

TRUTH & LIGHT

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LIGHT SHALL SHINE OUT OF DARKNESS

“For 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,” 2 Cor.

4:6. This is the beautiful way in which the gospel works. When all seems dark and lost, the light of mercy and salvation is able to be found. From the very beginning of creation, God was demonstrating His love for bringing hope, grace, and love in the midst of the blanket of darkness where everything seems bleak and empty. From the very first verses of the bible we learn that when God created the earth it was formless and void and enveloped in darkness. And yet in that shapeless void of matter covered in the pitch black dark, the Spirit of God was there moving until suddenly a brilliant light emerged separating itself from

the darkness. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 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. Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light,” Gen. 1:1-3. God loves to show up and spill His glorious light over the darkest places of this world. It is when all seems hopeless and lost and dark that His light of salvation is best able to be seen. This is how the gospel of John introduces us to Jesus.

Following the same introduction from Genesis of the origin of God’s created earth, John tells us Jesus came to bring Light in the darkness. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him,

and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.

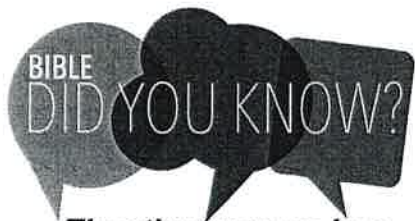
The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it,” Jn. 1:1-5.

This is how Matthew describes the beginning of Jesus’ preaching. Those who were sitting in darkness were visited by a great Light. “‘The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great Light, and those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, upon them a Light dawned,’ From that time Jesus began to preach and say, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,’” Mt. 4:16-17. This is what Paul is alluding to when he says, “Light shall shine out of darkness.” It is the great reminder that where the darkest hearts filled with the greatest sins are, the Spirit of God is there moving over the shapeless void wishing to bring the glorious Light of salvation into their lives. When we feel as if our lives are completely covered in darkness, alone, empty, and in despair God is there and able to bring us into the Light. It is only a matter of lifting the veil that Satan places over our eyes with his deceitful lies before we are finally able to see it. “...in 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,” 2 Cor. 4:4. This Light able to shine out of darkness is hope. It is the amazing truth of the gospel which says where nothing seems possible and all is hopelessly lost, the Light bursts through and takes hold and saves us. “And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach – if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from *the hope of the gospel that you have heard*, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister,” Col. 1:21-23. This is the very reason why when Jesus presents one of the worst-case scenarios for the possibility of someone being saved (being incredibly rich), He then says while with men this is impossible, it is not impossible with God. In other words, in the darkest possible condition of the hearts of men, there is hope for Light to come in! “‘It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom

of God.' They were even more astonished and said to Him, 'Then who can be saved?' Looking at them, Jesus said, 'With people it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God,'" Mk. 10:25-27. Let us never forget that it is out of despair that hope brings the light of salvation and new life. It was when the prodigal son fell into the lowest depths of darkness and loneliness that the light of hope changed the course of the direction of his life. Paul reminds us that when our lives have been darkened by the blackness and emptiness of sin and worldliness we are able to see hope through the gospel. "But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness," Rom. 6:17-18. What it is truly amazing is how the essence of how the light of the gospel came about through the resurrection of Jesus. There truly never was a darker day than the day Jesus was nailed to a cross and suffered in agony for our sins. Taken down from the cross, His lifeless body was put into a tomb and sealed shut by a large stone. It seemed all hope in a savior was lost, and

the three hour period of darkness during the crucifixion seemed to loom over the disciples for three whole days, feeling the sadness and darkness of loss and despair. Then three days later, the Light came! "And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said,'" Mt. 28:2-6. When all seems hopelessly lost, take courage that the hope of the Light of the gospel is able to shine through it.
— Daniel Ruegg



Timothy grew up in a spiritually divided home, yet chose to be faithful to God. "The son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a greek," Acts 16:1

BIBLE TRIVIA

C H A L L E N G E

DIRECTIONS: After searching through your Bible, circle which answer is correct.

1. When pride comes, then comes dishonor, but with the humble is ____:

- a) Pie
- b) Wisdom
- c) Riches
- d) Love

2. With his ____ the godless man destroys his neighbor, but through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.

- a) Slingshot
- b) Loud Music
- c) Mouth
- d) Drone

3. As a ring of gold in a swine's snout so is a beautiful woman who lacks ____:

- a) Money
- b) Deoderant
- c) Friends
- d) Discretion

4. Better is he who is lightly esteemed and has a servant than he who honors himself and lacks ____:

- a) Bread
- b) Buttons
- c) Hairspray
- d) A Monkey

5. He who tills his land will have plenty of bread, but he who pursues worthless things lacks ____:

- a) Balloons
- b) Sense
- c) Money
- d) Honor

6. The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the soul of the diligent is made ____:

- a) Thin
- b) Husky
- c) Chubby
- d) Fat

7. Leave the presence of a fool or you will not discern words of ____:

- a) Knowledge
- b) Anger
- c) Mystery
- d) Joy

8. He who despises his neighbor ____, but happy is he who is gracious to the poor.

- a) Dies
- b) Loses
- c) Hurts
- d) Sins

9. In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, and his children will have ____:

- a) Food
- b) Refuge
- c) Money
- d) Toys

10. Bread obtained by falsehood is sweet to a man, but afterward his mouth will be filled with ____:

- a) Lies
- b) Soap
- c) Pop Rocks
- d) Gravel

- 1) B, Reference: Prov. 11:2
- 2) C, Reference: Prov. 11:9
- 3) D, Reference: Prov. 11:22
- 4) A, Reference: Prov. 12:9
- 5) B, Reference: Prov. 12:11
- 6) D, Reference: Prov. 13:4
- 7) A, Prov. 14:7
- 8) D, Prov. 14:21
- 9) B, Prov. 14:26
- 10) D, Prov. 20:17

ANSWERS & VERSES: