

ness" (1 John 5:19). The Old Testament prophet Isaiah spoke of a time before Jesus' coming as a period of darkness covering the earth and heavy darkness covering the people (Isaiah 60:2).

Why is the world in darkness and wickedness? The total cause of this is *sin*. The darkness of sin entered the world when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden by listening to the devil and rejecting God's holy plan for them. Since they sinned, all of their descendants have a sinful nature which has the tendency to turn from God toward a life of sin and darkness. Isaiah 53:6 says, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way." In another scripture the Bible says, "There is none righteous, no not one" (Romans 3:10). The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." As the result of this sin and rebellion against God, spiritual darkness and ignorance are everywhere.

We know how difficult it is to live in physical darkness. To do our duties, we must have enough light to see where we are going and what we are doing. You may have had the opportunity to tour a cavern. What a breath-taking experience it is when the guide tells you he will show you the cave in "natural color," and then turns the lights off, and there you stand in total darkness. It is an awesome feeling of helplessness that settles over you. When this happens, you want to know where the guide is. He is the only one that will turn on the light and lead you out again.

The life of darkness, not under Jesus' control, is a much blacker darkness than any other. This darkness also has greater consequences. Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death." No one can tell how dark the blackness of sin really is. It is a life of unrest and confusion. This points up the condition of the life of sin under the devil's control.

While the life of sin is a horrible circumstance, the natural drawing of the sinner's life is toward a

continuing deeper and stronger bondage to the devil. Mankind in this state is rejecting the love-call of God and Jesus His Son. Jesus Himself said, when talking about people not accepting His love, "Men loved the darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reproved (exposed)" (John 3:19-20).

There are many people who have never heard of Jesus. These people are living in darkness. What a pity it is that there are millions living in spiritual darkness, who will live and die not knowing that Jesus came as the Light of the World. There are others who are living in willful disobedience to God. They have heard the Good News of Jesus but are rejecting Him as Lord of their lives.

Living in darkness and unbelief in Jesus carries with it a death sentence. Jesus says in John 3:18, "He that believeth on Him (Jesus) is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

But remember, Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." Only Jesus could say this, because He came to the earth as God the Son, in human flesh, to live a perfect life and then be sacrificed, shedding His blood on the cross for the sins of the world. Jesus came as the Saviour of the world, but for His sacrifice to be effective for you, you must accept Him as the controller of your life. God offers Jesus to you as a gift. But for a gift to be owned, it must be accepted. The latter part of Romans 6:23 says, "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

How is Jesus the Light of the World? How can He be your Light? When a person accepts Jesus' teachings and believes that He is the Son of God risen from the dead and is sorry for his sins and repents of them, then Jesus becomes his Light.

Study I Peter 1:18, 19. In I Peter 2:9, Peter says to Christians, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar (special) people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness unto His marvelous light." As the Light of the world, Jesus is still the Light of every saved soul. He is to be the Light of the whole world—yet His light rays are able to enter each individual heart that is open to Him. When the Light of Jesus comes to the believer, he moves from the shady to the sunny side of the street. Jesus enlivens and excites the Christian with the brightness of His Light.

As the Light of the world, Jesus reveals many things to us. He shows us God's original plan for the individual that the life of sin has overshadowed. His Light reveals the hidden beauty of God's purpose in each life. We know it is possible to trip up in the Christian life. But the Light of Jesus guides us. David wrote, "Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105). This light gives us a clear sense of direction and guidance for our lives.

But for the sinner, the light reveals something else. By looking to Jesus, the sinner can see himself as he really is, lost and in the darkness of sin.

Scientists tell us that light is the fastest thing known to man. It travels 186,000 miles in a second. Space and time do not slow it down or affect it in any way. In the same way Jesus is not hindered by time or space. As God, He is everywhere, present with all His people all of the time.

The Light of Jesus is the same as light from any source, in that the nearer we are to the source, the brighter the light appears. This is especially true as we learn to know Jesus better and grow more in our relationship with Him. The writer of the Proverbs said, "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Proverbs 4:18). To the Christian the Light of Jesus is so precious. But in contrast,