

## 1 Peter 2:4-10 Part H

1Pe 2:9 (NKJV) **But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; <sup>10</sup> who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.**

The word for “**light**” is a very important New Testament word. The word “**light**” in this sentence is called a prepositional object, and what makes that important is that it constitutes the main meaning of the sentence. This is that towards which Peter is driving. This is where Peter is primarily headed. This is what he wants his readers to both see and understand. He wants these believers to fully recognize and understand that they are now in the most coveted place that they could ever be or ever imagine to be. They use to live a life that was carefully calibrated and controlled by Satan to deceive them at every level, but now his deception and lies have been totally exposed and neutralized. So, rather than living under the constant influence of Satan’s deception, the believer is now living under the constant influence of God’s truth. What the unbeliever can never see or perceive, the believer is able to see clearly and fully. What the unbeliever can never understand on their own, the believer can clearly and fully understand. The unbeliever is completely and unknowingly engulfed, overwhelmed, and consumed by that which is deceptive, false, and evil. The believer is completely and knowingly influenced and controlled by that which is godly and spiritual. The contrast is literally a contrast between light and darkness, good and evil, sin and righteousness.

The Greek word for “**light**” is “*phos*”, and in its use in v9, it is used figuratively to mean moral and spiritual light and knowledge which enlightens the mind, soul, and conscience.<sup>1</sup> It is knowledge, awareness, comprehension, realization, understanding, and wisdom that is given to the believer by God. It is not something that can simply be learned by an education or something that can be learned by one’s own intellectual prowess. The make-up and character of this word is that it is purely “spiritual” in nature. I.e., it is something that is given to someone by the Holy Spirit. It is “of the Spirit”. So, if someone lacks the Spirit of God in their life, then they simply cannot and will not be able to receive God’s “**light**”. Unless God supernaturally intervenes in a lost person’s life to enlighten them to salvation, they cannot have and do not have God’s spiritual “light” operating in their life. They cannot make the correct spiritual assessments. They do not have the capacity to make godly judgments. They are children of the darkness, and they have been blinded by the “**god of this world**”. They have been blinded by Satan and God’s light has not been revealed to them. They are in an awful, awful place from which very few ever escape.

As used figuratively in the Scriptures, “**light**” is what enlightens, teaches, clarifies, educates, and edifies. It is what gives the individual understanding, wisdom, strength, courage, help, and hope. However, it can only come from God. The problem that many Christians have in this area is really very simple, yet something of which they are unconscious. It is when they assume that their familiarity with the truth equals God’s light. Just come to church, hear God’s Word being taught, go home happy and satisfied – just being familiar with the truth, what it says, and even understanding some of what it means. As believers, we have been incredibly blessed. We have been reshaped by God and the power of the Holy Spirit in such a way that we can receive God’s spiritual “**light**”, God’s truth. The issue, however, is that

God’s “**light**” is something that the believer needs all the time, every day, and in every situation. So, just being familiar with God’s truth is never a substitute for the enlightenment, the clarification, and the instruction that the Holy Spirit wants to give to the believer on a constant basis. If I can say it this way, knowing truth and receiving “**light**” are two totally different things. When I am studying, I do not just want more knowledge. I want God to speak to my life in such a way that it builds me up, it edifies my life, it speaks to me, it corrects me, it reproves me, and it challenges me. [Ephesians 5:8](#) says,

**Eph 5:8 (NKJV) For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.**

I.e., “**you are light**”, so “**walk as children of light**”. The word “**walk**” is an imperative mood, present tense, active voice verb. Being in the present tense makes it a continuous activity verb, something that we are to constantly be doing. I do not mean to sound negative, but the concept of walking in the light just seems foreign to many Christians. In their mind, it is as if attending a couple of church services, having a short devotion, and maybe reading a good Christian book qualifies for walking in the light. In reality, that is what it does not mean.

This wisdom, this understanding is not something that the believer can have by their own mental and intellectual prowess, or because of their familiarity with the truth – never. You could be the most intelligent Christian on the planet, but if you do not constantly make yourself available to the Holy Spirit for His enlightenment, then you could actually lead a terribly disgraceful and contemptible Christian life. You and I are not the source of spiritual light. We are only receivers of God’s light and containers of God’s light. Spiritual “**light**” is completely embodied in Christ, in His Word, but it is revealed to us and given to us by the Holy Spirit. Think of light this way. **Light is what makes sight possible. Light is what makes things visible.** I.e. you could have perfect 20/20 vision, but if you have no light and are in complete darkness, then you cannot see anything no matter what kind of vision you may have. I am sure that all of us have had to get up in the middle of the night and go to the restroom, but because it is so dark, we still may struggle to find our way to a place with which we are very familiar. Why is that? It is because there is no light in the room.

So, being able to constantly receive the light of God’s Word into your life and the very light of Christ Himself is what gives a believer the ability to see things spiritually. There are so many people who think that they are spiritual and yet they are living in total spiritual darkness because they have no respect for the Word of God and utterly no understanding of His truth. Obviously, people like the New Agers believe that they are the most spiritually enlightened people on the planet, but they may very well be the most deceived. Why? It is because spirituality is a direct by-product of the Holy Spirit’s presence in a person’s life, not some philosophy of life conceived in the mind of someone living in total darkness. However, it is far worse for a believer to have been given God’s enlightenment for different areas of their life, but then just constantly ignore it in their daily life.

