water (**John 7:37-39**), you can't hide it!

You stand out like a sore thumb! People will know.

When you enter a room, light comes in and darkness is dispelled.

Children of Light Don't Fear the Future, But Soberly Move Forward in Faith

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 Now, brothers and sisters, (family, collective lights) about times and dates we do not need to write to you, 2 for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3 While people are saying, “Peace and safety,” destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

4 **But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness** so that this day should surprise you like a thief.

5 **You are all children of the light and children of the day.**

We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.

6 So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober.

7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night.

8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.

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.

9 For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

10 He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.

11 Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

Next Step: I commit to live as a child of light, sharing Jesus' life and light with others.

Jesus said in **John 9:5** While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

But he also said in **Matthew 5:14** “You are the light of the world.”

So, let's embrace this reality and begin to Shine!