



Is Christianity Really the Light of the World?

Matthew 5:16: (NASB) *Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*



The world is systematically becoming a dark place. It is not that people are purposely looking to dwell in darkness, it is that many people have come to believe in things that had their origin in darkness and treachery. Wherever you look you can see the subtle creeping in of thinking, philosophies and actions that do not reflect the wholesome goodness of godly righteousness; rather, they engulf all in their path in a pervasive and deepening gloom that is labeled as a “new understanding” of what is good and acceptable. Jesus emphatically told his followers to be the “light of the world,” to be that “city set on a hill for the whole world to see.” So, how are we doing with that? Is Christianity truly the light of the world or have we misrepresented and failed the light of the gospel? Is the world supposed to see our light and come to it or are we simply off track in our understanding?

 **Data from nine countries, CNN - Religion to Become Extinct, Experts Predict (2011)**

- *Let's have a chat with our religious affairs contributor, Richard Green, to find out what is going on. Are people just fearing God less? So, they don't care as much? How do these guys even predict this, Richard?*
- *Well, these guys are not talking about what people believe - why they do what they do. What they're doing is they are analyzing the trends. So, they've got numbers from the census in these nine countries going back 100 years, and they show a very clear pattern. In all of these nine countries over time, more and more people are drifting away from religion. So, what they're saying is this is a trend that is going to continue and given time, religion will simply die out in those countries.*
- *And why those countries? Is there something particular about them and not others?*
- *Well, it's a question of where the data is available. These nine countries have the information available. The census has been asking people what their religion is. In many other countries, the census simply doesn't ask, so they were not able to do the analysis there.*

Let's begin by trying to figure out what Jesus is teaching us regarding our light shining. He mentions this on two separate occasions.

His first mention immediately follows the Beatitudes:

Matthew 5:13-16: (NASB) ¹³*You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.* ¹⁴*You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden;* ¹⁵*nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.* ¹⁶*Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*



How could we say Christianity is the light of the world based on what we see around us?

In Mark 4:21-23 and Luke 8:16-18, "light" immediately follows the Parable of the Sower and its explanation:

Luke 8:16-18: (NASB) ¹⁶Now no one after lighting a lamp covers it over with a container, or puts it under a bed; but he puts it on a lampstand, so that those who come in may see the light. ¹⁷For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor anything secret that will not be known and come to light. ¹⁸So take care how you listen; for whoever has, to him more shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him.



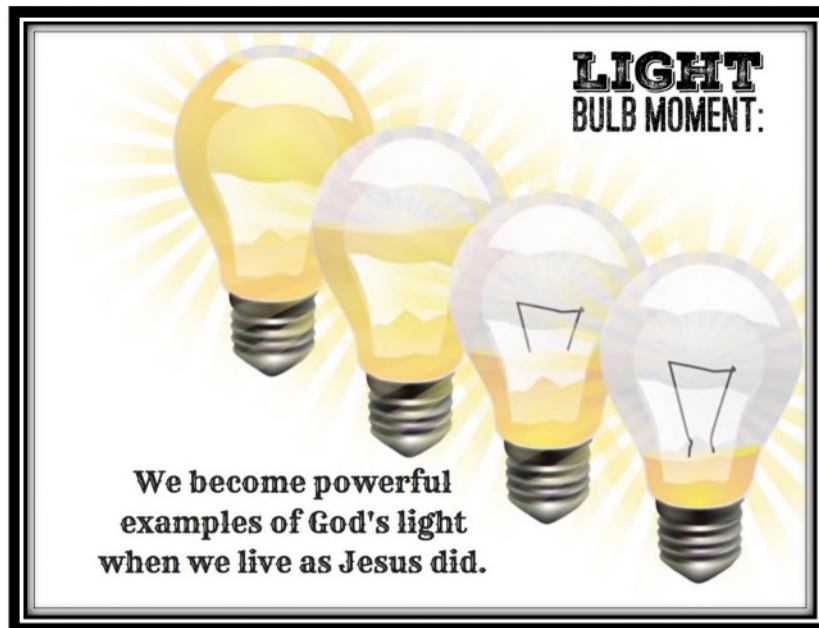
Observations so far about our responsibility of being light:

- The *ingredients* of these lessons are salt and light (more on this soon!)
- The *examples* of these lessons are salt's usefulness, a lighted city and a lamp in a house (more on this soon!)
- The *context* of these lessons: In the Beatitudes, Jesus gave us character lessons using *blessed are you if...* These teach us how to be a follower by being humble, gentle, merciful, willing to be persecuted and so on.



Letting your light shine can be bothersome to some people in the world. Light can reveal things about them they may not like, and they may take it out on you.

We always think of the Beatitudes as those first thirteen verses in Matthew 5, but all of that chapter and the surrounding context are part of the whole lesson. We understand this section to be one of the most important discipleship teachings that Jesus ever gave. He teaches us the importance of being a follower of Christ.





Lost and confused, *The War on Traditional Values Has Created a Lost, Angry, Confused Generation, Rebel Media*

- *Why are we so quick to throw away the values of our past? I've said this before on Twitter, that I find it very sad we spend most of our time in universities deconstructing and destroying tradition and culture instead of creating any. This is the problem with post-modernism and deconstruction of older values. We've deconstructed religion, race, gender roles, tradition, the nuclear family and much more. What have we left ourselves with? A generation of lost and confused individuals with no identity.*



Observations so far about our responsibility of being light: (continued)

- The *context* of these lessons: In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus teaches us about spreading the gospel - what we should be doing as his followers.



First he taught us *how* to be followers in general. Then he told us specifically *what to do*. Both of these have everything to do with being the light of the world.



Is there a connection between salt and light in Jesus' example of how we are to live?

Salt and light are two very common analogies in the New Testament referring to the life of a Christian. There is a deep connection between them in the teachings of Jesus and understanding this deep connection will really help us see how Christianity is in fact, the light of the world!



Even though it is difficult to hear, we will listen to different views on the failures of Christianity throughout this podcast.

 **Abstract hope, *Europe Without Christianity - The End of Faith in Europe*, CBN News, Paris**

- *(Journalist Richard Minter) As an American living in Europe, when you tell Europeans that you go to church on Sunday, they look at you like a museum piece - something strange.*
- *(Reporter) Near Brussels, at Christian Center, an Assemblies of God Church, Belgium pastor, Paul DeVost, ministers to a culture in which Christianity is largely irrelevant.*
- *(Paul Devost) In the United States, people would more quickly turn toward at least Christ in general and Christianity because it's still somewhat part of the culture in general. Here in Europe, we have gone beyond that point and we do not expect anything from religion apart from some very abstract hope that there is something after this life.*



Salt played an interesting role in the religious life of the Jews:

Leviticus 2:13: (NASB) ¹³*Every grain offering of yours, moreover, you shall season with salt, so that the salt of the covenant of your God shall not be lacking from your grain offering; with all your offerings you shall offer salt.*

Scripturally, salt had to be a part of all their offerings.

Why? Salt is a very common mineral yet very valuable. Offerings were called "covenants of salt," meaning they were a firm promise. The salt made the covenant more firm.

Soldiers would buy salt with their wages as it kept meat and fish from spoiling. Culturally, salt was very important.

What about the New Testament?

Mark 9:49-50: (NASB) ⁴⁹*For everyone will be salted with fire.* ⁵⁰*Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.*

For us to *be salted with fire* seems to directly refer to the gold refining process. For gold refining in ancient times, salt was one of the primary chemical agents of separation. If you did not put salt into the crucible with the gold, it would not separate the gold from the dross. You needed a significant amount of salt in that process in order to render gold.

