

Everlasting Light

The Eternal Light of God

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Today I am going to talk about the importance of light in our lives, both spiritual and physical, and that God is the only true source of everlasting light. I think you will find some of the things that I have to say very interesting, I found them so, as well as very uplifting and rewarding.

Of all the benefits that we have received from God there are few more remarkable than the possession of light, along with an ability to make use of it. By light, we come to possess extraordinary knowledge and many of our comforts and necessities—to say nothing of its wonderful purity, delicacy, and variety of colors that it reveals to our eyes. We get great pleasure from it.

It is not surprising that light exercises an enormous influence over the imagination of humanity and leads to its worship, because human nature tends to worship the creation rather than the Creator.

Humanity's misguided fascination with light caused some cultures of the ancient world to worship the sun and the moon. Ur in Babylonia and several of the Canaanite cities had elaborate systems of moon worship. The use of light was common in festivals of the Greek cults, especially those honoring Dionysus and Apollo.

Those who worship light itself find themselves unknowingly in spiritual darkness/spiritual ignorance, because light represents truth, among several other things.

When God places the light of the spirit in a human mind, it enables the person to think above the level of an animal and to be a reasoning, intelligent being.

Job 32:8 But there is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding.

As a result of this light, this mind power that God has given human beings, people are able to invent and build absolutely amazing things. Man has designed vehicles for all purposes to move his body from one point to another, and designed places to live with all sorts of conveniences. Animals, on the other hand, remain having just their normal animal nature, without being able to increase their habitats to any level of comfort above

what is part of their instinct.

Thanks to God's promise of the special blessing to Abraham that included illumination as well, the descendants of Israel have invented and built the majority of extraordinary material inventions humanity has seen. The Israelite Solomon was the wisest man ever. After God tested Abraham with the command to sacrifice Isaac and found him faithful, Abraham named the place, "The Lord will provide" and God promised that his descendants would be a blessing to all nations. Part of that blessing is the illumination that God has given to the Israelitish people because of that promise given directly to Abraham.

The blessings we enjoy in civilization: refrigeration, manufacturing, agriculture, chemistry, physics and superior institutions of learning are all products of God's blessing of illumination to the children of Israel, because of that promise to Abraham.

These are Christian-influenced Israelitish countries, where Christ is freely encouraged to have an influence in the minds of people, and the Word of God is read, preached, and taught publicly and without hindrance. This is in stark contrast to the Dark Ages that this world went through several centuries ago.

But sadly, as the majority of the descendants of Jacob, renamed Israel by God, reject all connection with God, so also there is a great loss of this illumination. The light of the minds of the descendants of Israel is going out. Even now it is only a flicker. Morally and spiritually there is little more than darkness in this spiritually bankrupt society.

Throughout the Bible, light represents truth, goodness, and God's redemptive work. Darkness, on the other hand, symbolizes evil and error and the works of Satan. With very little effort we observe in the world today darkness in the spiritual sense.

Job 37:21 Even now men cannot look at the light when it is bright in the skies, when the wind has passed and cleared them.

That simply means that their trouble is so oppressing to them that all they see is darkness and depression.

It is impossible to understand the biblical imagery of light without seeing it as the great antithesis and conqueror of darkness.

With the conflict between light and darkness as a context, light has the properties of

rulership over the universe, with an accompanying sense of awe such as a subject might feel toward a benevolent king.

We find this theme of rulership in the creation account. On the fourth day of creation God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night.

Biblical writers expressed terror about the absence of light. We can see this emphasis in Job's picture of deposed rulers in Job 12:25 who "grope in the dark without light." In Isaiah 5:30, in Isaiah's apocalyptic vision of light "darkened by its clouds." And, in Matthew 6:22-23, in Jesus' vision of good eyesight producing a "whole body" full of light and its opposite producing a "whole body" full of darkness. The idea of light affects every aspect of our lives.

The apostle John wrote numerous times that a godless life is darkness. A very dramatic example of darkness is that of Judas' betrayal of Jesus.

John 13:21-30 When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me." Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke. Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke. Then, leaning back on Jesus' breast, he said to Him, "Lord, who is it?" Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it." And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly." But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him. For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, "Buy those things we need for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor. Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night.

