

LET GOD ARISE!

The Good Shepherd #2

Prayer Guide for the Season after Epiphany • Rev. Dr. Don L. Davis



Let Your Light Shine Matthew 5.13-20

Jesus Bids Us Shine

Susan B. Warner (1819-1885)

Jesus bids us shine
With a pure, clear light,
Like a little candle
Burning in the night.
In this world of darkness
So let us shine—
You in your small corner,
And I in mine.

Jesus bids us shine,
First of all for Him;
Well He sees and knows it,
If our light grows dim.
He looks down from Heaven
To see us shine—
You in your small corner,
And I in mine.

Jesus bids us shine,
Then, for all around;
Many kinds of darkness
In the world are found—
Sin and want and sorrow;
So we must shine—
You in your small corner,
And I in mine.

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The Revealing God of Glory

The Word Made Flesh Makes the Father Known to the World

John 1.1-18 – In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [2] He was in the beginning with God. [3] All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. [4] In him was life, and the life was the light of men. [5] The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

[6] There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. [7] He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. [8] He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

[9] The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. [10] He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. [11] He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. [12] But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. [13] who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

[14] And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. [15] (John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”) [16] And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. [17] For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. [18] No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

The Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation Given to the Church

Eph. 1.15-23 – For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, [16] I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, [17] that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, [18] having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the



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riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, [19] and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might [20] that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, [21] far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. [22] And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, [23] which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Isa. 28.16 – Therefore thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: ‘Whoever believes will not be in haste.’”

The Eternal Son of God Has Been Incarnated in the Flesh, Made Manifest in and to the World

John 1.1 – In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Rom. 1.3-4 – concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh [4] and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rom. 9.5 – To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

1 Cor. 15.47 – The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven.

Gal. 4.4 – But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law.

Phil. 2.6-8 – Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, [7] but made himself nothing, taking the



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form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, [8] he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

1 Tim. 3.16 – Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.

Heb. 2.11 – For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one origin. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers.

Heb. 2.14-17 – Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, [15] and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. [16] For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. [17] Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

Heb. 10.5-7 – Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; [6] in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. [7] Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.’”

1 John 4.2-3 – By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, [3] and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.



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2 John 1.7 – For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.

The Lord God Reveals to Gentile Magi the Appearing of the Son of God

Matt. 2.1-12 – Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, [2] saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” [3] When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; [4] and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. [5] They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: [6] ‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.’” [7] Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. [8] And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” [9] After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. [10] When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. [11] And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. [12] And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

The Prophets Foretold That, though of Humble Birth, the Babe of Bethlehem Will Be King of Israel and the World

Ps. 2.6 – “As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.”

Isa. 9.6-7 – For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called



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Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. [7] Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Isa. 32.1-2 – Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule in justice. [2] Each will be like a hiding place from the wind, a shelter from the storm, like streams of water in a dry place, like the shade of a great rock in a weary land.

Jer. 23.5 – “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. [6] In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: ‘The Lord is our righteousness.’”

Zech. 9.9 – Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Matt. 21.5 – “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.’”

Luke 2.11 – For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Luke 19.38 – saying, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”



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Luke 23.3 – And Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” And he answered him, “You have said so.”

Luke 23.38 – There was also an inscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.”

John 1.49 – Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

John 12.13 – So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!”

John 18.37 – Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world— to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”

John 19.12-15 – From then on Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.” [13] So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. [14] Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” [15] They cried out, “Away with him, away with him, crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.”

John 19.19 – Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.”



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Jesus, the Messiah Is a Light to the Gentiles

Isa. 49.5-6 – And now the Lord says, he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him; and that Israel might be gathered to him—for I am honored in the eyes of the Lord, and my God has become my strength—[6] he says: “It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”

Matt. 12.15-21 – Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. And many followed him, and he healed them all [16] and ordered them not to make him known. [17] This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: [18] “Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles. [19] He will not quarrel or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets; [20] a bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench, until he brings justice to victory; [21] and in his name the Gentiles will hope.”

Isa. 11.10 – In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.

Rom. 15.12-13 – And again Isaiah says, “The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope.” [13] May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

Col. 1.27 – To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ■



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Let Your Light Shine

Matt. 5.13-20 – You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet. [14] You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. [15] 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. [16] 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. [17] Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. [18] For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. [19] Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. [20] For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

“IF YOU were a lamp, how would you describe the brilliance of your shine?

Are you dull? Are you bright? Are you off?

Jesus in his great manifesto of the Kingdom of God, the Sermon on the Mount, declared to his disciples that they were the salt of the earth, the light of the world. As salt, they enriched and preserved all that was good and gracious that is in the world, and as light, they were to shine before others that they might see their good works and glorify God the Father. Make no mistake. A city set on a hill, Jesus declares, cannot be hidden. Nor do folk light a lamp and then stash it under a basket. Light is for display, for shining, for glow.



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Light, a Key Biblical Symbol

The imagery of light is so pervasive in the Scriptures that one would be hard pressed to overlook its presence everywhere in them. As Ryken comments on the imagery of physical light in his master Dictionary of Biblical Imagery:

Not surprisingly, the poets of the Bible give us the most rapturous pictures of the life-giving and illuminating properties of physical light. The nature poetry of the Bible and the psalms of praise are the greatest repository: God has “prepared the light and the sun” (Ps. 74.16 KJV); God covers himself “with light as with a garment” (Ps. 104.2 RSV); God’s omnipresence is so powerful that “darkness is as light with thee” (Ps. 139.12 RSV). The ultimate praise of light comes from the pen of an author who is mistakenly considered by some to be a nihilist: “Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to behold the sun” (Eccles. 11.7 RSV). If the birth of light energized the Bible’s stories of origin, the extinguishing of light is one of the notable archetypes in the Bible’s apocalyptic visions of the end. In the OT visions we read that “the stars of the heavens . . . will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising” (Isa. 13.10 RSV) and that the heavens will have no light (Jer. 4.23). The NT concurs: “The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven” (Matt. 24.29 RSV); “The light of a lamp shall shine in thee no more” (Rev. 18.23 RSV).

Light is a dominant image given of God, of righteousness, of saints, of goodness, and of truth. In the OT, light is instrumental in every phase of the Tabernacle and Temple worship, with the symbolism of the menorah of Christ as light. In the NT, too, light shines through in every scene of God’s great story: in the nativity of Jesus, with the glory of the angels who appeared to the shepherds (Luke 2.9), and the star that shone its glory to lead the devout, seeking Magi to the place where Mary and Jesus lived (Matt. 2.9-10). When the vicious Saul goes to Damascus to kill disciples of Jesus, it was a light from heaven that appeared all around him (Acts 9.3), and before Peter is



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miraculously rescued from his prison cell, a supernatural light shone in the place where he was held (Acts 12.7). Truly, God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all (1 John 1.5), and in his light do we see light.

God and Light: A Critical Analogy

Importantly, light is used as a symbol of God before it is used as a symbol of his people. Again, Ryken suggests of light:

Light also symbolizes God. In the OT we find the evocative image of “the light of [God’s] countenance” (Ps. 4.6; cf. Num. 25-26). Isaiah’s vision of the final triumph of goodness includes the assertion that “the Lord will be your everlasting light” (Isa. 60.19, 20). The most succinct statement is found in 1 John 1.5: “God is light and in him is no darkness at all” (RSV). James speaks of God as “the Father of lights” (James 1.17). Elsewhere God is simply associated with light as an image of divine glory: he covers himself “with light as with a garment” (Ps. 104.2); “his brightness was like the light” (Hab. 3.4); “the light dwells with him” (Dan. 2.22). Ezekiel’s vision of the divine chariot (Ezek. 1) is a riot of brightness, flashing fire, shining jewels and gleaming metals. By extension, God who is light inhabits a heaven bathed in light. Here light becomes the preeminent symbol for transcendence, dear to the mystics’ and poets’ expressions through the ages. The classic passage is 1 Timothy 6.16, which speaks of God as the one “who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light” (RSV). Colossians 1.12 speaks of the believer’s being qualified “to share in the inheritance of the saints in light” (RSV).

Yes, indeed, God is light, and Jesus is light, the light that is the light of men, the true light that shines upon everyone in the world (John 1.4,9). Jesus is the light of life, the light of the world: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8.12). This is significant for us who want our little lights to shine. We have no light in and of ourselves. Like the moon, all our light is reflected from our



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following our Lord, from our regeneration and adoption into God's family through our faith in Jesus Christ. We shine because he shines through us.

