

# THE REAL CHRISTMAS LIGHT

CMBC December 14, 2014

John 1:1 – 9

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There is a large maple tree near Stanley Park that has a spectacular display of lights that seem to be dripping off the tree. It is beautiful.

The Bible has a lot of references to light.  
Not surprising. The Bible tells us that God is Light.  
This is the real Light of Christmas

## 1. THE LIGHTS OF CHRISTMAS

- a. In the Christmas story
  - i. The star that the Magi saw and followed
    1. It led them to Jerusalem where they inquired at Herod's palace
    2. They rejoiced when they saw the star again
    3. **Matthew 2: 9-10** and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. [10] When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy.
  - ii. The angels coming to the shepherds  
**Luke 2:9** An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. (the radiance of the glory of the Lord)
  - iii. Zachariah's prophecy  
**Luke 1:78 – 79** Because of God's tender mercy, the morning light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace.
  - iv. The last verse of Silent Night  
*Silent Night. Holy Night.  
Son of God, loves pure light.  
Radiance beams from thy holy face  
With the dawn of redeeming grace  
Jesus Lord at thy birth*
- b. Our celebration with lights
  - i. Lights have a prominent place in our Christmas celebration

- ii. We have candles, and lights all around us as decorations
- iii. We complain when the stores commercialize Christmas, and then the same people complain when they replace the word Christmas with Holiday.

## 2. THE COMING OF THE LIGHT

### a. The promised light

- i. **Isaiah 60:1** "Arise, Jerusalem! Let your light shine for all to see. For the glory of the LORD rises to shine on you. Darkness as black as night covers all the nations of the earth, but the glory of the LORD rises and appears over you. All nations will come to your light; mighty kings will come to see your radiance.
- ii. **Isaiah 9:1 – 3** Nevertheless, that time of darkness and despair will not go on forever. The land of Zebulun and Naphtali will be humbled, but there will be a time in the future when Galilee of the Gentiles, which lies along the road that runs between the Jordan and the sea, will be filled with glory. The people who walk in darkness will see a great light For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a light will shine. After John the Baptist was murdered, Jesus went to live in Capernaum, which is in the land of Zebulun and Naphtali in Galilee. Isaiah spoke of the time when this humbled land would be filled with glory, the glory of the Messiah. A great light has come.

- iii. One of the best known passages about Light are the first verses in the Gospel of John.

**John 1:1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was with God in the beginning.<sup>3</sup>

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and that life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe.<sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

### b. Light of the world

- i. Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.
  - ii. **John 3:19** This is the verdict: Light has come into the world. And men love darkness rather than light.
  - iii. **John 12:4** I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.
- c. The radiant light of Jesus
- i. What is this light, this glory?
  - ii. I think that Jesus transfiguration gives us some understanding.  
**Matthew 17:2** There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.
  - iii. The disciples saw him in his holiness
  - iv. Paul describing Jesus says:  
**1 Timothy 6:16** who lives in unapproachable light,

### 3. LIGHT FOR THE WORLD

- a. God’s great plan
  - i. **Isaiah 9:1** Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan— The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; God’s plan for the Gentiles, the world.
  - ii. **Isaiah 42:6** I the Lord have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind
  - iii. Many more Scripture passages refer to God’s plan through Israel to bring “light” to the Gentiles.
  - iv. Simeon’s statement  
**Luke 2:30 – 31** For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”
  - v. Paul called by Jesus was blinded by a great light.

**Acts 22:3** <sup>15</sup>“Then I asked, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ “‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,’ the Lord replied. <sup>16</sup>‘Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. <sup>17</sup>I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them <sup>18</sup>to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’

b. Nations drawn to the light

**Isaiah 49:6** I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.”

#### 4. PEOPLE OF THE LIGHT

a. You are the light

i. **1 Peter 2:9** <sup>9</sup>But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

ii. He told us “You are the light of the world. ... Let your light so shine.”

iii. Our church Fellowship Hall is beautifully decorated for the banquets we did in the past 2 weeks. I love the Christmas lights that are strung along the beams and on the support posts. The brightness of the lights give a warm feeling as you enter the Hall.

For the Teen Challenge Banquet they turned off the main florescent lights and had only the strings of Christmas lights and a few lamp turned on. It drew the attention even more to the tiny lights strung all across the Hall.

We often think that it is the big lights that shine the truth in the world – the Billy Grahams, the pastors in the church. But the most effective light comes from the multitude of smaller lights shining in the world. All of our lights together present the greatest message from God about His light.

That is what Jesus meant when He said, “A city set on a hill,” – that is, all of our little lights shining together, -“cannot be hiddeb.” **Matthew 5:14**

**Ephesians 5:8** <sup>8</sup>For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light

- b. Today's bright Christmas lights
  - i. Jesus is the real light of Christmas
  - ii. We too are lights and the world needs us to shine brightly, at Christmas and always.