It is interesting here that he ends that segment with "it was night"—darkness. It was not only physically dark but it was a time of spiritual darkness, especially for Judas. The repetition of the phrase: "Now after the piece of bread" in verse 27, and "having received the piece of bread" in verse 30, indicates that Satan's control of Judas, and his departure from the group, must have been simultaneous. There is great tragedy in the abrupt comment: "And it was night."

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Judas set off to Jerusalem from Bethany, which was about two miles distance. Under the conduct of the Prince of Darkness, and in the time of darkness, he did this work of darkness. Judas left the light of Christ's presence and went into the world of darkness—"and it was night."

Light represents illumination, the opposite of darkness.

It may have been that when Judas opened the door to leave, John saw the city veiled in darkness. John's four words correspond to Jesus' statement when Judas actually betrayed Him.

Luke 22:52-53 Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs? "When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

John's comment "and it was night" increases the implication that Jesus' life was one of conflict. The opposite of darkness and light is illustrated by the growing hostility between Jesus and His enemies.

As the conflict became more noticeable, Jesus says it reflects the contrast between what He had seen with His Father and what they had heard from theirs. When they protested, He declared that God was His Father and that the Devil was their father. Or you could say that darkness was their father.

John 8:42-47 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. "Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. "You are of your father the Devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. "But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. "Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? "He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."

Not only do they not hear, but also they do not see, because they are not in the light.

Truth is an abstract that is difficult for people to know and appreciate. Pilate, for example, had become so enmeshed in politics that he no longer knew what truth was. Jesus told the Jews that because they were children of their father, they did not know what the truth was. They lived in a world of lies, distortion, and falseness. In a sense, truth was a foreign language to them, and their native language was lies.

Today, we see that the same darkness has fallen over this present society. Partly because most people speak one language, they speak the language of lies and deceit. We only need to pay attention to politicians, lawyers, salespeople, and advertisers to see that this is so. Scientists, doctors, and teachers are all known for their distortion of truth in this society. It was not like that many years ago, many decades ago, but it definitely is now.

In sharp contrast, light benefits all life. The creation of light was the initial step in the creation of life. "Let there be light" was the first command God spoke after His creative Spirit moved upon the primary material out of which He created the heavens and the earth.

The ultimate focus of light, on the fourth day of creation, brought the initial creation process to completion as the essential condition of all organic life. The origin of light finds its explanation in the purpose and nature of God. The apostle John defined God as not only the Author of light, but in an all-inclusive sense, as light itself. John said "God is light".

The word light is rich in its comprehensiveness and meaning. Its material splendor is used throughout the Scriptures as the symbol and synonym of all that is luminous and radiant in the mental, moral, and spiritual life of human beings and angels.

The Eternal God, because of His holiness and moral perfection, is pictured as dwelling in unapproachable light. Every phase of the word light, from the original light in the natural world to the spiritual glory of God, is found in the Holy Scriptures.

There are three main types of light. Normally we just think of light as either the spiritual representation of truth and knowledge or we think of it as to whether we can see or not. There are actually three different types of material light.

Light's characteristics are beauty, radiance, and utility. Natural light rejoices the heart and is truly sweet. Without it, people stumble and are helpless. It is something for which they wait with inexpressible longing. Life, joy, activity, and all blessings are dependent on light.

Light and life are almost synonymous to those who depend directly on it, such as farmers for the crops, and in the same way, darkness is synonymous with death. The severest plague in Egypt, next to the slaying of the firstborn, was the plague of darkness, the ninth plague that fell upon the Egyptians.

Exodus 10:23 They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

That does not just mean physical light. It means God was there with them.

Light is necessary for good health, and it prolongs life, both physically and spiritually.

The Department of Education of Alberta, Canada conducted a two-year study involving different kinds of light. Physicians, educators, social workers, nutritionists, and dentists conducted the study. The study found that students under full spectrum light, similar to natural daylight, with trace ultraviolet, learned faster, tested higher, and grew faster. They had one third fewer absences due to illness and had two thirds fewer cavities than expected. That is a substantial effect that full spectrum light has on us. By full spectrum I am talking about man-made full spectrum light, an artificial light produced by a long tube or bulb that gives you almost the whole spectrum of light. No one has been able to exactly match God's creation of natural light.

A winter study of veterans in a soldier's home in Massachusetts compared calcium absorption under two lighting systems.

Calcium absorption increased 15 percent under full spectrum light.

Calcium absorption decreased 25 percent under standard light, as you would have in the average office.

Natural light also has a cheering influence. It is known that women have a hard time dealing with the long dark winters in Alaska and many suffer from severe depression during this time. Research has found that light can alleviate seasonal depression.

I have discussed natural light and now I would like to cover artificial light. When natural light fails, people, by discovery or invention, provide themselves with some temporary substitute, however dim or inadequate it may be.

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The ancients had candles and oil lamps as their primary sources of artificial light.

You remember the story of the young man Eutychus who while sitting in a window fell asleep while listening to Paul preach through the night.

Acts 20:8 There were many lamps in the upper room where they were gathered together.

There is a problem with artificial light. One study by John Ott, Ph.D., dramatizes the importance of full spectrum light. The study placed 2,000 mice under four different types of light.

In an otherwise identically controlled environment C3H strain mice, which I have no idea which type of mice they are, developed spontaneous tumors and died at:

7.5 months under pink fluorescent light

8.2 months under cool white (standard office) fluorescent light

15.6 months under full spectrum fluorescent lights

16.1 months under natural sunlight

Once again, God has excelled, or exceeded, what man can do. Only God can design the perfect light for our well being, no matter how hard man tries with his science. A ship relies heavily on the lighthouse on the shore to warn of obstacles in the ocean. Not only is our physical environment marked with shorelines of rocks and shoals, but our spiritual state is as well. We know that there are many false lights shown everywhere in the world, and therefore the right light is needed.

Under artificial light, the night- Satan's favorite time of day- is illuminated. More crime and immorality goes on during the night, under artificial light, than during the day. This is why cities stay so bright at night. Studies have shown that crime goes down in direct proportion with how well lit a city is. When we had our energy crisis they cut back on the number of lights that were illuminating their cities and crime skyrocketed through the roof.

Job 24:13-17 There are those who rebel against the light; they do not know

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its ways, nor abide in its paths. The murderer rises with the light; he kills the poor and needy; and in the night he is like a thief. The eye of the adulterer waits for the twilight, saying, 'No eye will see me;' and he disguises his face. In the dark they break into houses which they marked for themselves in the daytime; they do not know the light. For the morning is the same to them as the shadow of death; if someone recognizes them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of death.

Satan illuminates false light, the wrong light, while at the same time he is surrounded by darkness. He focuses his false light on the pleasures of sin. You could almost say that he has a spotlight on the pleasures of sin. It is our duty to illuminate the right and true light. We must be clear of the blood of the sins of the world by shining as true lights in the world.

The next type of light that the Bible mentions is mental, moral, and spiritual light. The phenomena of natural light have their counterpart in the inner life of a human being.

Few words lend themselves with such beauty and appropriateness to the experiences, conditions, and radiance of the spiritual life. For this reason the Scriptures use light mainly in the figurative sense.

Education that enlightens the mind may leave the moral person untouched. This distinction rarely holds in the Bible, which deals with a human being as a free will agency and looks on his faculties as interdependent in their action. Every thought, movement, look, and statement is interconnected within every individual on earth.

A few passages, however, refer to the light that comes primarily to the intellect or mind through God's divine instruction.

Psalms 119:130 The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.

God's commandments shed light on the errors in our lives

Proverbs 6:23 For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light; reproofs of instruction are the way of life.

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It is interesting that most of the time that the term lamp is used, in a spiritual or figurative sense, a lamp is actually showing a focus or spotlight on something. Here in Proverbs 6:23 it is the commandment that is being spotlighted.

Isaiah describes a moral confusion and blindness, which cannot distinguish light from darkness:

Isaiah 5:20 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

For the most part, light and life go together. It is the product of salvation.

Psalm 27:1 The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Light, figuratively used, has to do preeminently with spiritual life. This also includes the illumination that floods all the faculties of the mind: intellect, conscience, reason, and will. In the moral realm the enlightenment of these faculties is dependent wholly on the renewal of the spirit.

Light is frequently used for spiritual illumination, especially the illumination that is effected in the mind by the indwelling Spirit of God.

II Corinthians 4:1-6 Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Verse 6 tells us that the same God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness at creation, is the One who illuminates our hearts and minds to the truth. The apostle John recorded that Jesus said, "He who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God." Doing the truth and coming to the light are crucial to our salvation.

Throughout the Bible, light is a symbol of knowledge, purity, and truth. Darkness, in contrast to this, is a symbol of ignorance, error, sin, and wretchedness. God removes this ignorance and pours a flood of light and truth on our minds. David asked God to "send out Your light and Your truth and let them lead me." Light is used for that which cheers and renders prosperous. It is applied with great force to spiritual joy, arising from the happy influences of the Spirit of peace. God's Holy Spirit has a very important part to play with that light. Without it, there is no light.

We know that God is light, and that He is associated with light in a very glorious way. In all of the Bible references to light it is not self-generated. It comes, usually unrequested, from above or outside of the earthly and human sphere, and transforms that sphere with a transcendent splendor both physically and spiritually. As a symbol, light pictures the simultaneous transcendence and imminence of God and it is far above, but it permeates everyday life here on earth.

Light is continually used as a symbol of holiness and purity. It is an attribute of holiness, and thus a personal quality of God. It is the outshining of the Deity.

God is light, just as truly as He is love, truth, and spirit. Spirit and light are expressions of His essential nature. Love is the expression of His personality corresponding to His nature. God not merely loves, but is love. Love is His very nature, and He imparts this nature to be the sphere in which His children dwell in light.

The most succinct statement is found in I John

I John 1:5-7 This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Darkness, mentioned in verses 5 and 6, is the universal symbol and condition of sin and

death. In direct contrast, light, mentioned in verse 7, is the expression of holiness. God, by His presence and grace, is to His royal priesthood, to His holy nation, a marvelous light.

The glory of His holiness and presence is the "everlasting light" of the redeemed. Israel's vision of final triumph of goodness includes the assertion that "the Lord will be your everlasting light." You might say that this is the capstone of the sermon here.

Isaiah 60:19-20 The sun shall no longer be your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; but the Lord will be to you an everlasting light, and your God your glory. Your sun shall no longer go down, nor shall your moon withdraw itself; for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be ended.

God does not repeat things unless it is important. God will be our everlasting truth, goodness, purity, righteousness, and holiness. He will be our everlasting light! As members of God's church He should be our everlasting light.

God is associated with light as an image of divine glory. Light, righteousness and truth completely cover Him as a garment.

Psalms 104:2. Who cover yourself with light as with a garment, Who stretch out the heavens like a curtain

By extension, God, who is light, inhabits a heaven bathed in light.

I Timothy 6:13-16 I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.

This is the only place in the New Testament that the Greek word translated 'unapproachable' is used. The light where God dwells is so brilliant and dazzling to the mortal eye that a human being could not survive if they saw it. This is a very common

representation of the dwelling place of God.

The declaration is added in verse 16 that no person has ever seen God or can see Him. This truth is stated in the Old and New Testament.

Exodus 33:20-23 But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." And the Lord said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. "So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. "Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."

I cannot imagine how bright that must be.

John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

As a symbol for God, light takes the more specific form of representing the Messiah. Isaiah's prophecy predicted Christ coming as light and spiritual illumination.

Isaiah 9:2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined.

That light is Jesus Christ. Jesus applied this prophecy to Himself in Matthew 4 when He began His Galilean ministry:

Matthew 4:12-17 Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned." From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Spiritual illumination had come to the people of Galilee in the form of Jesus Christ, who brought God's truth. Light had dawned on them.

It is a great light, representing the clearness and evidence of the truth. This was not the light of a candle, but the light of the sun when it shines in its strength. It is a great light because it illuminates great things that are of enormous consequence. It will last long, spread far, and grow. The work of Christ, like a grain of mustard-seed, or the morning light, was small at the beginning, but gradually grew in intensity as His light shined.

Christ, the Eternal Word, is Himself the radiant splendor of God's glory. The biblical phrase "light in the Lord" indicates the source of light and life. The implied message is: If God is light, to come to God is to come to the light and to receive life.

John's introduction in praise of the personified Word repeatedly applies the symbolic language of light to Christ.

John 1:4-9 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

As the predicted Messiah, Jesus was to be a light for the Gentiles. Christ declared Himself "the light of the world" and as light He was God manifested in the flesh.

Jesus, as the Word, is the external expression of God, as a word is the expression of a thought. In the essence of His being God, Christ is the light of life.

John 6:57 As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.

Christ-the-Word manifests the attributes of the divine nature as love, life, and light. These are inseparable, and constitute the glory which the disciples saw in Him. In revealing and giving life, Christ became the light of men.

