

UNDERSTANDING THE CHILDREN OF LIGHT

“The light shines in darkness, but the darkness has not understood it” (John 1:5). It is not just the darkness that does not understand the light; many in the church do not understand it either. The first recorded words we have of God speaking is, “Let there be light,” and there was light” (Genesis 1:3). This was not only the announcement of physical light coming to the earth, but also a forecasting prophecy of Jesus coming to the world. Scripture says about Jesus, “The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world” (John 1:9). The Bible announces that, “In him was life, and that life was the light of men” (John 1:4). What does this mean, and how can we understand the explosive power of God’s light in us?

WALKING IN DARKNESS

“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). Without Jesus, all people are walking in darkness; they are living under the shadow of death.

Many people continuously make wrong choices, and their lives are completely messed up. They somehow exist on the very threshold of death. This is usually due to catastrophic sin that has led them to a life of addiction. Too many have abused themselves and have abused those around them as well. Their lifestyle is one of chaos, and without change, they are destined for complete ruin. Scripture makes it crystal clear, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23). It is amazing that many who live under this shadow of death, have not died already. It is only because of God’s mercy.

Many others, who have not received Christ, have not made such wrong choices. They are living successful lives, because they have followed the principles of Scripture without realizing it and have been blessed because of it.

Still, they are also living under the shadow of death, because only in Christ can one find eternal life. And while they seem okay, they are living far short of the glory and power that God has called everyone to experience and enjoy.

CHILDREN OF LIGHT

Jesus has extended the opportunity for everyone to become the children of God, and therefore children of light. Scripture says, “He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right [the power] to become children of God” (John 1:12). Jesus told us that he is the light of the world, but he also said, that we are the light of the world as well. We are



instructed to let our light so shine before men, that they might see our good works, and glorify our Father, who is in heaven.

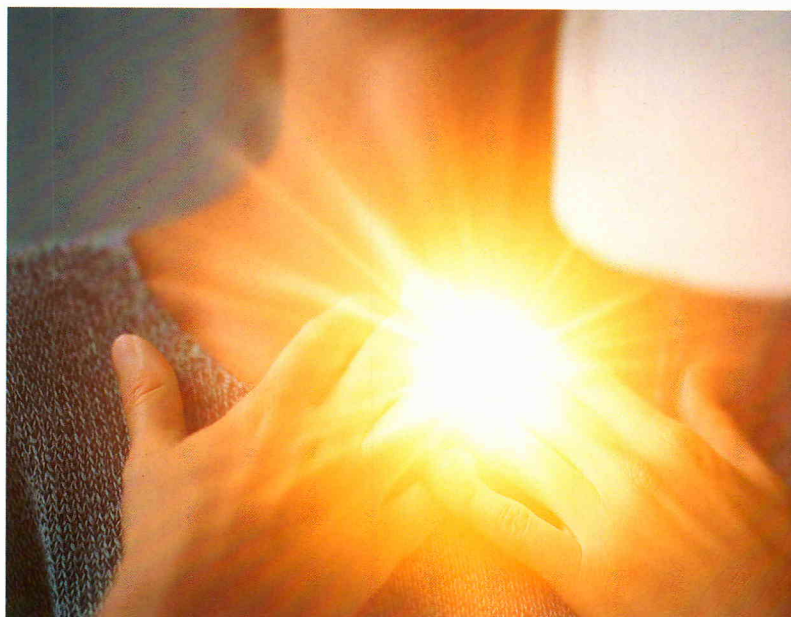
The other day, I was traveling to Ghana, Africa on British Airways. A steward was coming down the aisle, serving water and snacks. He was most engaging, telling jokes and making the travelers laugh. Later, I went to the back galley to get some water, and there he was, eating with half-a-dozen other crew members. I struck up a conversation. "You missed your calling," I said, "You should have been a stand-up comedian." He replied, "No, but I am from Virginia, and we do all things well. Virginia is the best state in the union." I told him that I have been going to Virginia every year for the past 22 years, and I stay in a 200-year-old, log house, on an 800 acre farm, with cattle and sheep. With all of the flight attendants listening, I asked if I could tell him a story. I proceeded to tell him that I was a pastor, and that I went to Virginia to preach. About 15 years ago, I had asked the farmers how things were going on the farm. They told me it was a terrible year; they had lost 42 sheep because of bears and coyotes. I prayed that this would stop immediately. The next year, when I returned, I was told they had only lost 2 sheep to predation. And they decided to give me a cow, butchered, and delivered to my home, 5 hours away. For the past 15 years they have only lost 2 sheep per year, and for the last couple of years, they had zero predation. I said, "God answered prayers."

Soon, the head stewardess, asked me to return to my seat. I do not think that the workers on the plane were believers, but as the Steward I had talked with was making a last run along the aisle collecting garbage, he leaned down and whispered in my ear. "Please sir," he said, "Would you pray for my daughter? She is 35 years old and has advanced cancer." I promised I would pray for her, and when the miracle comes of her healing, that family will give glory to God. The door has cracked open, and the light is shining through.

We are the children of light. We can change the situation when we enter a room. We bring light, where there is darkness. This is not because of our own greatness, but because of the power of God within us.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

The Bible tells us what we should do. It says, "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth)"



(Ephesians 5:8-9). It is not enough for us to receive the light; we must learn to live as children of the light. There is a power in us, because we have received Christ. We are now called to let our light shine. We need to understand the power of the light that is within us, and we extend that light to others.

STEPS TO TAKE

Ephesians tells us that the fruit of the light is goodness, righteousness, and truth. This is the order for sharing light. The first ray of light we send is goodness, kindness, love and blessings. Then, when people receive the goodness, they want to be righteous, and they will learn how. The third thing we give them is truth. Now, they are ready to hear the truth.

So many try to give truth first, but people in darkness cannot hear it; the kindness of God will lead them to repentance. As children of light, understand what you have, and do as Jesus did. Scripture says. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil" (Acts 12:38). Let your light shine. Give goodness, then righteousness, and then truth.

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