

A Divine Light in a Dark World

Part 1
Jesus is the Light of the World

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

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A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

Questions for Community Group Discussion

- What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you? ...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?
- Pastor Doug noted that Jesus, the "Light of the world", enlightens us. Now read 2 Corinthians 4:6. **When** did God say, "Light shall shine out of darkness"? (Need a hint? See Genesis 1:3.) What connections do you think Paul wants us to make between "creation" and "re-creation"?

Look at the connection between "God said" and "and it was so" in Genesis 1:6-7, 9, 11, and 14-15. When God speaks, what **always** happens?

Read John 6:37 and 10:27-29. When God calls people to salvation, what **always** happens?

Read 2 Corinthians 4:3-4. **Why** doesn't **everybody** believe the good news of God's forgiveness?

Read 2 Timothy 2:24-26. **What** can we do to help people believe the gospel (v. 25a)?

How must we do it (v. 24)?

What **can't** we do in order to help people believe the gospel (v. 25b-26)?

- Doug said: "If you are **not** changing, ask yourself, 'Am I **really** a child of light? Am I **truly** born again? Is God's light radiating from me for all to see?' "
Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.

How confident are you that you are a "new creation"?

Mark your confidence level here:

Are you ready to shine with God's light?

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||||| Low Medium High

Application-Challenge

- Spend some time this week reflecting on some of the ways that Jesus is the Light of the World. Consider how he is the source of life, truth and beauty.
- **Ask yourself:** "To what degree am I reflecting that light to others by how I live and by how I love? Am I really growing in Christlikeness? What are some **specific** ways that I'm growing and changing?"
- Allow the Holy Spirit to more fully control your life. Submit to him and allow him to produce the fruit of the Spirit in you—qualities like love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Sermon Summary (Key Text: Isaiah 60:1-5, 10-16)

When we ask the question, “Who is Jesus?”, we discover in Isaiah that he is the divine light that has come into a very dark world. At first, Isaiah appears only to be talking about Israel’s return from exile in Babylon, but the vision it portrays is too great for that: all of Earth’s kings are reconciled and come to live in Jerusalem forever (the book of Revelation talks about a similar time). And although it doesn’t mention his name, it clearly is talking about Jesus, the Light of the world. And because of our association with him, we too can be lights in the world. Isaiah uses the imagery of the sun to talk about spiritual light (v. 1-2). In what way is God the Light of the world? Because **sunlight brings life**. If the sun burned out, life on earth would cease to exist. Similarly, God is the source of all life (1 Timothy 6:13; Acts 17:28); he holds our molecules together (Colossians 1:17). Our existence is just borrowed! The sun also is like God in that it reveals what is true. When you hit a pothole and wreck, it’s because you needed more light to see the truth. **Sunlight brings truth**. Just as sunlight reveals things as they are, so God is the Light of the world, revealing truth to us (Psalm 36:9). When you look at a mountain, you’re not really seeing the mountain—you’re seeing the sunlight that bounced off the mountain. We only see truth because God is the source of all truth. Finally, **sunlight brings beauty**. As an amateur photographer, there is nothing I enjoy more than taking pictures of a gorgeous sunrise or sunset. Light is dazzlingly beautiful! We need light, not just for life and truth, but also for joy. Rates of depression are higher in parts of the world where it’s dark for long portions of the day. Saint Augustine once said, “Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee.” So to say, “God is the Light of the world” means that he is the source of all life, truth and beauty.

But this passage is telling us much more. Isaiah not only says that the light of God shines on us, but that in response, we become light reflectors (v. 3-5; cf. Ephesians 5:8)! As followers of Jesus we have an obligation to reflect God’s light by how we live and love, with the goal of pointing others to our great and gracious God! To be lights in the world means that we have a great capacity to exhibit the spiritual life that God brings. A good, moral, religious person who does a lot of good things may be heaping up good deeds, but he’s doing it like someone who piles up bricks. But someone who is growing in grace is experiencing organic spiritual transformation from the inside out, just like a flourishing fruit tree grows. Are you growing as a pile of bricks grows, or as a living, flourishing tree grows? Are you more contented, more resistant to discouragement, than you used to be? Are you more humble and able to take criticism than you were two years ago? Are you a wiser person than you used to be? Are you less impulsive, less anxious, more reflective? Walking with Jesus makes you less impulsive and more reflective. You grow in humility. Growth in Christ also emboldens you. It keeps you from being too cautious. You become more courageous. If you are not changing, ask yourself, ***“Am I really a child of light? Am I truly born again? Is God’s light radiating from me for all to see?”*** Is it?

When God’s light shines on you, you see things you couldn’t see before, because you were walking in darkness. Seeing the selfishness in your heart—and agreeing with God that passages such as Romans 3:10-18 are not exaggerations—is one of the ways you know God’s light is shining on you. And our eyes are opened to see the beauty of what God has done for us (Isaiah 60:10-11, 15-16). Today, as Christians, we can better understand the richness of this statement because we know that in Jesus God became our redeemer. Jesus said “I am the Light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life” (John 8:12). He said this during the Feast of Booths, which commemorated God’s glorious pillar of fire which led the Jews through the wilderness (Exodus 13:21). Jesus was claiming to be the glory of God in human flesh, our Redeemer! God does not strike us down for our sin because he struck Jesus in our place. We aren’t forsaken because Jesus was forsaken for us. The Light of the world hung in darkness on the cross (Matthew 27:45–46). You will never experience new life unless you see the ugly truth of who you are and the beauty of what Jesus did for you. Only then can you become for others, “The light of the world!”

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) is a simple way to study any passage. We can use it to learn about living in the light...

Monday—Romans 13:11-14

Tuesday—2 Corinthians 6:14-18

Wednesday—Ephesians 5:7-16

Thursday—Philippians 2:14-16

Friday—1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Saturday—***In preparation for worshipping your risen Lord with your church family,*** study **Mark 1:14–34.**

For each passage:

- Mark every occurrence of the words "light" and "dark".
- List everything you learn about how to live in the light.
- Choose one thing you will do today to live in the light.

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]

Men—
Don't miss this opportunity
for spiritual growth
beginning Monday!



JOHN

JESUS—THE WORD, THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD

Men's Bible Study

- Gospel of John
- 13 weeks, beginning January 11
- Open to all men
- Just \$10 (for materials)
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Life is best lived
in circles not
rows.

MEN'S
GROUPS
TCC.org/Men

Mornings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mondays• 7-8:30am• begins January 11 (ends early April)• zoom only	Evenings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mondays• 7-8:30pm• begins January 11 (ends early April)• zoom or face-to-face option (at TCC)
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