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How Bright is the Light of Your Life?

Matthew 5:14: (NASB) *You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.*

Our world is in great need of many things. We need to learn to listen to those with whom we disagree, we need to be merciful and understanding, yet we also need to be firm and just. We also need to find light. Not just any light, we need to find the purest life-giving and revealing light of truth that is available. As Christians, we know that the light of the world is Jesus, but what we need to learn is how to use that light, how to be clear reflections of that light and how to be worthy vessels of that light.

There are hundreds of Scriptures that talk about light, but they do not all talk about the same thing.

What are the "building blocks" to light up our lives in a Christian way?

The "Light Up Your life" Building Blocks:

1. Find light and identify what kind of light will guide your life
2. Learn how to use that light
3. Learn how to reflect that light
4. Learn how to be a vessel from which that light shines

1. Find light and identify what kind of light will guide your life:

Let's start understanding light in the most basic and obvious place - the very beginning:

Genesis 1:1-5: (NASB) ¹*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.* ²*The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.* ³*Then God said, Let there be light; and there was light.* ⁴*God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.* ⁵*God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.*

The introduction of light was the first and MOST IMPORTANT step in all of creation! Without light, nothing else would have happened.

There are different lights for different tasks:

Genesis 1:14-19: (NASB) ¹⁴*Then God said, Let there be **lights** (plural) in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years;* ¹⁵*and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth; and it was so.* ¹⁶*God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also.* ¹⁷*God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth,* ¹⁸*and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good.* ¹⁹*There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.*

There are three distinct lights, two of which are our light sources:

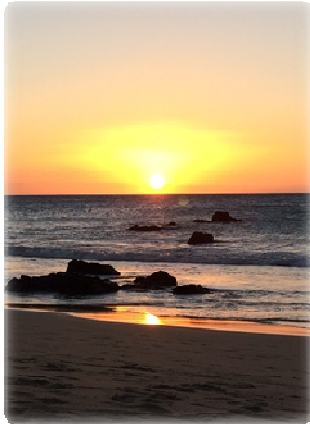
- **Sun:** The direct light and energy source that fosters all earthly life
- **Moon:** A reflective light to guide us while darkness prevails
- **Stars:** The far off direct lights of other parts of God's universe

Do the Scriptures tie in any lessons for us here?

Malachi 4:2: (NASB) *But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall.*

So, the sun can show us the Son? The brightness of the sun has a healing effect; the brightness of the Son also has a dramatic healing effect.

The prophecy about John the Baptist to his father, Zachariah: **Luke 1:76-79:** As the advent of Jesus was preparing, John the Baptist's work is described as *the sunrise from on high* - we get a sense of the physical sun as being a picture of the great light of Jesus.



If the sun is the Son, what is the moon? It is not even a real source of light!

The contrast between light and darkness:

Proverbs 4:18-19: (NASB) ¹⁸*But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, that shines brighter and brighter until the full day.* ¹⁹*The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know over what they stumble.*

On the path of the righteous, we are supposed to grow and mature. But what about those who sit in darkness in Luke 1:79?

Once sin entered, it became the standard. But God had a plan to remove that standard over time.

One of the first steps in that plan was of necessity to *identify* sin: **Romans 3:19-20:** (KJV) ¹⁹*Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.* ²⁰*Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.* (The Law Covenant that God gave through Moses to Israel.)

Even in the dark, the moon is a visible light to expose the darkness for what it is. The moon is a dim reflection of the sun when it can't be seen, just as the Law (Moses) was a dim reflection of the Son (Jesus) before *he* could be seen...


Moses was a picture of the Law being delivered. Jesus is the actual deliverer of righteousness and healing. The Law was a true reflection of Jesus.

Genesis 1:5: Why was evening first? This is speculation, but perhaps the light of the moon, for the sake of humankind, was the first light they saw - the light of the Law to identify what sin was. This would be a reflection of the sun that would rise later.

The light we want for our lives? The pure light of the sun/Son.

2. Learn how to use that light

Use the light as a tool for our strength and benefit.

 **Take action, *The Science of Positive Focus*, Brian Tracy**

- *You see, the major difference between successful people and failures is that successful people are action orientated and failures are not. Now, if you take action only two things can happen. What are they? Succeed or fail. It's pretty simple. If you succeed, you do more of it. If you fail what do you do? You learn something and you try something else. Human beings are trial and failure organisms. We try and fail, try and fail, try and fail, try and fail and then try and succeed. Phil Knight, the president of Nike shoes says, "You only have to succeed the last time."*

The light of our lives must provoke us to action. If it doesn't, then it is not the light of our lives; it is light *in* our lives.

The light is a tool that shows us the way: Carry it! **Psalms 119:105:** You do not walk a dark path and leave the light at home! Carry the light because the world in which we live is very dark. **John 8:12** **The light is a tool that gives us great confidence: Believe in it!** **Psalms 27:1** **The light is a tool that feeds us and kindles a positive outlook: Absorb it!** **Psalms 97:10-12** **The light itself is a tool of defense - it is armor: Wear it!** **Romans 13:12-14:** Use the light as a tool for the strength and benefit of others, as well.

The light is a tool that opens people's minds: Reveal it! **Luke 2:25-33:** God's power and influence gave His mind a light, which was above his natural ability. What zeal we should show with the Gospel message! The light of revelation was a new discovery for those Gentiles who were previously in the dark. Light provides energy!