The spiritual meaning of “**light**” also includes the idea of moral goodness, purity, and holiness that leads to great reward and contentment in the believer’s life. It is a true knowledge of God and of those things that are spiritual. The purity and the holiness that God’s light produces in the believer is what gives them the actual power to walk in the light and to live in the light they have been given.<sup>2</sup> For instance, in [John 12:36](#) and [1 Thessalonians 5:5](#), believers are referred to as “**sons of light**”.

**Jn 12:36 (NKJV) While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.**

**1Th 5:5 (NKJV) You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.**

There are great rewards for walking in the light and for obeying God's truth. For instance, [1 John 1:7](#) says,

**1Jn 1:7 (NKJV) But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.**

[John 8:12](#) says,

**Jn 8:12 (NKJV) Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."**

The more spiritual light (knowledge, wisdom, understanding) that you have, the more spiritual life that you have. God's light and God's life are integrally interwoven into each other. A believer can never enjoy God's spiritual life within them apart from God's light given to them. I.e., the quality of your spiritual life is directly proportional to the quality of the time that you spend in God's Word, in God's light. [2 Corinthians 4:6](#) helps us to understand how we receive this spiritual light into our life when it says,

**2Co 4:6 (NKJV) For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.**

I.e., the wisdom of God and the knowledge of God are found in the person of Jesus Christ. If I can say it this way, biblical light is always Christological. It is always about Christ in some way. Even living the Christian life in a godly manner is about glorifying Christ in our life. That is why [2 Corinthians 4:4](#) says,

**2Co 4:4 (NKJV) whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.**

What this verse reveals is that the only thing that Satan really cares about is that the unbeliever never becomes exposed to the "**light of the gospel of the glory of Christ**". Why is this so important to Satan? It is because Jesus Christ is the only, remedy for those who are in darkness.<sup>3</sup>

Another critical aspect of "**light**" is that it is always Christocentric, always pointing to Christ, always revealing Christ, always exalting Christ. Christ is the One who reveals the greatest knowledge of God to someone. Jesus said these words in [John 14:9](#) when he was talking to Philip,

**Jn 14:9 (NKJV) Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"**

So, if someone can look at their life – young person, parent, marriage partner, elderly person, successful business man, housewife - whoever, but never truly see the life of Christ being manifested in their life, then chances are very good that they are not actually saved. On the other hand, if in reality they can see the life of Christ being constantly manifested to them, in them, and through them, then in all likelihood that person has been truly "**born again**" and is genuinely in the light.

I want to close by saying just three things about God's light that I believe are very important. First of all, God is the source of spiritual light, so we must go to Him for it. We do not own it, possess it, nor can we obtain it apart from a meaningful and saving relationship with God. If a believer has developed a lifestyle where they have no meaningful time with God, then they are not going to be given any light. They may intellectually obtain some knowledge of biblical matters, but that does not guarantee that they have any spiritual light related to their knowledge. In fact, the Word of God says that knowledge can be very dangerous simply because it “**puffs up**” and makes a person proud ([1 Corinthians 8:1](#)). Please understand that the light that God will give to you is pure. Everything about it is right, wholesome, uncorrupted, and uncontaminated at every level. It is completely trustworthy and because of that simple reality, you can build your entire life around it. We are simply fools not to build our life around it.

Secondly, God's light will search you out. It will find you no matter where you are. There is not one single area of your life where God's light is unable to penetrate, unable to reach. If you were in a completely dark room outside of a room that was well lit, but there was a small, tiny hole in the wall, the light would penetrate through that hole in the wall. God's light will not give you rest if you are living in disobedience to it. It will search you out, so please do not expect God's light to ignore the sin that may be in your life. I do not know about you, but sin really frightens me, it scares me. When I see Christians living in sin, it frightens me for them. I have no idea how God will discipline them and when, but at times I fear for them. There is a very interesting verse in [Numbers 32:23](#) which says,

**Nu 32:23 (NKJV) But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure your sin will find you out.**

Think of it this way – God's light and God's Spirit will not let you rest in your sin. You will be uncomfortable, miserable. The discipline that God may use in your life when you continue to sin against Him may be very painful, very stressful. Once He turns on His light in your life, you cannot escape it. You must respond to it or choose to live in disobedience to it. There are no other options.

Lastly, God's light is incredibly powerful, yet it works silently in the individual. It is the truth of God's Word that changes a man or woman's life, so the more you give yourself to it, the more it will change you into the image of Christ. It does it quietly. The work of God in your life is never flashy and rarely ever immediately visible to other people. So, be diligent to keep presenting yourself to God and to constantly be asking Him to let His light transform your life. Please understand that when God does reveal His light to you that what He is teaching you and how He is encouraging you is something that is very, very powerful if you will only yield yourself to it. Most of the time we grossly underestimate how very powerful God's light actually is and we dismiss it as not being relevant for where we are in our life. That is a tragic, tragic mistake. May God help you to become a constant receiver of His spiritual light and His spiritual life.

## **ENDNOTES**

<sup>1</sup> Zodhiates, 1462.

<sup>2</sup> Zodhiates, 1462.

<sup>3</sup> Verbrugge, 598.

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