God gives the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ, and this salvation is called the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ. Christ is the Teacher,

Enlightener, Guide, and Savior of humanity. He gives us light, that is, He gives us understanding, truth, and wisdom.

Jesus, as the One who brings the true knowledge of God, is the light of humanity. When people tried to snuff out the Light of men there was the fall of darkness at midday when Jesus was being crucified.

Matthew 27:45-46 Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

At the time that Christ took the sins of the world on Him, He was in total darkness for that split second and felt it very deeply. He needed the light that the Eternal Father radiates, that everlasting light. This is what sin does to us—when we sin we place ourselves in darkness. We need to get back to that light. The New Testament presents Jesus as the personification of light or divine illumination. In John 8:12 Jesus said, "I am the light of the world". He plainly stated that those who rejected this divine light would bring judgment upon themselves. Sin separates us from God. If we are separated from God, we are separated from spiritual light, that is, from spiritual understanding.

If God and His Son are light, then light is a symbol for salvation and the new life as well.

I am going to talk about Christians as individual lights. The person who does what is true comes to the light, that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been done in God. When Christ spoke of Himself as the light of the world, those who follow Him are defined as people who will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

According to I Peter 2:9, God's own special people are those who have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light. When anything is exposed by light it becomes visible, because anything that becomes visible is light. Paul explains this in Ephesians 5:8-14. Paul said, "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light."

In John 5:35 Jesus called John the Baptist "a burning and shining lamp." It is significant that John the Baptist was referred to by the Greek word *luchnos* translated "shining lamp." *Luchnos* (lookh'-nos) means a portable lamp or other type of direct illuminator, either literally or figuratively.

On the other hand, the disciples of the New Testament church, which includes us, are referred to by the Greek word *phos* in Matthew 5:14, "You are the light of the world." *Phos* (foce); means to shine or make manifest, especially by rays, so it is more broad. It also means luminousness, in the widest application, natural or artificial, abstract or concrete, literal or figurative.

This affirms that John the Baptist came to shine light on a specific event, the coming of the Son of God. On the other hand, members of God's church are to shine and make visible God's whole way of life. Even in the hidden meanings of words, we see confirmed in the Bible, two specific purposes and commissions. John the Baptist, in his focus and spotlight, was to shine it on the coming of Christ. He was also to be that light.

Those who have been delivered from the power of darkness and conveyed to the Kingdom of His beloved Son are strongly associated with light as the thing that defines our very essence, according to Paul in Colossians 1:13.

Just like the many professing Christians who do not live by Christ's example, the Jews of Christ's day who possessed the law, mistakenly supposed he was "a light to those who are in darkness." The Jews were as guilty as the Gentiles for being in darkness, even though they should have been a light to the Gentiles. They only had the form of knowledge and truth in the law. That word 'form' is very important in their description.

Romans 2:17-24 Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God, and know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law. You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," as it is written.

Being a light equates to illumination of knowledge and truth. The form of knowledge and truth in the law is the show of appearance. That is all it is. If their knowledge rests in emptiness and darkness, they have only the form of it, like a well-drawn picture that is colorful, but needs life. A form of knowledge produces only an appearance of godliness. A form of knowledge may deceive people, but cannot get past God's heart-searching,

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discerning eye. The true light in a Christian comes from within; it comes from the heart. It is part of the very essence of God and His children. A form may be the vehicle of the power; but in reality, it only produces the noise of sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.

Sinners fear the light. God must call people to the light, because it is His own work.

We cannot do anything of ourselves to bring someone into the Church, but we can do a lot, with the help of God, to let our light shine as a true witness. People see that light that God is radiating.

Briefly, to summarize that section. There are five main ways light relates to the Christian:

1. Light is a type of the Christian who walks with God.
2. Light refers to the testimony of the Christian.
3. Light is a figure of the state of the Christian, after he leaves Satan's kingdom of darkness, and is brought into the Church.
4. Light refers to the walk of the Christian in which he serves God in a Godly way, and directs his life according to the Word of God.
5. Light refers to the defense of the Christian who lives above reproach and has a godly witness before his neighbors.

The Church is portrayed as the possessor and giver of light. The Church of the first Christian scattering was radiant with the light of God and of Christ. The Spirit, revealed the seven churches of Asia to John, as seven golden candlesticks, and her ministers as seven stars, both luminous with the light of the Gospel revelation.