Keep trying, *The Science of Positive Focus*, Brian Tracy

- And you know, if you read every single story of every single man or woman who's ever accomplished anything, their entire life is a lifetime of failure. It is failure, failure, failure, failure, failure, outstanding success. Boy, wasn't he lucky! You'll find that successful people try far more things, and most of the things you try won't work at least they won't work initially. So therefore, the thing is to keep trying because you have a cybernetic organism or mechanism built into your brain. Which means every time you try anything you learn something. You're trying something and you're learning something, and you learn what works and you learn what doesn't work. So, you find there's a direct relationship between the number of times you try and how likely it is you are to triumph.*

Sometimes when light is not welcome, we have to move on in a respectful way. Life experiences might make them ready for light at some point. It doesn't mean we stop shining our light and give up. Maybe we focus in a different direction.

The light is a tool that uncovers hidden realities: Come to it! John 3:16-21: This plan of light had been in place for all the ages of man's creation, waiting for the right time.

There is no hiding under the brightness of the light - under the brightness of the authority of Jesus. The light makes plain what we do and who we are. For all mankind, this is not necessarily a welcomed response. But the light will shine brighter and brighter. In the resurrection of judgment, it will give those people an opportunity to understand for the first time.

That song continues with the next verse adding Piglet as his friend and so on, describing a large group of friends. Eeyore is not looking at all the little things as adding up to something big. We can choose how we look at life around us. If we choose to look through the eyes of light, we see the brightness the light brings. If we choose to look through the eyes of darkness, we see clouds and things that are scary. Fear paralyzes. Don't be Eeyore! Be focused on using the light as a tool to benefit ourselves and others.

The light is a tool that reveals the most important parts of Christ-likeness: Apply it! 1 John 2:8-11: This describes the process of darkness passing away and light shining. John tells us that to be in the light is something we have to apply in every aspect of our lives. God's plan is big enough to provide an opportunity for those blinded to see the light in the future.

Before the next application of light, this next text should serve as a sober warning regarding the light that we choose to follow: Isaiah 5:20-23

3. Learn how to reflect that light

When we reflect something, we are standing in its path and are being used by that which we reflect to pass its message, be it good or evil, to those around us. As in the last text, we may not be the one substituting darkness for light, but are we in any way reflecting that substitution?

How can we be an effective reflector of light? **Seek and be familiar with the source:**

Psalms 89:14-16: Walking in His light affords us the opportunity to reflect His light! It must shine on you for you to have the ability to reflect it. Do we allow the darkness of the world to shine on us or do we solely allow the light of the Gospel to shine on us?

Always keep the most important thing the most important thing - the Gospel of Christ! 2 Corinthians 4:3-6: Jesus reflects everything God is. We get the strength from His light. Preach the Gospel of Jesus, not the Gospel of prosperity! Be bound to the true message, because it reflects from the inside out!

As Children of Light, have the expectation to follow and imitate the steps of Jesus: 1 Thessalonians 5:4-8

What is the difference between *reflecting* the light of Jesus and *bearing* the light of Jesus?

Realize that true fellowship can only grow as we grow closer to the likeness of Jesus:

1 John 1:7: The closer we get to the source of light, the closer we get to each other.

This verse transitions from being reflective of the light to actually bearing the light:

Isaiah 60:1-3: (NASB) ¹*Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. (reflecting)* ²*For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; But the LORD will rise upon you and His glory will appear upon you. (We have been reflecting the light up until now...)* ³*Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.*

4. Learn how to be a vessel from which that light shines

To be a vessel of the light is to have found it, understood it, applied it and reflected it. Now, maturity dictates that we carry it, that we become its very conduit as a witness to all. It literally shines through us! **Psalms 37:4-6:** When we delight in something, it motivates our life and affects all aspects of it.

Matthew 5:13-14: If there is any light at all, people in darkness will gravitate towards it. Light challenges fear.

The culmination of the Christian experience - to BE the light that the world can see and hope in! **Matthew 5:15-16:** To truly be a Christian is to *be* the light of Christ.

Luke 11:33: Christians should not be secluded from the world or even hidden in plain sight - we should shine the light of truth!

Luke 11:34-36: (NASB) ³⁴*The eye is the lamp of your body; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is bad, your body also is full of darkness. ³⁵Then watch out that the light in you is not darkness. ³⁶If therefore your whole body is full of light, with no dark part in it, it will be wholly illumined, as when the lamp illumines you with its rays. (More on this in the Bonus Material)*

Let us continually test the depth that the light has penetrated our very souls...

People are looking for truth and truth is found in the light. How are we shining out the light of the Gospel in our lives? *How are we a city set upon a hill that cannot be hid?*

To be the light is to shine *through* the imperfections of our flesh:

2 Corinthians 4:7-11: The obstacles of life are there to continually press our humble focus towards the glow of the life of Jesus. This should be our obsession!

It is not enough to know the light or to reflect it - this text tells us that we have to *become* the light: **Ephesians 5:6-16:** It is like being adopted - you were once a child of the darkness of Satan but now are known by a new name - the name "Light." We live in a dark place. We need to be able to shine. Christ can shine upon us as we shine out the light of the Gospel. In this way we will always have this light in abundant supply to be able to freely give it to all!

How aggressive should we be? We do not want to abuse the light and shine it in peoples' faces. Look at how Jesus and the Apostles acted. They used wisdom and humility. Remember the adage, "I would rather see a sermon than hear one."

Finally, what does one look like who exudes the light of Christ and the Gospel? **1 Peter 2:9-12:** This light has many different facets! This light is the embodiment of mercy and grace.

This light transforms us so we may in turn be instruments of transformation for others!

The light of Christ needs to be recognized, understood, used in terms of the tools it gives us, reflected by us and then, as we grow in maturity, we need to become the glorious light on the hill that gives hope to the world. Be the light on the hill! Be obsessed with being Christ-like!

*So, how bright is the light of your life?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions,
Think about it...!*