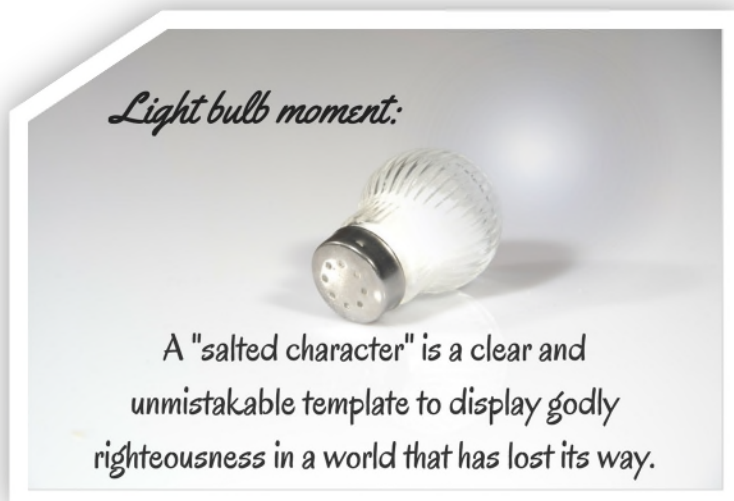




What does the salt factor teach us? *Salt is an agent of separation in the refining process, and we believe it to directly refer to the strength and focus of our character* - to our submitting ourselves to being in line with the pattern of Christ so that the Holy Spirit can accomplish its work in us. Like in the refining process, if you submit yourself to the "salt," then the "gold" can come forward. God cannot work good results for us through a bad character.

Colossians 4:6: (NASB) *Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.*

Seasoned with salt - seasoned with good character. Salt is not the measure of our faithfulness, it is an ingredient in the purifying of our faithfulness. When we first come to Christ, we should not be the same person as when we have been a Christian for a long time. Salt helps make us different than when we started - something higher, more spiritual. Thus, the salt - the character is not an end but a means to an end. Focused character brings a purity of purpose, good "flavor" to our lives and to those around us, and the preservative quality that imperfect humanity so desperately needs. Good character can save relationships.



Salt is often used for household chores, like a stain remover cleaning coffee pots. Salt water is good for our skin. We can gargle with it for sore throats. Our words should help remove the stains of life, promote spiritual health and heal the wounded.



Sometimes our light goes out but is blown into flame by another human being. Each of us owes deepest thanks to those who have rekindled this light. — Albert Schweitzer

Prayer, witches and pork, Ten Things I Hate About Christians, Onision

- ...This is ten things I hate about Christians: They sound crazy.
- What are you doing?
- I am praying to God.
- What's that?
- I'm talking to the Creator of all things!
- That's strange because I don't see a hands-free blue tooth device.
- He doesn't need a phone to hear me, silly!
- So, is He in the closet or something?
- No! He's everywhere all the time!
- They cherry pick which parts of the Bible they actually follow.
- You know God says we should kill witches so, if I ever meet one...
- ...You would murder a witch?
- Exodus 22:18 - Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.
- Here's the problem - you eat bacon, and the Bible specifically instructs its followers not to eat any form of pig.
- Well...
- You can stop being a nut case now.

This prophecy describes our backwards world that contrasts with our salted character:

Isaiah 5:18-21,23: (NASB) ¹⁸Woe to those who drag iniquity with the cords of falsehood, and sin as if with cart ropes; ¹⁹Who say, Let Him make speed, let Him hasten His work, that we may see it; and let the purpose of the Holy One of Israel draw near and come to pass, that we may know it!

This is a facetious way to look at God - treating God as if He is to take direction from us, commanding Him to appear as we want Him to.

²⁰Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! ²¹Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight! ²³Who justify the wicked for a bribe, and take away the rights of the ones who are in the right!

This prophecy helps us see what our world has come to in terms of morality and what we can rely on. Christianity has standards set beyond humanity, so we have to look up for those standards. This is saying there comes a time when that would be set aside because of man's own desires.

