

LIGHTS

WEEK 2

Light for Your Darkness

December 4 & 5, 2010 • René Schlaepfer

Light is the central biblical metaphor for Christmas!

The land of Zebulun and Naphtali... Galilee of the nations, by way of the sea, beyond the Jordan — the people **walking in darkness** have seen a great **light**; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a **light** has dawned. *Isaiah 9:1–2 [NV]*

This verse is quoted or alluded to by:

- Zechariah (Luke 1:78–79)
- Simeon (Luke 2:30–32)
- John (John 1:9)
- Jesus (Many verses, including John 8:12)
- Matthew (Matthew 4:14–16)... and many others!

What's the historical context?

In what ways do I “live in darkness?”

- **DARKNESS** _____
- **DARKNESS** _____

The heart is hopelessly **dark** and deceitful, a puzzle that no one can figure out. *Jeremiah 17:9 [TM]*

How does light help when I am in darkness?

1. LIGHT _____

[Jesus] “I am the Light of the world. So if you follow me, **you won't be stumbling around in darkness**, for living light will flood your path.” *John 8:12 [LB]*

2. LIGHT _____

No one has ever seen God. But God the only Son is very close to the Father, and **he has shown us what God is like**. *John 1:18 [NCV]*

3. LIGHT _____

[Jesus said,] “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of **life**.” *John 8:12 [NIV]*

4. LIGHT _____

... the **darkness in our lives disappears**, and the new light of life in Christ shines in.
1 John 2:8b [LB]

[Jesus said,] “I have come as a **Light** to shine in this dark world, so that all who **put their trust in me** will no longer wander in darkness.” *John 12:46 [LB]*

The big question:

DO I _____ ?

Daily Meditations

Monday

What is your most vivid memory as a child of experiencing a dark place (e.g., a cave, tunnel, or power blackout)?

What feelings do you associate with darkness?

Reread the verses in the notes, and review the main points. What parts of the message were particularly meaningful to you? Why?

Write down a few of the “dark” things you worry about here — worries about the world, about your family, about yourself that get your attention in the darkness of late sleepless nights:

Now look back over that dark list and commit it to the Light of the World! Ask Jesus Christ to help you put your trust in Him and live in the light instead of the darkness.

Tuesday

Read Isaiah 9:1–7. What are some of the ways this world is living in darkness?

What are some of the ways you have lived in darkness?

How does the Light of Christ serve as an alternative or antidote to the darkness?

Of the various ways the Messiah is described in these verses, which resonate the most with you right now, and why?

Thank God for sending the true Light into the world! Ask Him to light your life today.

Wednesday

Read John 1:1–14. Why do you suppose John wanted to start his gospel before creation, instead of with the birth of Jesus like Matthew and Luke? What idea did he want to be certain was understood?

List some of the ways Jesus is “the Light”:

Is the invitation in verse 12 an encouragement to:

... live a good life?

... become religious?

... get your act together and become successful?

... join the family of God?

How is this different from some perceptions of the Christian life?

Ask Jesus to help you see the glory of the Father through His light this Christmas!

Thursday

Read John 8:12 and John 12:44–46. What is Jesus promising in 8:12? What does this mean?

How is following Jesus like following a light through a dark place for you?

Thank God for being the Light for you to trust in and follow!

Friday

Read Matthew 5:14–16. Here Jesus passes the torch, in a sense, to us.

In what way are we, collectively, a light to the world?

In what ways are we not the light in the same sense Jesus is the light?

How can you practically shine your light in this Christmas season?

Ask God to show you how to shine your light. Please be praying about who you can invite to the Christmas concerts and Candlelight Services, since this is proven to be a time many people begin or restart their relationship with Jesus!

Saturday

In preparation for this weekend’s message, read Luke 2:1–20. What impresses you about these verses?

Please pray for the weekend services, that God would shine His light through us to the many who will attend!



Memory Verse

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. *Isaiah 9:2 [NIV]*