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"Shine it into their lives"

By Rev. Edgar F. Solís

Intro.

A gentleman was walking one day in the east end of the city of Glasgow.

The streets were so narrow, and the houses so high that little direct sunshine ever reached the houses on one side. The gentleman noticed a ragged, barefooted boy trying, with a small piece of mirror, to catch the sun's rays and direct them to a certain spot on one of the houses opposite. He became interested in the boy's earnest efforts.

"What are you trying to do, little boy?" he asked.

"Do you see yon window up there?" the boy replied. "Well, my wee brother had an accident two years ago and is always lying on his back in yon room, and it is on the wrong side to get the sunshine, so I always try to catch the light in this wee glass and shine it into his room."

How important it is to receive the light, and how crucial it is to share it!

What would happen if our planet lacked the element of light?

Could you imagine a world with no light?

Associate professor of Biology at Eastern University in Pennsylvania, Rebecca Hays wrote about light.

"Light is foundational to almost all life on earth. Quite simply, life as we know it could not exist without light. Light is foundational, and yet we treat it so simplistically.

We think about light in terms of what we can see, but there are so many wavelengths of light that we cannot see.

We could not exist without light, and yet we so often only think about light in the context of sunny days or lights turned on and off in our homes.

Light is necessary to all life. Plants use light in photosynthesis to create sugars that sustain life.

Without light, any life that existed on earth would be quite different.

There might only be life in hot springs and hydrothermal vents.

The existence of humans, dogs, flowers, or birds would be uncertain.

But, if by some miracle we did have humans, there would be shocking differences.

We wouldn't need eyes to see if there was only darkness.

There would be no color.

There would be far less beauty in the world.

Life would be radically different in every way without light.

Light not only illumines our way but sustains the beauty of our world as we know it.

Bible Context.

In the Gospel of John, the life and light symbolize ways in which God and the Word (Jesus) are present to sustain the creation and give direction to humanity.

In today's Bible passage, we can notice this tension.

Light and darkness.

However, a powerful sentence is more than remarkable. *The darkness does not overcome the light.*

Theological Reflection

Now, in the Christian disciple, the importance of light becomes incredibly profound when we consider that we are Jesus' followers. We enjoyed the lessons, carols, and special music in our candlelight Christmas service, but how powerful it was to remember that a small candle can spread a small light that defeats the darkness. Now, let's remember, if the light is shared, the sum of all the lighted candles makes its way to illuminate the entire sanctuary! The same happens with the light of Jesus in each one of us. Yes, you and I are the light of the world! (Matthew 5:14-16). Remember that in other parts of the Scripture, Jesus calls us to illuminate the way for others and to sustain the beauty of the world around us — just as physical light does.

Our call to "be light" plays as necessary a role as light itself."

Conclusion

Do you remember the short story that I shared at the beginning of my message?

Let's recall the phrase of this little one trying to share the light of the sun with his little mirror to his brother:

He said, "I always try to catch the light in this wee glass and shine it into his room."

In what ways are we catching or reflecting God's light to others in our lives, with our family, in our community? God can use our tiny mirrors to illuminate people that live in the darkness! You don't have to have a gigantic mirror; you don't have to have a fancy or luxurious mirror. You need to have the little mirror of your willingness, good deeds, and goodwill, to reflect Jesus to others! Let's shine with the light of Jesus into the hearts of people suffering in the darkness!

Amen!