Christianity is being "dumbed down" in an alarming way. For example, the "Prosperity Gospel" takes the principles of Christian sacrifice and turns them into Christian accumulation.

A "salted character" must precede our being light, because a dramatic contrast with worldly thinking is necessary so we can maintain the light of God's direction throughout life!

Without a strong Christian character, you will never be the light of the world. Salt has to come first.



We have talked about the importance of salt, so now what about light - are we light or is it given to us?

In Matthew 5 Jesus tells us *blessed are you if you...* His very next statement is that his followers are *the salt of the earth*, which means they are to have godly characters that could literally preserve and enhance the human condition. Then he says they are to be *the light of the world*.

Let's consider how we become this light:

Matthew 5:16: (NASB) *Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*

We want to bring honor to God and not ourselves. People might see our good works, but it is not about us. We do not naturally possess the light of God - to let *our* light shine we first must find the light of God.

There are many kinds of light in the world. The light we are looking for is the light of Christianity. That is a powerful light when you understand what it is and how to use it.

A salted character will help us to stay focused on the contrast between godly 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.*

Where are we getting our light from? Is it a different source than the light that the world seeks?

Social media influence, CNN - Religion to Become Extinct, Experts Predict (2011)

- *Richard, one of the interesting things was actually the influence of social media and social media networks on the "no religiousness" of some of these countries, right?*
- *That's right. One of the assumptions that these guys are working with is that you're affected by your friends. You see it on Facebook, they say, "If you look at people's friends on Facebook you can predict their politics, their religion, their income." So, what these researchers say is look, if you know even a couple of people who don't go to church, who don't go to mosque, you are more likely not to go yourself and the more people you know who are not church-goers, who are not religious, the less likely you are not to go yourself.*
- *Are the guys who did this research right?*
- *I wouldn't bet on it. (That Christianity will become extinct.)*

Our light originates from God through Jesus:

John 8:12: (NASB) ¹²*Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, I am the Light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.*

Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. — Martin Luther King, Jr.



The light of God through Jesus is a tool that shows us the way. Carry it and believe in it:

Psalms 119:105: (NASB) *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*

Psalms 27:1: (NASB) *The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the defense of my life; Whom shall I dread?*

The light comes from the *outside in*.



A caller from Connecticut suggests: Our Heavenly Father is light in **1 John 1:5:** (KJV) *God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all.* **Psalms 119:105** that you just quoted shows us that we have no light of our own. We need to go to a source, our Heavenly Father. This should humble us.



The light is a tool that feeds us and kindles a positive outlook. Absorb it:

Psalm 97:10-12: (NASB) ¹⁰*Hate evil, you who love the LORD, who preserves the souls of His godly ones; He delivers them from the hand of the wicked.* ¹¹*Light is sown like seed for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart.* ¹²*Be glad in the LORD, you righteous ones, and give thanks to His holy name.*

Light is sown like seed for the righteous - a seed absorbs the nutrients of the soil and water so it can grow. We have to absorb the light of God so we can grow. These are the beginning steps of how Christianity is the light of the world, even though it does not look that way.

Our fellow Christians are not perfect - we all make mistakes. We need to let our light shine by being forgiving and helpful. If not, it contributes to the light becoming dimmer within us and within other Christians.

That is why it is important to realize the light does not come from within us. We are all imperfect. We have to be understanding and make adjustments in our expecting perfection from others.



