



Christmas Light: An Indescribable Gift

By Pastor Haywood A. Robinson, III

*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour,
which is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:11 (KJV)*

*The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone,
was coming into the world. John 1:9 (NLT)*



One of the inspiring activities of each Christmas season is the singing of beloved carols and hymns. Many of them contain poetic language describing the celebrated Christ-child, Jesus. *O, Little Town of Bethlehem* describes Him as a gift: “How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given! So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heaven.” The revered *Silent Night* refers to Him as “Son of God, love’s pure light.” Again, in *O Come All Ye Faithful*, this picture of deity and light is painted: “True God of true God, Light from Light Eternal, Lo, He shuns not the Virgin’s womb; Son of the Father, begotten, not created;” Another treasured carol is *Hark, the Herald Angels Sing*. Its second verse includes the following characterization of the Savior:

“Hail the Heaven-born Prince of Peace; hail the Son of Righteousness. Light and life to all He brings, risen with healing in His wings.”

The content of each of these songs is based on Scripture. The central biblical truth is this: In His Son, Jesus, God the Father has given a special gift to the world...the gift of light. Light, itself, is rather indescribable, isn’t it? Think about it. How would you describe it? Brightness? Radiance? I’m not so sure those terms really capture it. What we can describe is its impact, especially on darkness. Not only is darkness contrasted with light, it is consumed by it. Light can be most appreciated in environments where darkness once prevailed. And it was into such a world, bound by darkness, despair and death, that the babe of Bethlehem was born. No wonder the angel announced to the shepherds, “...I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior — yes, the Messiah, the Lord — has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David” (Luke 2:10-11 NLT). The apostle, John, recorded it this way: “The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world” (John 1:9 NLT).

Now, the world had known light before. At its dawning, the world was sheer darkness. In his sermon, *The Creation*, James Weldon Johnson says, “...as far as the eye of God could see, darkness covered everything, blacker than a hundred midnights, down in a cypress swamp” (*God’s Trombones*, 1927). Now that’s dark. Then, God spoke and gifted that barren world with light — Sunlight. Starlight. Moonlight.

Whatever light is and wherever it is, it works just as God intended. Whether lamplight, flashlight, headlight, traffic light, streetlight, or penlight, it has a similar effect. It disrupts, disperses and displaces the darkness. It illuminates the way, the space, the object, whatever is in its path.

Yes, the world is familiar with light. But, the Christmas Light was to be different — very, very different. This special gift is human. This light is a person — a living person, born of a woman. A divine person, born of God. A God-Person, born as God. Yes! "...And He shall be called Emmanuel, which means God with us" (Matt 1:23). Isaiah spoke of Him as Light (Isaiah 32:6). John wrote of Him as Light (John 1:9). Jesus spoke of Himself as Light (John 9:5). "I am the Light of the world" (John 8:12). Perhaps this personification of light is the most significant distinction of all. Again, Jesus said "While I am in the world, I am the Light of the World" (John 9:5).

During this season, not only do we celebrate Jesus' coming to be light in the world, but His coming to bring light into the world. Piercing the dense spiritual darkness of a world separated from God came the Son-Light. His presence illuminated God's heart for us and our hunger for Him. Through practically every aspect of His life, He revealed something of God's love, grace, mercy and overall commitment to us. Through Him we could now see our own wretchedness in light of His righteousness. Jesus said to His followers, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life" (John 8:12). And again in John 12:46, "I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness."

Finally, as we celebrate Christ's being light and bringing light, we give attention to His begetting light. Truly, Jesus is the uniquely indescribable gift. He alone is the original Christmas Light. However, we're mindful that He pointedly taught His disciples, "You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). As He prepared for His return to the Father, Jesus commanded and commissioned His followers to be light in and for the world in which they would live. Today, our lives must reflect the Savior's love, life and light for all people. As we comply with His command, many will discover that in Christ Jesus is life, and this life is the light of men (John 1:4-5). Through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, let us commit to be light, to bring light and to beget light throughout the world that many will discover that they have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light, if they would but answer the call. My friends, in the words of the familiar Christmas carol, let us, "Walk in the Light, beautiful Light. Come where the dewdrops of mercy shine bright. Shine all around us by day and by night. Jesus, the Light of the World!" Merry, Merry Christmas!