

"That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9).

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THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

by Henry M. Morris*

One of the most amazing statements ever made was the assertion of Jesus Christ in the temple in Jerusalem one early morning long ago, speaking to a group of bigoted religionists who were seeking an excuse to condemn Him. This claim should immediately have branded Him as either a raving lunatic or a con-ning charlatan—or—(could it conceivably be true?) as the very Son of God Himself!

The Amazing Claim

Here is what He said: *"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life"* (John 8:12).

A listener may have thought, "But, Sir, it is the mighty sun that illumines the world, not some wandering preacher from Galilee. The sun moving high in the sky provides light so that men do not have to walk around in the dark, so how can you claim to be the sun? The sun does, indeed, make life possible, with its radiant energy causing plants to grow and rivers to flow: it can certainly be said to be *'the light of life.'*" But how can *you*, of all creatures, claim to give life?

Oh, His followers might reply, "He was just speaking metaphorically. He is the *spiritual* light, giving *spiritual* life, conquering *spiritual* darkness, not really

claiming to produce sunlight."

But that's just as bad, isn't it? This country preacher with no formal education and only a motley group of deluded followers! Yet here He is professing to provide the spiritual, as well as moral and intellectual guidance for the whole wide world, when neither He nor His disciples have ever even traveled beyond the borders of Israel! How could this Jesus, from Nazareth, possibly expect anyone to believe *that*?

The Astounding Fulfillment

Yet, for the past two thousand years there have indeed been millions of people from all over this whole wide world who have believed just that, and whose lives have been transformed because of it. Further, not only individual men and women have been transformed; but whole societies and cultures. Great educational institutions have been established in His name, as well as hospitals and charities of all kinds, not to mention multiplied thousands of churches and helpful ministries in great variety. Nations have been established to serve Him; even the worldwide evil of slavery has been almost abolished.

Most of the founding fathers of science were sincere followers of Jesus, as well as the greatest medical researchers of the past. The Lord Jesus Christ, even

*Dr. Henry M. Morris is Founder and President Emeritus of ICR.

though despised by so many of His contemporaries that He was judicially executed in a uniquely cruel manner by their leaders, has indeed been the Light of the world ever since, not only spiritually, but also intellectually and morally. Those who choose to follow Him have not walked in darkness but gladly testify that they have found the Light of life, just as He promised.

But that is not all, by any means! By overcoming death and rising from His tomb in a glorified physical body (which many would evaluate as the best-proved fact in history), He proved Himself to be (as He also claimed) the omnipotent Son of God, equal with the heavenly Father—the very Word of God made flesh!

As His early disciples soon began to proclaim on His authority, it was also He who had actually created all things. He was not the sun (the physical light of the world), but He is greater than the sun, for He created the sun! “*By Him were all things created, that are in heaven . . .*” (Colossians 1:16). “*All things were made by Him*” (John 1:3). It was obvious that God, in the beginning, created heaven and earth, but He “*created all things by Jesus Christ*” (Ephesians 3:9).

Not only was the physical light of the world—the sun—created by Christ, but it is He who has kept it shining ever since. It is the eternal Son of God—“*whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting*” (Micah 5:2). *Who being the brightness of (God’s) glory, and the express image of His person*” who is still “*upholding all things by the word of His power*” (Hebrews 1:3). Scientists are still somewhat uncertain as to what keeps the sun shining, though most of them promote the theory of thermonuclear fusion processes in its deep interior. There are unsolved difficulties even with this explanation, however, and no one really *knows*.

The Power of Light

We do know, however, if we believe the Bible, that Jesus Christ the Creator is also the Conservator. He upholds everything by His own power! “*By Him all things consist*” (Colossians 1:17). Not only our sun, in fact, but all the suns of the cosmos! Indeed He *is* the light—not only of our little world, but of the entire physical universe! In the promised future new earth, in fact, with its magnificent holy city, we are told that the city will not even need the sun for its light, “*for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof*” (Revelation 21:23).

Note, incidentally, the anticipatory intimation in such verses of the modern scientific concept of the equivalence of mass and energy. *Things* are held together by *power*. And that power is nothing less than the power of Christ Himself. In Him, all things “*consist*” (literally “*are sustained*” or “*hold together*”). Our gentle, loving Savior is the mighty Creator of all things who is now upholding all things and someday will restore all things to their primeval perfection.

As far as physical life is concerned, He also claimed that those who follow Him not only would no longer “*walk in darkness*” but also would possess “*the light of life*.”

Modern physical science (at least classical physics) was centered around the electro-magnetic spectrum, which included all the varieties of force and energy in nature—light, heat, sound, electricity, magnetism, chemical energy, etc.—everything except gravity and nuclear energy. Light, of course, in a sense covers the whole spectrum, from long-wave-length infra-red to short-wave ultra-violet radiation, with the visible light spectrum occupying the key center, as it were.

