

# Where Does God's Light Shine ?

Sermon Notes for Jan 14, 2018 at Brentwood

Psalm 72:1-14 (522) & Isaiah 60:1-6 (676)



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

## Provocative Ponderings that Call Forth Our Potential in Christ

I had a dear colleague in ministry who suffered from SAD (seasonal affective disorder) – it's a depression that emerges from the lack of bright light, especially in the morning during the winter – a complex series of factors that are not well-understood, according to the *WebMD* – but it's symptoms are clear – feeling miserable and cranky – those aren't the words used to describe it on *WebMD*! – the best treatment that has been found so far is exposure to full-spectrum light through special light bulbs – full-spectrum light that activates all the dynamics of flourishing in the human body – I thought of that this week as I was working on this sermon and think it's a good image to keep in mind as we explore where God's light shines through our lives in our world – very briefly, we'll look at the context of the people who would have heard these words in Isaiah originally, summarize an answer to our sermon question, and suggest key places where God's light shines in our lives

- The text is from the prophet Isaiah – these later chapters are addressed to the people of Israel after they have returned from exile in Babylon – now what do we do? – how do we rebuild our lives? – where is God's light shining now that our freedom has been restored? – what do we do in gratitude for this gift of liberation?
- At the heart of God's answer is our text this morning – let the energy of my light shine through everything you do – that's a daunting mission – is God really serious here, or is this just some kind of deluded desperate wish on the part of religious leaders trying to maintain control? – God really is serious here – full freedom, full-spectrum light, finally comes among us in Jesus, the Christ – that's what the season of Epiphany is all about – God's light in the world – shining on and through those who are living in humble loyalty to the true source of all life
- The simple answer to our sermon question this morning is everywhere – that's why the doctrine of creation is so important for the Judeo-Christian communities – this God created and is still creating all that is – and we have a special responsibility in shedding this light

*Notes for a sermon preached by Brian Fraser,  
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- Let's just think for a moment where we might take up that responsibility within our circles of influence – the three that seem most important to me are 1) our own awareness of the brightness of God's light in our own lives, illuminating what God wants us to do with our lives in the service of the flourishing of God's whole creation – keep this at the centre of our awareness by pondering the witness of the Scripture to this God and prayer, perhaps first thing in the morning as we awake to that day's opportunities; 2) simple smiles – eye contact accompanied by a smile – see how it changes the quality of passing encounters, let along the more important relationships in our lives; 3) challenging the energies of darkness that we encounter daily by offering alternatives ways of seeing and doing things that reflect more faithfully the light of God's loyalty to the flourishing of creation

### **So, what are we going to do with this ...**

As we said last week in this 'So what?' summary of the sermon, there is a brightness and bounty to God's presence that is worthy of our renewed attention – we can, with the help of the Holy Spirit, let God's light dispel our SADness, burn the fog of our fears away – we can, with the help of the Holy Spirit, become a beacon of flourishing in the world, no matter how dark things seem – we can, with the help of the Holy Spirit, join the Holy Trinity's dance of love for the creation and brighten everything around us – now we'll let Dan and ..... get our souls tapping with the beat of that brightness

### **Your Notes ...**

### **Today's Framework for our Prayers**

**Thanks** – for dispelling our SADness with the light of your love in every dark space in our lives ... [a time of silent prayer]

**Help** – in tapping into the resilience nourished by your brightness so that we can beam brightly with your compassion and courage ... [a time of silent prayer]

**Awe** – at how illuminating your light is as it shines its love on all the dark places in our lives ... [a time of silent prayer]