In Ephesians, Christ, who is the Light of the world, is the Head of the Church. The Church is His body through which His glory is to be manifested to the world, to make everyone see the purpose of the mystery.

Ephesians 3:8-12 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created

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all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.

Ephesians 3:20-21 Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

The Church brings glory to God by revealing His glory to human beings, through its reproduction of the life and light of Christ in us as a witness.

Light in its varied meanings is at the heart of such central biblical themes as creation, providence, judgment, redemption, and sanctification. Light is interwoven throughout the entire biblical statement of the plan of God for mankind's salvation.

The text within the Bible itself that comes closest to summarizing the range of meanings of light is Paul's description of the light of Christ's gospel that we read earlier in Corinthians.

II Corinthians 4:6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

The true light from God comes out of our hearts and is not just an appearance; it is not just a form. That light that comes from God is the link between creation and the new creation, between the Old Testament and the New Testament and between the physical reality and the spiritual reality.

There was a time in human history that historians call the Age of Enlightenment. It was the enlightenment of the 1800s, not the Reformation or the Renaissance, which dislodged the religious establishment from central control of cultural and intellectual life. This liberated science from the shackles of false theological tradition and paganism.

But in doing so, the Enlightenment made possible the autonomous development of modern culture. So the enlightenment of humanity from false religion, that began in the

1800s, paved the way for the scientific religion of evolution and humanism. In this, we see a clear example of how Satan uses a false light to shift people to deeper darkness. Now religion, especially Christianity, is being attacked.

Romans 13:11-12 And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

The armor of God and the armor of light are equal. God is light. It is interesting where it talks about when the fruits of the spirit are produced show light from God. The members of the true Church of God are being spiritually enlightened now, as the potential firstfruits of God's Kingdom. For the world, however, the true period of spiritual enlightenment will be after the Tribulation, during the Millennium and the Day of the Lord. God will shine light on people's minds, revealing Himself and His way of life. Truth will finally be seen in the light by all.

The apostle John portrayed the wonder of the new heavens and new earth by drawing attention to the royal city as its center. In the New Jerusalem, the people of God will enjoy unhindered worship and fellowship under the great King, Jesus Christ.

The divine King's presence, the glory of God, will provide light for the city, and the nations and kings will bring their splendor into it.

The final picture of light that we find in the Bible appears in John's visions of the new city of God in the book of Revelation. The New Jerusalem comes down from heaven having the glory of God. Its radiance is like a very rare jewel.

Revelation 21:10-11 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.

Jumping down to verse 22 begins the description of the glory of the New Jerusalem. The city does not need the sun or moon to shine because the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. Illuminated by the overflowing radiance of the presence of the glory of God, the Holy City no longer needs a temple. But spiritually it has a temple, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

Revelation 21:22-25 But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there).

All the glorious purposes of God, ordained from the foundation of the world, by this time have now been attained. The rebellion of angels and humanity is finally subdued as the King of kings assumes his rightful sovereignty. Absolute and unchangeable holiness characterizes all within the universal Kingdom of God, the family of God. The redeemed, made so by the blood of the Lamb, are in eternal glory and everlasting life. Life is everywhere, and death will never rear its ugly head again.

At the end of the age, the light of God will obliterate all traces of darkness. The earth and the heavens are both renewed. Light, truth, beauty, holiness, and joy, the presence of God, the worship of God, service and likeness to Christ, are all now abiding realities. Words cannot truly adequately express what God has prepared for those who love Him, for those who walk in the light of God's presence.

Revelation 22:3-5 And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.

God is the only true source of everlasting light, truth, goodness, purity, righteousness, holiness, understanding, and justice. There will be no physical or spiritual night. No more idolatry, no more intellectual darkness. The Scriptures will be read everywhere, the pure Word preached everywhere, and the Spirit of God will shine and work in every mind. All this will be with perfect knowledge and joy. All will be full of wisdom and comfort, continually walking in the light of the Lord. This perfect knowledge and joy will not be for a specific time period, but forever and ever. The whole purpose of light is to reveal and glorify God. God is light!

The glory and light of the New Jerusalem will be the presence of God, with no artificial illumination whatsoever. The servants of God will reign with Christ forever in everlasting light!

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Psalm 89:14-15 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; mercy and truth go before Your face. Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound! They walk, O Lord, in the light of Your countenance.

May the Lord be to you an everlasting light, and your God your glory!