

**Theme: SHINE**

**January 9, 2023**

**Message Title: The Light Of Mankind**

**Verses: John 1:4-5**

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GOOD MORNING! Every day is a new day and God's mercies are new every morning.

AMEN! It is such a privilege to stand before this body today. I am truly humbled to be with you today.

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LET'S PRAY!

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Today's message is titled **The Light of Mankind**

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**TODAY'S TEXT IS John 1:4-5**

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**PLEASE STAND AS WE SHOW HONOR TO OUR CREATOR FOR HIS PRECIOUS WORD.**

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**John 1:1-5**

**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

**<sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God.**

**<sup>3</sup> All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.**

**<sup>4</sup> In him was life, and the life was the light of men.**

**<sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

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## **THIS IS THE WORD OF THE LORD!**

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**We finished the year 2022 Dwelling, and I hope you are energized by the possibilities of the new year 2023. We are almost finished with January. We made it through January 24<sup>th</sup> which is consider the most depressing day of the year by many. It represents a convergence of several things such as the post-holiday let down, the holiday bills coming due, less daylight and colder, wetter weather. The perfect storm. Of course, there are many other issues in each of our lives. I hope to bring you what the Lord brought to me about your next steps.**

**Today's message will focus on the new theme here at Faith Fellowship- SHINE. I am privileged and honored to share what the Lord has revealed to me for this message.**

**While I am excited about looking to explore this new theme into the coming months, I would be remiss, if I did not explore the DWELL Theme just a bit more.**

**As has been shared each month last year, your time with Lord is critical. God instructs us to make that time a priority. It must go beyond just "reading" the Word of God. To know and grow, that time must go beyond a simple devotional. Don't get me wrong those things are good, but I believe God has something better in store for you when dig deep into His Word. Remember, people, which includes believers, say they believe many things; however, it is what we actually do that reflects what we truly believe.**

**For believers, we say that we believe in God. We say we know that Jesus is our Lord and Savior. We believe the Holy Spirit has been placed inside of us when we sincerely and intentionally give over our hearts to Jesus. Essentially, we are saying we love God. We are saying we love Him more than life itself. We are saying that we love Him more than other significant people in our lives including family and friends.**

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**We all some knowledge of who God is, don't we? How do we truly come to know Him? In any close relationships, people will have, is it not through time spent with person to truly understand who they are? Was it by short conversations taking only a few minutes a day? Spouses, close friends, co-workers, neighbors; it is all the same. What does it take to establish a close relationship with anyone? To love them? It takes time to get to know that person. The same can be said for God. We say we love Him. We all pretty much know of Him or know something about Him.**

**We say we want to know Him more especially this time of year with New Year's Resolutions and new devotional plans. We make new commitments to God don't we? I am first in line I can assure you. We say we love God, and if that is the case, what kind of time are we willing to spend in His Holy and Precious Word to come to truly know Him? What kind of time are we intent on spending in quiet prayer where we listen. These are questions we all must answer.**

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**Our quiet time ought to be relational. The Bible, as awesome as it is, is not a text book. It is not meant to be only an academic endeavor. Sure, to gain the knowledge is critical, but to truly know God, we must spend time with Him in His Word. Studying, meditating, piecing together this beautiful tapestry outlining the love letter from Our Creator. Amen?!**

**We ought to be in a mode of intentional, quiet prayer which is NOT simply outlining your list of wants and needs. (See A.C.T.S.- Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication). Listening is a key part of prayer and meditation. That is not our nature is it? Psalm 46:10- Be still and know that I am God.**

**Let me encourage you to keep after it. 2022 is behind us, yes. Make that commitment to continue to DWELL with the Lord. It'll be so worth it! If you have to re-start, then be encouraged. It is still January. The Lord is with you. Run to Him.**

**You see, the dwell time provides a deep connection to this year's theme of SHINE. Coming to know our God intimately will enable us to shine for Him to the world. Scripture tells us that He is the light of the world. The Light of Men. Let's resolve to put into practice our dwell time through how we live for the Lord. May our hearts and minds be open to the Light of Jesus shining through each and every one of you this year more and more. Please be encouraged. The Lord will see you through. Amen?!**