In a significant sense, light energy is thus the most basic energy of all, and it

is not surprising that the first words recorded by the living Word of God were: “*Let there be light*” (Genesis 1:3). There were no “lights” as such at that point, however, until He said: “*Let there be lights*” (Genesis 1:14). Then, instantaneously appeared in the sky the two great lights for the earth and “*the stars also*” (Genesis 1:16) scattered throughout the vast cosmos.

And all of these lights—and the light which they generated and sent forth to be “*for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years*” (Genesis 1:14)—would also serve life itself through the many marvelous mechanisms it would energize for Earth’s coming inhabitants (photosynthesis, etc.).

Thus it is that: “*In Him [that is, the Word of God] was life; and the life was the light of men*” (John 1:4). It then follows also that Christ is “*the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world*” (John 1:9).

And that is true in both the physical sense and spiritual sense. Physically, “*in Him we live, and move, and have our being*” so that He is “*not far from every one of us*” (Acts 17:28,27). It should be painfully sobering for even those who refuse to believe on Him to realize suddenly (as they must, someday) that their very existence—even the cellular structure of their bodies—depends on His moment-by-moment maintenance. If He just withdrew His power for an instant we would collapse into nothingness.

Spiritually, we are likewise assured that He enlightens “*every man that cometh into the world*” (John 1:9). That is, even those born in some heathen home and those who may spend all their lives without ever hearing of Christ, have been given some spiritual light (in nature, in conscience, in history, etc.) so that if they respond positively to the light they have, will then somehow be given more and

more light, eventually enough to be saved. The classic Biblical example is the Roman Cornelius, to whom God eventually sent Peter with the full message of salvation through Christ. As Peter said at that time: “*God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him*” (Acts 10:34,35).

The warning, however, is that those who do not respond to whatever light they have are “*without excuse*” and thus will “*die in [their] sins*” (Romans 1:20, John 8:24), because they do not believe on Christ. And the tragedy is that “*light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil*” (John 3:19). Nevertheless, “*the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him*” (II Chronicles 16:9). After all, God does desire everyone “*to be saved*” (I Timothy 2:4), and to “*turn them from darkness to light*” (Acts 26:18), but they will not come.

Passing Heaven’s Torch

Jesus also said to His disciples (including us!): “*Ye are the light of the world*” (Matthew 5:14), obviously here referring just to spiritual light. Thus, since He is no longer here in the flesh, His enlightening ministry is to be mediated through us, passing His torch, as it were, to us. “*As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you*” (John 20:21).

Our mission and challenge, therefore—as those who know the Lord Jesus as both Creator and Savior, is to “*shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life*” (Philippians 2:15,16). “*For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*” (Acts 4:12). 

DID GOD LIE TO US?

by John D. Morris, Ph.D.

When I was a child, I sometimes went with my father to one of his speaking engagements. It was always a great father/son time but he was also making sure the truth was transferred to his son. As soon as my kids were old enough, they started going with me on my speaking trips, for the very same reasons.

The first time was when my oldest daughter was just five years old. I was lecturing on the global nature of the flood, and she was sitting in the front row with the pastor's kids.

I taught that God, at the end of the flood, placed His rainbow in the clouds as His covenant to never again destroy the earth and its inhabitants with a worldwide flood. Waxing eloquent I exclaimed, "If the flood was only a local flood, as many professors at evangelical colleges and seminaries teach, then God lied to us, because there have been many local floods since Noah's Flood, even large floods. And He promised there would never again be such a flood."

It's an interesting point—a Biblical necessity for the global nature of the flood. But a global flood such as described in Scripture would unquestionably be a geologically significant flood, eroding vast amounts of material in one place, depositing it as sediments in another, complete with the abundant dead remains of plants and animals. Now those sediments have hardened into sedimentary rock and those dead things have hardened into fossils. The sediments later buckled and faulted into mountain ranges and eroded to form canyons. In short, the surface of the entire globe was restructured and sculptured into its present form

by the flood. One could never hope to understand Grand Canyon, for instance, without the Flood of Noah's day in their thinking. All of the so-called evidences for great ages are, properly interpreted, evidence for Noah's Flood. In fact, if the flood was global and deposited the world's fossil-bearing sedimentary rock, there is little evidence for evolution or an old earth, for fossils and rocks are the main evidence for both. The Bible contains many Biblical necessities for the Flood's global nature, and geology provides abundant support for it.

My daughter and I enjoyed the weekend. Back home, several evenings later after we had shared family devotions and a bedside prayer, I was saying "good night." As I tucked her in, deep concern clouded her little face. "Daddy," she asked, "did God really lie to us?" The next few minutes were one of those treasured moments between a father and his child. "No, God didn't lie to us. You know how much I love you, and that I would never lie to you. God loves His children more than an earthly father could ever love his little girl, and He wants us to know the truth. He would never lie to us. We can trust everything He has told us in the Bible. Not just about the flood, but about Jesus Christ and salvation, too."

Just last week I gave that little girl to a godly young man, and she left my home to start another with him. She brings to her new home an absolute confidence in and reliance upon the truth of Scripture. She knows that God doesn't lie, and should God bless their union with children, that will be among the truths transferred. 



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