

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 mentioned at Christmas time.

**ILL: (Have a nativity scene and hold up or point out each character.)**

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**, who Mary and Joseph meet in the temple when they went for the purification rites and to present Jesus to the Lord. (**Luke 2:21-24**)

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, **Luke 2:38 Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.**

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

**Luke 2:25-32 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,**

**32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."**

### **A Light for Revelation**

**Luke 2:32** (Jesus is) **a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."**

- This was a confirmation that of what the prophet Isaiah had spoken. **Isaiah 60:1-3** “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. 2 See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. 3 Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
- 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.

As Jesus, the true light, shines on us we are to arise and shine! Simeon said, Jesus is the light of revelation. So, to today, let's talk about how to live in the light of revelation everyday of our lives.

## Living in the Revelation of the Light

### 1. Live as Children of Light    **Ephesians 5:8** For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.

- We are 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) Sometimes we have to stop and do a fruit inspection.

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

**Next Life Step: This week I will be a "produce inspector" and I will make sure I'm walking 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 for this, 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** Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.

### 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.

These deeds are fruitless! We don't share in the lifestyle of darkness.

**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**

Remember the 5:14 Alarm from our Rise and Shine Series in September? **Ephesians 5:14 This is why it is said: "Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."**

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 of revelation is here. Jesus 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 as you carry his light.

**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.**

### **ILL (Lantern on a stand and a basket to cover the light)**

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 hide 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 basket or putting my light on a 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 offense.

**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**

**4 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.**

**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, the light of revelation, we will NEVER walk in darkness.