
LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Over Coming Darkness

Christmas a Wonderful Time?

To some extent and for some part of our own story it's true. I've heard it said that Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year, but for many people it's complicated. For the most part it is wonderful, but it can also be terrible. It's easy to see where darkness gets in, even to a time like Christmas.

Christmas can exaggerate all the bad things, and at the same time point us to something that is absolutely incredible.

Pastor Andy Stanley says – “Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year but not because of what is happening around us, but what has happened for us.”

Light and Life for All

In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.

JOHN 1:4

John's Gospel account does not give us the normal Christmas narrative. John's description of Jesus is an expansive and an all-inclusive eternal picture of hope and purpose.

John is trying to get the message out that Jesus came for ALL mankind. He brought life and light to everyone.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

JOHN 1:5

John knows what darkness looks like. The darkness of the oppression John had experienced was very real and almost incomprehensible to us. It's with this back drop, that John still refers to Jesus as a light that not only is their life but a light that shines in the darkness, a light that is not able to be extinguished by the darkness.

No matter how dark the depression, no matter how dark the oppression, no matter how dark the pain and suffering may be, there is a light that brings life that cannot be overcome by the darkness no matter how thick the darkness appears.

With all that is going on in this world, with all the darkness that has tried to extinguish the light, the light has overcome it.

We are reminded at Christmas that through it all – Jesus is the life and light who overcomes the dark.

A New Perspective

It's not what you're looking at, but how we're looking at it that really matters. No matter how dark it is today – no matter your financial situation, your family situation, your emotional or physical situation may be – you don't have to be afraid of the dark.

In times of uncertainty, times of discouragement, times when it seems like hope is dim, be encouraged: the light has come and overcome!

“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

There is always hope. There is always a reason to believe. There is a God who hears our prayers and has made a way. Don't give up, put your trust in Jesus who brings light and life.

What makes this the most wonderful time of the year is not necessarily what is happening but what has happened when our Heavenly Father sent His son, Jesus into the world. Because in Him is life and light. If you need to find a way through your darkness, it's Jesus. If you need to find life, it's Jesus.

PRAY

Father God, thank you for giving Jesus to us as the one and only source of true light and life. I confess that I have walked in darkness and that even by my own decisions I have ignored You, gone my own way, and in doing so I have sinned against You. Father, forgive me, I need you Jesus, I need life found only in You. I give my life to you, come Light of the World, and lead me in Your everlasting ways.

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways is Christmas a complex and complicated time for you?
2. Discuss Pastor Andy Stanley's comment – "Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year but not because of what is happening around us, but what has happened for us."
3. Share testimony of how Jesus has been your life and light in times of darkness.
4. What can we consistently do in our walk with Jesus to keep perspective in times where it feels like darkness is encroaching?
5. Share what the reality of Christmas looks like for you and your family. Pray for one another that we might bring light and life into our own Christmas celebrations.