

3 Ways Jesus Can Light Up Your Christmas and New Year

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you” (Isa. 60:1).

A few weeks ago, two of my little grandsons spent the night with me. When I was tucking them in, they asked for a night light because it was too dark in the room. I quickly found a night light and plugged it in, only to realize that it was some type of spinning light—kind of like a disco light in a tiny bulb. The 3-year-old old began to dance on the bed, and the 6-year-old jumped up and exclaimed, “Wow, Mimi that’s so cool!” Everyone was ready to party! It was as if we had our own light show in Mimi’s bedroom! Not exactly the atmosphere for going to sleep.

My party light got me thinking about Jesus as the light of the world. Years before Jesus’ birth, the prophet Isaiah wrote, “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you” (Isa. 60:1). When the children of Israel were wandering in the desert, the Lord led their way with a pillar of light by night—it was the *shekinah* glory of God.

Many generations later, Jesus came, possessing all the glory of God. During the feast of tabernacles—a Jewish celebration remembering how God led them through the wilderness—Jesus stood emphatically declaring, “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12). His meaning was crystal-clear: I who stand before you am God. I was there then leading you, and I am here now!

As I think about Jesus as the light of the world, there are several profound implications for you and me as we head into 2019:

This is not the time for complacency; arise and shine. This is

not the moment in history for you to just coast. This is *your* moment in history to *shine* with the love of Christ. Who are you praying for to know the love of Christ? Who are you loving unconditionally to show the love of Christ? Who are you telling your story of how Jesus has changed your life? Listen, God's not finished until every last person on earth has heard the story of His love and forgiveness, and He has chosen you to shine with His love (Matt. 5:14-16). As you enter 2019, shine, baby, shine! Let the world around you see something different in you. Don't preach. Demonstrate the love of Christ.

As the light of the world, His presence and power go with you into 2019. The darkness can feel overwhelming, and at times it brings a sense of hopelessness. Friend, there is hope because Jesus goes with you into 2019. His presence, power, and promises are all yours through His Holy Spirit. All that you need He will provide. Whether direction or provision, He's got you! His glorious presence goes above you and beneath you, before you and behind you. You are completely hemmed in by Him and "even the darkness will not be dark to you" (Ps. 139:12a, NIV).

Celebrate His light. Like my little sweet grandsons, once you realize the light has come you can't help but party. Celebrate! Take joy in His light. Praise Him daily. Dance for joy. He illuminates the path before you (Ps. 119:105). The unknowns of 2019 are known by Him. He is already in tomorrow, so you can celebrate.

Merry Christmas, dear friend. Celebrate! Your light has come.
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This article originally appeared at .