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**What does it mean to shine in a human sense?**

**To give out a bright light or glow or be bright with reflected light.**

**What is the point?**

**To see things, right? That something will be illuminated for us to see it.**

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**Well, we will look at today's theme from four (4) different angles.**

- 1. Recognize that Jesus is the light of the world and all mankind.**
  - 2. Recognize our inability to shine our own light.**
  - 3. Understand ways we must let the light of Christ shine through us.**
  - 4. Celebrate what happens when we let Jesus' light shine through us.**
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### **JESUS is the Light of the World and all mankind**

Let's begin with in the book of John 1:1-3

**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

**<sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God.**

**<sup>3</sup>All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.**

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John differs from the other three Gospels, known as the synoptic Gospels. Matthew wrote to Jews with a focus that Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecies. Jesus is the King of King! Mark seems to be writing to the Gentiles. He was presenting Jesus as the suffering servant who could minister to those in need. Luke wrote his Gospel for the Greeks and introduced Jesus as the Son of man, emphasizing Jesus' humanity. However, John, the

beloved disciple, writes to both Jews and Gentiles, presenting Jesus as the Son of God, emphasizing his divinity. That Jesus is God!

The first three Gospels describe events in the life of Jesus while John emphasizes the meaning of those events. John's Gospel is more of a theological argument for the deity of Jesus as opposed to a biographical view. John seems to use every event, every statement, every miracle to show us that Jesus is God. Amen!

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See John 20:30-31

<sup>30</sup> Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; <sup>31</sup> but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

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John wants us to believe Jesus is God. He writes with this as the clear purpose.

We must understand that Jesus is God. He was with God the Father at the beginning. When God said let there be light, Jesus was there. When review John Chapter 1, that is evident to us. "He was in the beginning with God."

That is the starting point. There is no separation between the Father and the Son. Anyone who states that they believe in God yet do not recognize Jesus as God is not talking about the same God.

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Which brings us to the light. God created light in Genesis 1: 3-5 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup> And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day."

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This was the first day of Creation. Interesting that the sun was not created until the fourth day of Creation in Genesis 1: 14-19.

<sup>14</sup> And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons,<sup>[1]</sup> and for days and years,<sup>15</sup> and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. <sup>16</sup> And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. <sup>17</sup> And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

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God is supernatural light which existed before the sun. Scripture also clarifies that there will be light without the sun in eternity.

Isaiah 60:19 - The sun shall be no more

your light by day,  
nor for brightness shall the moon  
give you light;  
but the LORD will be your everlasting light,  
and your God will be your glory.

Revelation 22:5 - <sup>5</sup> And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

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This demonstrates to us that light is more than a physical substance; it is supernatural. In the new heavens and the new earth, there won't be any sun or moon. God Himself will be the light. God does not change. He has always been the light. He continues to be the light and He will continue be the light.

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Now, let's look at Jesus as the life and light of the world from this month's memory verse.

**John 1:4-5**

<sup>4</sup>In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

<sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

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When we look at life, we know God created all life. He is our Creator. We know that Jesus was there at Creation.

**Psalm 139:13-14**

<sup>13</sup>For you formed my inward parts;  
you knitted me together in my mother's womb.

<sup>14</sup>I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.<sup>[a]</sup>

Wonderful are your works;  
my soul knows it very well.

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Jesus is life. He was life. He created life. Without Jesus there is no life!

John 1:4 goes on to clearly state that life is the light of men.

Follow this:

Jesus is life and life is the light of men. Therefore, Jesus is the light of men. Some translations read in "Him was the life, and the life was the light mankind." That resonates to me. It just stuck with me. It really represents all men, women and children. Mankind. God's creation. Jesus is the light of all mankind. That is how this message title unfolded. Praise God!

