



Not optional

Light is important. We know that. For starters,

- Light enables us to see things (yes, *dah!*).
- Light from the sun warms the earth.
- Light is important to our physical and mental health.
- Light is essential to plants for photosynthesis.
- Light is vital for your TV, smart phone and computer.

Unless you are blind it can be difficult to imagine living in a world without light.

That is physical light. But there is another kind of light that has everlasting importance for every person. A hymn sings,

“The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin.”

When Adam and Eve sinned they plunged themselves and the world into spiritual darkness—the condition, the nature of being separated from God and in sin.

God is light. The apostle John declared, “God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5). God is perfectly pure, holy, good and true. There is no evil or sin in Him.

One of Jesus’ seven *I Am* statements was

“I am the Light of the world; the one who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life” (John 8:12).

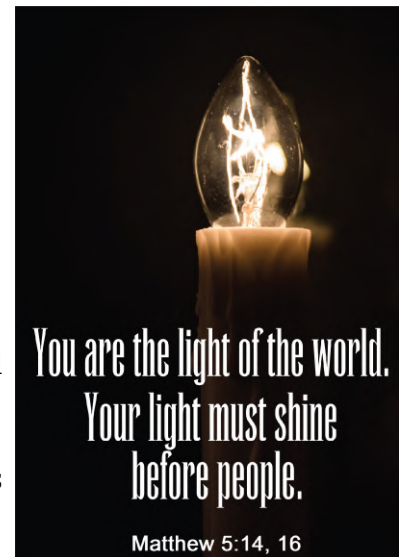
So that hymn sings, “The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin, *the Light of the world is Jesus*.”

The first thing to note is that Jesus is the only source of light, the only one, the only way to give people the truth and life with God. He tells us,

“believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light” (John 12:36).

Those who have placed their faith in Christ are sons of Light and are His light in the world.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are



in the house. Your light must shine before people in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:14-16).

Yes, if you are a believer you *are* the light of the world. We are Christ’s messengers, ambassadors to shine His light to people around us. Our relationship to Jesus as His light is often compared to the relationship of the moon to the sun. A full moon beams a bright light. That light does not originate in the moon, but is reflected from the sun. So, as God’s people, with His presence, we shine His light, not our own.

But what does that mean? What does it involve? Jesus, we just saw, said

“Your light must shine before people in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

Being His light is not optional! He tells us that it involves living so that people see our good works. The apostle Paul wrote,

“you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), as you try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:8-9).

In another place Paul tells us the Holy Spirit produces fruit, the character of Christ within us.

“the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law” (Galatians 5:22-23).

As you allow God to develop that fruit in your character your light will shine as it produces words and actions, as it shows and tells people about Jesus.

So be aware, be intentional, *let your light shine brightly!*

Pastor Lyle