Gay marriage, Muslims Forgiveness, Ten Things I Hate About Christians, Onision

- *Many of them regularly oppress others while still pretending they're good people.*
- *I'm not a judgmental person, I just don't think gay people should be allowed to get married.*
- *So, gay people shouldn't have the right to marry consensual loving adults?*
- *It's not me, it's the Bible. It says here if a male lies with a male both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death.*
- *They often preach about respecting other people's religious beliefs but don't really practice that themselves.*
- *There's a war on Christians right now and it's unacceptable. Religious freedom is part of the foundation of our great nation.*
- *Muslims.*
- *They're all terrorists and should be banned from this country.*
- *They literally believe God will forgive most anything.*
- *Ugh, you aren't trying to get me to go to church, are you?*



- *I'm just letting you know that I am moving next door and I am a registered sex offender. I may or may not have raped and molested multiple people.*
- *Okay, so I am definitely moving now.*
- *Don't judge! The Bible says! The Bible says! 1 John 1:9: If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I can't wait to meet all the other forgiven rapists and pedophiles in heaven.*

This is overtly offensive and misrepresents true Christianity. Forgiveness means changing what you do. The whole concept of forgiveness is changing what you do - changing direction. Being forgiven does not mean you can keep doing anything you want. A lot of the world looks at us like we have a double standard. The character (salt) of Christians and the light we are given is transformative. Every one of those people who ridicule us benefit by the goodness of what true Christian salted character and light is.

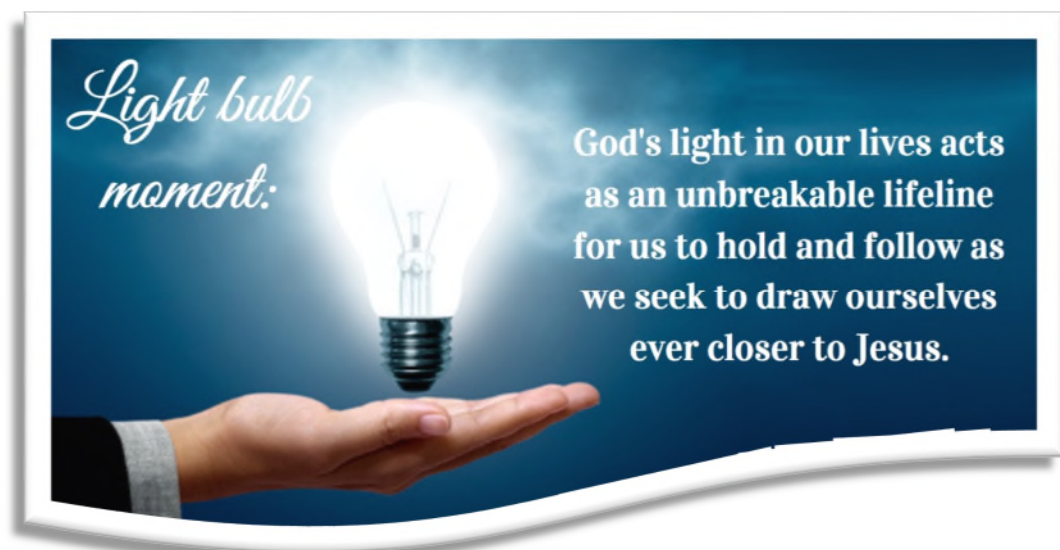
The light itself is a tool of defense - it is armor: Wear it!

Romans 13:12-14: (NASB) ¹²*The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore, let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.* ¹³*Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy.* ¹⁴*But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.*



Put on the armor of light - we are not like a turtle, who naturally grows a shell of armor. We do not have that natural shell of armor. We are to put on the light of God through Jesus, which will be able to protect you in your experiences. Jesus said he was the light of the world. Put on Jesus, who is the armor, who can protect us from the bad things of the world. This does not mean bad things will not happen. It means that when they do, they will not undermine that salted character and light of sacrifice. They will make it better for a godly purpose.

To wear the righteousness of Jesus is to be clothed in an unmistakable, powerful godly light. Note, *Christian systems* are not the light of the world. We are talking about true Christianity.





**Okay. We see, carry, absorb and wear the light of God.
But how do we BECOME that light?**

Becoming light is a big step. Think about it, a tradesman begins as an apprentice and works with and for a master of his trade until he internalizes his craft and is tested thoroughly enough to prove himself. We also must internalize our craft, which is living the gospel.