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So Jesus is life and light. Jesus gives us life. He is light. In John's Gospel message, he uses the term light on twenty-one different occasions. There is a clear connection to light and the deity of Jesus. At that time, it was common for Rabbis to teach using the term light interchangeably with Messiah which was promised to come to save the world. John is saying that Jesus is the light and he is actually saying that Jesus is the Messiah. Therefore, Jesus is God! How awesome is that?

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**John 8:12**

Again, Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

**John 9:5**

As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

**John 1:5**

<sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

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At creation, “darkness was over the face of the deep” (Genesis 1: 2) until God called light into being in verse 3. God’s new creation involved the casting out of spiritual darkness by the His supernatural light which shines in The Word for us to understand it.

Darkness is the absence of light; however, once the supernatural light of God shines the darkness cannot overcome it. This light leads the way for each of us. Jesus is the light. Therefore, Jesus leads the way for us.

**Psalm 119:105**

Your word is a lamp to my feet  
and a light to my path.

**The second point is for us to recognize our inability to shine our own light.**

On the cover page of the slides, we can see the verse that is foundation of our theme this year. **Matthew 5:16**. Let’s take a look at that verse and a couple before it.

**Matthew 5:14-16**

<sup>14</sup>“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

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**A lamp has to be lit to shine. A candle must have fire to be used. The moon has no light of its own. It reflects the sun to give off any light. A lightbulb gives not light until a greater source pushes through at the flick of a switch. Each of these examples require a light source greater than any of its own to shine. We are in the same state. We have no light of our own. You see our Creator gave us life because He is life. He is also light. It is only through Him that we have any light of our own. He is the source of life and light. For us to shine, we He must shine through us.**

**Psalm 36:7-9**

**<sup>7</sup>How precious is your steadfast love, O God!**

**The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings.**

**<sup>8</sup>They feast on the abundance of your house,**

**and you give them drink from the river of your delights.**

**<sup>2</sup>For with you is the fountain of life;**

**in your light do we see light.**

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**King David is pointing us to one point. We need the Light of God to see light. We need the light imparted into us that we can even see it. We certainly cannot have any true light of our own if we cannot see light without light. We are all the moon with no light of our own.**

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**Singer/ song writer Sara Groves said it so well:**

**You are the sun shining down on everyone  
Light of the world giving light to everything I see  
Beauty so brilliant I can hardly take it in  
And everywhere you are is warmth and light  
And I am the moon with no light of my own  
Still you have made me to shine  
And as I glow in this cold dark night  
I know I can't be a light unless I turn my face to you.**

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**Now we must make a choice. This is the third application today. We must be willing to let the light of God shine through us. This is a conscious decision. This is where your Dwell time becomes evident in you.**

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**Psalm 119:18**

**Open my eyes, that I may behold  
wondrous things out of your law.**

**Psalm 119:130**

**The unfolding of your words gives light;  
it imparts understanding to the simple.**

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**How will your eyes be opened to the teachings of the Lord? How will your eyes be opened? We need to dwell in the Word and in constant, intentional communication, listening and prayer. Back to the beginning about how we know someone - Intentional time spent. It is through this intentional commitment to prayer and meditating on God's Word that we can truly know Our Creator. Our eyes will be opened. It is here where the light of God can shine through us. It is here that the world can see the light and have their eyes opened as well. We become the clear, unsmudged window for others to see Jesus! It in these moments that we can shine for God!**

**That choice has incredible impact.**

## **2 Corinthians 4:3-6**

**<sup>3</sup> And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. <sup>4</sup> In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. <sup>5</sup> For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. <sup>6</sup> For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.**

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**Make no mistake. It is a choice. Can God shine through anyone He wishes? Of course, He can. However, it is our choice to follow Him, to know Him, to love Him, to be open to shining His light for His glory. This choice is what opens the door wide for the light of God to shine and open the veiled eyes of those who are blinded by the enemy.**

**Paul is essentially quoting Genesis 1:3 where God brought light into existence to the world.**

**We must remember that God created light in the physical world. Also, when we turn to Him, He will create light in us- Spiritual light. While the enemy's light is bright and often blinding, be encouraged. God's work in bringing forth the His light is far brighter and cannot be extinguished. Amen!**

### **So, Choose to Shine.**

**Examine your heart and intentions.**

**God knows your motives.**

**Seek His counsel.**

**Be Sincere, Real and Authentic.**

**Be Encouraging in words and actions.**

**Be in the Word day and night.**

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Now we turn to the last and most practical application for us to Shine for the Lord.

