

**NEWS AND VIEWS**  
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*“Southern Baptists with the Full  
Gospel for the Whole World”*

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Ever notice how the first words someone says can usually reveal their purpose? Consider God’s purpose as we reflect on the birth of Jesus by asking the question... *Why* was He born? God’s stirring activity in the earth in Genesis 1 is accentuated when He says, *Let there be light* and there was light, and God saw that the light was good. With the invasion of sin in the life of humanity, God’s plan of illuminating the darkened soul is brought into focus with some of the first words in John’s Gospel. Concerning the incarnation of Jesus we read, *In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. (John 1:4)* In a very real way, the Lamb of God becomes the Lamp of God, not to be covered up and hidden, but on display, overcoming the darkness, bringing life to a deadened landscape. Like a city on a hill.

When you actually see a “city set on a hill,” the sight of it screams in the silence of night. A few years ago, I was privileged to go on a mission to Honduras. The capital city of Tegucigalpa is surely one of these cities set on a hill. When I saw the night lights shimmering like so much Christmas decoration adorning the hillsides, I could understand what Jesus meant when He said that one of these places could not be hidden. The most prominent display for a city on a hill is in dark times. There have always been times of darkness...but take heart...we have a God who works the night shift. Observe...

**I. WE FIND DARKNESS OCCURRING IN A NATURAL STATE.** Without light, it’s just the way things are. In the beginning, the world was dark and gloomy. Sometimes it still is. Without the supernatural nature of Christ influencing our lives, it is naturally dark. Humans will default to the dark side of things, taking a dim view. It’s the reason the Bible says that men love the darkness instead of the light. We can see that the unredeemed part of humanity still bears out the truth of that.

**II. LIGHT HELPS US SEE REALITIES.** It’s hard to see clearly in the dark. We cannot make good decisions about where we are going unless we can see where we are going. We can be oblivious to know the obstacles that are in our path unless we stumble over them or can see well enough to avoid them. Our vision in the darkness is lacking. Our night vision can be flawed unless we are aided with some outside illumination.

**III. LIGHT COMES FROM AN OUTSIDE SOURCE.** In Him is the Light of men. Jesus is the source of our illumination. And when we are “in Him” we have His light helping to see out into the darkness. His word is the resource for our lives. When we are in the darkness with Jesus, it is comforting to know that He is the light of men. That source of light is within us if we have received the Holy Spirit. We are given not only light in the darkness, but eyes to see the light.

**IV. LIGHT PRODUCES LIFE.** Nothing grows very much in darkness. God has designed the created order of things to grow in the light. Without light, nothing grows. Without growth, death comes. The light of Christ in our lives, our family, our workplace, and our church causes godliness to grow. Can you remember a time when you were the light of the world and brought God’s light to someone else?

So what are you doing this Christmas? Are you busy seeing all the lights or are you thinking about being some light? Would you think about someone whose life seems a little void of light this year? There’s a lot of sorrow and pain and disappointment in a lot of lives lately. *In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.* Take some time to bring the light of Christ into someone’s darkness. God’s purpose ... share Christ in you. In Christ, God has given us the Light of life to shine His light in someone’s darkened life.

Merry and Many Christmas Blessings to You,  
Pastor Sam