Moral relativism, *Europe Without Christianity - The End of Faith in Europe*, CBN News, Paris

- *There have been news reports recently that although church attendance in Europe is low, belief in God is actually very high, but belief in what sort of god? Judging from surveys it's a new age faith with a large dose of moral relativism. Vince Esterman, a Frenchman who grew up in Australia has been a French pastor for almost 20 years and has a dynamic street ministry in Paris. Although he has led many Frenchmen to Christ, he doesn't talk much about revival. He speaks of a Europe that is still moving away from God.*
- *The Europe that was the custodian of the gospel in the very early decades now is the convent that is rejecting the gospel and Christianity. We have seen France go into decline and with it Europe generally.*

Moral relativism is what happens in the absence of absolutes. It is the ability to say something is right "Because I say so, because it feels right, so therefore it must be."

How can Christianity be the light of the world when it seems to be losing ground everywhere?

Back to a portion of our original text:

Matthew 5:14-16: (NASB) ¹⁴You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; ¹⁵nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.



You are the light of the world - We have discussed how the light source is external - from the *outside in*...somehow it is now from the *inside out*. How did that happen? Here is where we start to understand how true Christianity (not Christian systems or denominations) is the light of the world.

Let's talk about being the light of the world and the light that is in the house. We will save the city on the hill analogy for later.

Becoming light: First, to become light, we need to be related to the source of all light:

Romans 8:14-17: (NASB) ¹⁴For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, Abba! Father!

We have been adopted into God's family.





Abba! - In the Greek language, means a very personal relationship as in "daddy."

Second, the proof of this sonship is born out in the begetting of the Spirit of God:

¹⁶The Spirit itself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

Sonship means brotherhood, mutually-shared experiences.

We cannot hold a torch to light another's path without brightening our own. — Ben Sweetland

Third, as a result, we are transformed into light, because we are now children of light:

Ephesians 5:8-10: (NRSV) *⁸For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light ⁹for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord.*

If you are a child of light, you are born into light. You grow up to be light just like your Father. By being light, you can walk into a room and change the way the whole environment looks.

The fruit of the light - it produces that transforming character that can have an effect on things around you, such as the fruit of the Spirit.

Being light means not just *knowing* what godly righteousness is but by *being* righteous and godly.

Fourth, as children of light we must shine that light at home - among our family in Christ:

Galatians 6:6-10: (NASB) *⁶The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him. ⁷Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. ⁸For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. ⁹Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. ¹⁰So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.*

Another good point about our personal responsibility is we are to let our light shine to our pastors and teachers. They need spiritual encouragement and fellowship as well to strengthen them. We have a responsibility to uplift our pastors.

If you *are* light, it never goes out. If you borrow light, you could put it down. We are supposed to *be* light.

 **Anti-women, Ten Things I Hate About Christians, Onision**

- *They irrefutably oppress women.*
- *You know your religion is horrible to women, right?*
- *Na-uh.*
- *1 Timothy 2:11,12: Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man.*
- *That's one example.*



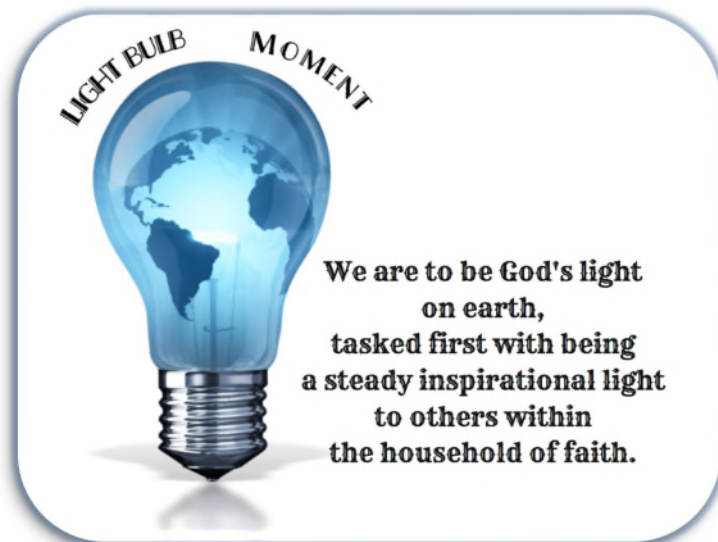
- *Deuteronomy 22:28,29 says, If a man rapes a woman then all he has to do is pay the father money and then she has to marry him.*
- *More non-believer propaganda.*
- *Here, check it out.*

(For previous podcasts on the subject of how the Bible views women, please go to our website, ChristianQuestions.com, and search “women.”)

There is a liberty in Christ that frees us in a different way. There is a defined relationship between men and women for a godly purpose. There is not oppression. This takes a line here and a line there out of context, which causes damage.

As children of light, have the expectation to follow and imitate the steps of Jesus:

1 Thessalonians 5:4-6,8: (NASB) *⁴But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; ⁵for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; ⁶so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober... ⁸But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.*



If we can truly be that light within the household of faith, then that means your light does not turn off for any reason. Then, actually *being* the light of the world will make more sense. This is a process. First you have to have that salted character. You have to then put on light to have light. Then you have to be “begotten” of the light. The Bible shows us we reach a point when we *are* light.

When will the light that we are becoming show the way for the masses of humanity?

In a dark and troubled night, light does show the way, and in so doing it provides a beacon of hope and direction. The gospel and those who live it are such a beacon for our misery torn world, so our next focus will be on where this beacon leads to. Think of a beacon of light like a lighthouse. It shines to some



place. To be the light of the world is to be a beacon of light that is shining someplace different.

Slavery, *Ten Things I Hate About Christians*, Onision

- *Despite knowing how truly screwed up their religion is, they continue to follow it anyway.*
- *You realize the Bible is literally pro-slavery? Like, if the Bible was a person and could vote, they would say slavery is a good thing.*
- *What's the quote this time?*
- *Leviticus 25:44: As for your male and female slaves whom you may have, you may buy male and female slaves from among the nations that are around you.*
- *That's the Old Testament.*
- *It's a huge part of this book. The one that's the foundation of your religion - the Holy Bible.*
- *Old Testament. Key word - Old.*
- *Okay, Ephesians 6:5: Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling. That's the Bible quoting slavery in the New Testament as well.*
- *Wow.*
- *You're still a Christian, aren't you?*
- *Yep.*
- *Idiot.*

The Scriptures in context teach an entirely different thought. (For previous podcasts on the subject of how the Bible views slavery, please go to our website, ChristianQuestions.com, and search "slavery.")

Our light shines towards the Day of Reconciliation:

Philippians 2:14-15: (NRSV) ¹⁴Do all things without murmuring and arguing, ¹⁵so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, in which you shine like stars in the world.

Our example should be like stars - "look up" worthy! Our characters should be able to be recognized as different by the people around us. That character stands on different ground than the world.

This verse shows us both being reflective of the light and actually carrying and being the light:

Isaiah 60:1-3: (NASB) ¹Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. ²For 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 are reflecting the light and now we must also be the light.) ³Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising - This is a prophecy - but when and where will it happen? More soon!

There is so much darkness out there that if we are shining our light, it should be obvious! Part of the challenge is that true Christianity will hurt their eyes and they may shield themselves from you.



))) Confidence in identity, *The War on Traditional Values Has Created a Lost, Angry, Confused generation, Rebel Media*

- *As Brendan O'Neil has stated, nothing speaks more profoundly to the crisis of character than the phrase, "I identify as." I am a builder, I am a mother, I am a Jew. There was a confidence, a certainty to their sense of identity and to their declaration of it. O'Neil's words ring true when looking at the millennial crisis of character. It's tough to know who you are when all the guidelines have been doused in oil and burned. Even for things previously seen as innate such as gender. To be fair, no one wants to be held down by societal constraints. No one wants to be forced to have a certain religion, two and a half kids, a white picket fence and a dog named Spot. Not that there's anything wrong with that, it's just not going to suit everyone. But instead of just being open to other ideas than this nuclear family and traditional lifestyle, what post-modernism has brought is the deconstruction and rejection of old ideas, most of which still hold a lot of value.*

We see people clamoring to find their identity and they are coming up empty. When society is in that state, terrorism has an easier way of rising. Part of what Christianity does is give us a clear identity.

Finally, let's talk about how our light should shine as from *a city set upon a hill*. This is a dramatic picture! How does it work?

Always keep the most important thing THE MOST important thing - the Gospel of Christ!

2 Corinthians 4:3-6: (NASB) ³And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶For God, who said, Light shall shine out of darkness, is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.



The beacon we have points to Christ and in turn to God. The world looks at that and says, "I cannot see that. It is too bright and hurts my eyes. I am not looking."

But we are to preach Jesus - even if no one listens. Be bound to that message because it shines from the inside out.

In the Day of Reconciliation the world will see what Christianity stood for. The work you do now will have its effect later. You are investing light into the world. That investment takes time to mature.

Give light, and the darkness will disappear of itself. — Desiderius Erasmus

Satan poses as an angel of light because the kind of light he will show you is attractive and not so bright that it will hurt your eyes, but leading to a road that is dark.



We ARE God's light. This means that we should be *naturally* showing the world the meaning of true light in mighty contrast to the kinds of light that they naturally seek:

1 Peter 2:9-12: (NASB) ⁹*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; (This light has many facets and shines out in many different ways!)* ¹⁰*for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you have not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (This light is the embodiment of mercy and grace!)* ¹¹*Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.* ¹²*Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

For those people who made fun of you for your beliefs, they will be able to see the glory of God once they are raised in the resurrection. We are to stand above the ridicule.

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



The light we shine out is the light of the world because it is shining towards a new day when all will be resurrected. Transformation will follow! Our example in a dark world will be an inspiration.

*So, is Christianity really the light of the world?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*

*And now even more to think about...
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*



What was the first act of God upon this earth? It was to bring light!



Genesis 1:1-5: (NASB) *¹In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²The 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. ³Then God said, let there be light; and there was light. ⁴God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God 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.

Different lights for different tasks:

Genesis 1:14-19: (NASB) *¹⁴Then God said, let there be lights 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; ¹⁵and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth; and it was so. ¹⁶God 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. ¹⁷God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, ¹⁸and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good. ¹⁹There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.*

Three distinct lights, two of which are our light sources:

- The Sun: The direct light and energy that fosters all earthly life
- The Moon: A reflective light to guide us while darkness prevails
- The 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?

Luke 1:76-79: (NASB) *⁷⁶And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; For you will go on before the Lord to prepare His ways; ⁷⁷To give to His people the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins, ⁷⁸because of the tender mercy of our God, with which the Sunrise from on high will visit us, ⁷⁹To shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.*

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:

Psalms 37:4-6: (NASB) *⁴Delight yourself in the LORD; And He will give you the desires of your heart. ⁵Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He will do it. ⁶He will bring forth your righteousness as the light and your judgment as the noonday.*

We ran out of time! Here are various Scriptures that refer to light in various applications:

Psalms 36:7-9: (NASB) *⁷How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings. ⁸They drink their fill of the abundance of Your house; And You give them to drink of the river of Your delights. ⁹For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light, we see light.*

Psalms 43:3-4: (NASB) *³O send out Your light and Your truth, let them lead me; Let them bring me to Your holy hill and to Your dwelling places. ⁴Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy; and upon the lyre I shall praise You, O God, my God.*



Matthew 6:19-24: (NASB) ¹⁹*Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; ²¹for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. ²²The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. ²³But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! ²⁴No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.*