**Celebrate what happens when we let Jesus' light shine through us.**

There are many great results that are possible from the light of God shining through us.

I have outlined five (5).

1. **Others will see Jesus through us and many will desire to know Him.** Is that not a perfect place for someone to come to trust their lives to Jesus? Yes! Others are watching. Time to Shine!
2. **We will radiate and shine brilliantly the more you are seeking to know God intimately.** It takes time, but there is a difference. As we dwell and seek to understand the heart of God, we look different. We act differently. Our motives are different. Our desires are different. Our desire is for our will to line up with God's will. How awesome is that?
3. **The Fruit of the Spirit will be observable.** Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. Paul explains in **Galatians 5: 22-23** that against these there is law which means there is freedom for us.

**2 Corinthians 3: 17-18**

<sup>17</sup> Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. <sup>18</sup> And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom! What more can we want, if we are truly seeking God, but to reflect those amazing attributes of the Fruit of the Spirit? They will become more observable when we open up to shine for God.

4. **We will demonstrate a peaceful posture in difficult situations.** We will live and breathe as children of light. We will take less and less for granted. In order to shine, the Holy Spirit must be present. When the Holy Spirit is present inside us, we will see situations differently. We will see things with fresh eyes. As we walk in the Spirit- in the light of the Lord. Our responses to challenging moments will be an encouragement to others. We will respond in a way that is not of this world. After

all, the light we shine is supernatural isn't it?

5. **We will be moved to serve others and Our God.** There is no one in this room that has demonstrated more selfishness in life than me. As a matter of fact as I type this, I am literally in tears recognizing how foolish I have been even as recent as this week. However, the Holy Spirit is refreshing. He is encouraging. He is moving and inspiring. There is more and more grace for you and even for me. Praise God! We have been delivered! How can we not be moved to want to share that with others. To share with them the greatest story ever told. To share our testimony and to serve others for God's glory. Not for some selfish purpose. Jesus gave us the greatest most selfless act ever known. He came to save us from eternal separation. He came when we least deserved it. How can we not be moved to open to shine for His glory that one person might see His glory too?

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Jesus gave us His commandments to love God with our whole mind, heart, soul and strength and to love our neighbors as ourselves. He commanded us to obey Him and to go and make disciples of all nations. These things are not possible in our own strength. Left to fend for ourselves, we will never make it. Jesus takes the pressure off. We do not have to make it on our own. He makes it clear that without Him we can do nothing, but with Him anything is possible. How about that! The Creator of the Universe is offering you the opportunity to shine His supernatural light and show others both believers and non-believers the Light of God. So yes, Jesus is the Light of all mankind. Praise God!

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I would like to leave with this from a song that moves me every time I hear it. It's title is Even Me by a Christian Band named I am They. The name comes from John 17 where Jesus gives His Priestly Prayer for Himself, the Disciples and all believers then and to come. He refers to the believers as "they" in the prayer several times. They are they. We are they.

**Even Me**

**He knows my thoughts  
The things that no one sees  
He knows my heart  
It's every broken piece  
Somehow still I'm held by this one thing**

**He knows my past  
The choices I have made  
When I have wandered  
When I pushed away  
Somehow still I'm held by this one thing**

**Yes, Jesus loves me  
Even me, even me  
I stand forgiven and free  
Even me, even me  
Even me, yes even me**

**Nothing could ever stop this love  
Nothing could ever take it away  
My life was lost, His life He gave  
Even to the grave, even to the grave  
Even to the grave**

**Yes, Jesus loves me  
Even me, even me**

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**WORSHIP TEAM**

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**Lord bless you all!**