Who among us has not been heartened when, in the cover of darkness, afraid of what was lurking in the shadows, we were encouraged when a light pierced through the blackness, and we were able to see our way clear again? How many of us have been discouraged in the middle of the night, to have an entire change of attitude and outlook when the morning came? Who is able to sustain their cheer and hope in a world so bleak and sad because of the darkness and shadow of this world's lust, pride, and greed? Truly, all of us, everywhere, have been touched by the power of the light – to illumine, to cheer, and to guide.

The Church as a Community of Light

What is so challenging this Church Year season to realize is that we are seen as the light; we are the light of the world, the city set on a hill, a lamp set on a lampstand to provide light to everyone in the house. In the cities of the nation and the world, disciples of Jesus are a community of light, a people who are meant to shine. Because we have been transformed by the Spirit through our faith in Christ, we now can come to the light, in order that it may be clearly seen that our deeds have God himself as their source (John 3.21 RSV). We who believe are an amazing people now; having been in the shadows, having walked in darkness, having been under the dominion of the devil in the kingdom of darkness (Col. 1.12-14), we now have been called out of darkness through faith in the Son of God and called into his "marvelous light" (1 Pet. 2.9). Now, according to Paul, rather than being under the power of darkness, we actually expose all things through the light that God emits through us:

Eph. 5.7-14 – Therefore do not become partners with them; [8] for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light [9] (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and



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right and true), [10] and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. [11] Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. [12] For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. [13] But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, [14] for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

While it may seem incredible, God now shines to the entire world through his people. Through us he makes his glory and beauty known, his word clear, his Son displayed, and his will revealed. We are sons of light and sons of the day (1 Thess. 5.5). We are exhorted by our Lord to let our lights shine because we are in fact the light of the world (Matt. 5.14). We simply need to allow the light of the Lord to so shine in the presence of others that people can see our good works of hospitality, generosity, and goodness, and give glory to the Father who is in heaven (Matt. 5.16).

This Little Light of Mine, in My Corner of the World

In this day of darkness and discouragement, of hurt and sickness, of selfishness and pride, what a challenge it is for people to shine their little lights in the corners where the Lord has placed them, quietly glowing, overcoming the shadows all around us. Light is silent but sweet, gentle but potent, demure yet piercing the blackness and shadows wherever the dominion of darkness needs to witness the Kingdom of God’s beloved Son (Col 1.13).

During this Season after Epiphany where we celebrate Jesus as the Light of the world, let us burn and shine in the places in the city where no light has shined before. Let us quietly and constantly glow, exposing the works of the world, and revealing to all the beauty of the Father in the works, wonders, and witness of the Kingdom in our lives and homes, and in our works and our ministries. Let us be unassuming, unashamed, undeterred, always aglow for the One who is the Light of life.



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Are you hiding your light under a bushel basket? Are you manifesting the glory of the Father in the corner where you are?

“This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine. Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.” ■

**The Season after Epiphany: The Manifestation of Christ –
Let Your Light Shine That All Can See through Your Good Works and
Give Glory to the Father**

As we enter into this new Church Year season, let us open ourselves afresh to the leading and infilling of the Holy Spirit, the One through whom our Lord was conceived, and through whose divine power the God-man was born. Only as we yield without condition or qualification to the Holy Spirit can we become the kind of vessels in whom the Messiah will be born, and through whom his glory and honor will be seen. Immanuel comes through the yielded virgin daughter, broken before her Lord who conceives the Messiah within her, and through whom he comes into the world. May we too, with full assurance of faith, so surrender to the leading of the Holy Spirit in order that the same Lord might be seen in us, and through us, come to be seen and heard among our friends, family, neighbors, and associates.

Matt. 5.14-16 – You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.[15] 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. [16] 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.

Biblical Principle of the Season: Let Your Light So Shine

As children of the light and of the day, God has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. Now, through our union with God and his Son, we are the light of world, commissioned to demonstrate through our words and



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works the Kingdom of light into which we have been brought. No longer can we become the partners of the children of darkness, nor participate in their works and ways. While at one time we were darkness, now, through Jesus, we are light in the Lord, and are called to walk as children of light. As we follow the Good Shepherd in this Season after Epiphany, let us bask in the light of the Lord, and let our lights shine for all to see, that God may be glorified in all things.

Rom. 13.11-14 – Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. [12] The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. [13] Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. [14] But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

An Example of This Season's Teaching: The Thessalonians

1 Thess. 5.5-10 – For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. [6] So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. [7] For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. [8] But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. [9] For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, [10] who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.



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