

# Let There Be Light

Message for Christmas Eve 2017  
by Bruce Fraser

**Scripture:** John 1:1-14; 8:12

## MESSAGE, PART 1

John's gospel does not talk about shepherds or Wise Men, or a baby born in a stable. Instead, he describes Jesus' birth as light coming into a dark world.

- ) Light helps us to see where we are going.
- ) Light can be very beautiful and joyful.
- ) Light helps things to grow.
- ) Light comforts us in the night.
  
- ) Jesus is light. He is all those things, and much much more.

Light is very important in our world. The very first spoken words in the Bible are about light:

*And God said, "Let there be light" [Genesis 1:3]*

What is light?

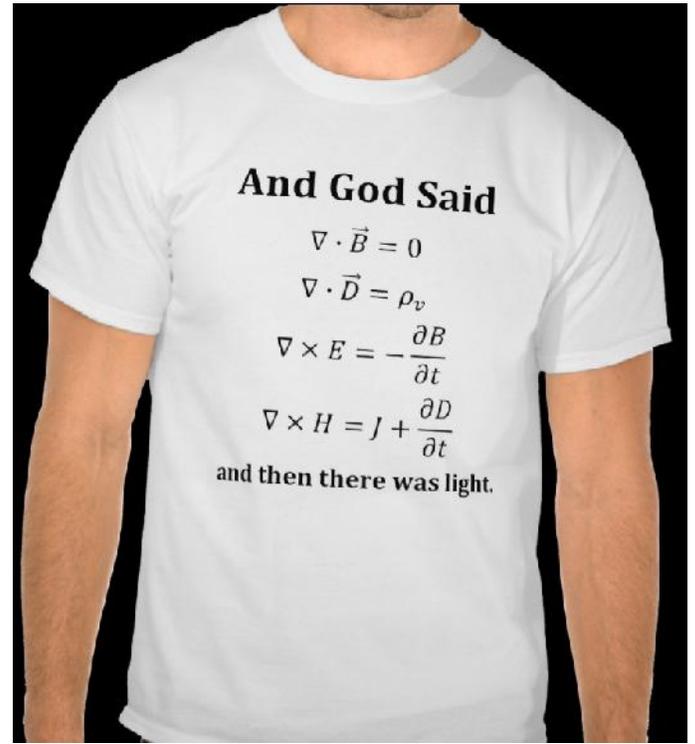
Ask for someone from the congregation to answer this question. They may say it's the opposite of dark; it's the beam seen in dust particles; it's what we see in a light bulb. These are merely telling what light isn't, or describing it's appearance. What *is* light?

In Job 38:19, Job ponders the mystery of light: "Where does light come from? Where does darkness live?"

What is light? An old scientific theory said that light was made of tiny particles. But then, how could light pass through solid glass? A later theory said that light was made of light waves, like soundwaves. But then if it has no weight, why does light coming from a distant galaxy bend as it passes the gravitational field of a black hole in space? For that matter, how can a light wave pass through the vacuum of space, with no water or air to support the wave?

Today, scientists strain to find words to describe what we think we know about light. They now say that light is made of photons, tiny particles yet no weight.

My brother Dave did his Ph.D. in physics at Western University in London, studying how light affects certain chemicals. He showed me this t-shirt which was a favourite among physics students there:



Those are Maxwell's equations, in case you didn't immediately recognize them.☺

Yet all these equations and theories only describe how light behaves, not what it is. When a child asks a simple question, "What is light?", we can only smile and say, "It's one of God's wonders. You don't need to understand it in order to enjoy it."

And isn't God's world full of wonders? And the most wonderful wonder of all is that God loves us.

We don't understand God's love anymore than we do light. Yet that does not stop us from enjoying God's love!

That's why we celebrate Christmas, why we celebrate Jesus: he came to show us in person God's love.

## MESSAGE, PART 2

We have five senses, yet our sense of sight is the most dominant. We can try this in an experiment. Close your eyes, so you are no longer using your sight. Be quiet. Listen. After a few moments, your

ears will begin picking up little sounds that you had not noticed before.

Your sense of touch is also heightened. Feel the weight of your pants or dress on your legs. Become aware of your breath going in and out.

These things are all happening constantly. Yet our senses are being bombarded by things demanding our attention, that the little things go unnoticed.

Isn't this what much of your life is like? Some things demand our attention, while the important things get taken for granted. In Philippians 4:8, Paul gives us a list of things to concentrate our senses and our lives on. I'll read that now.

*Read Philippians 4:8.*

### **MESSAGE, PART 3**

I said earlier that if we turn off the lights, our other senses are heightened. What if we turned off those senses also? People have done experiments like this. You go into a room with no windows, so there is no light. The walls and floor are padded, so there is no sound. You float still in a pool of warm water, so that you are touching nothing. The body is completely deprived of all sensations.

When these experiments have been done, the volunteer subjects quickly begin to hallucinate. The brain, when it is missing messages from the nerves, starts to make its own messages. The subjects beg for relief after just a few hours: they cannot stay sane without stimulation of the senses.<sup>1</sup>

It is not just our body that needs stimulation. So does the spiritual part of our life. Our souls thirst for meaning and purpose in life: God. Without that vital, life-giving presence, the void is unbearable. The soul starts to make its own gods to give meaning to life: money, sex, power. That's a gloomy, bleak way to live. Those are poor substitutes for the real thing.

This is what Jesus meant when he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never

walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" [John 8:12].

Jesus Christ said, "I am the light of the world." Can he also be the light of your life?

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Brand and Philip Yancey, *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*, p. 187.