

The Purpose of Creating Light

“In Your light we see light”

Ps 36:9b NASB1995

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This is the second class in the Science In Light Of Scripture series

Review key concepts from our first meeting

- What is our goal in this series of classes?
- What does the acronym ORIGINS stand for?
- Complete knowledge is knowledge by what?

God gave us the ability to understand Him. He gave us light to see the path He wants us to follow. Without light to see by, we cannot know where to place our feet. Without light we will, not maybe, we will stumble and fall. We will discover that the importance of Spiritual light is illustrated by the importance of natural light in many ways. Everyone is able to relate to natural light. Like the parables that begin with “The Kingdom of God is like...”, natural light is an ever-present parable, always at our fingertips, reminding us of the reality and importance of Spiritual light. After all, The Creator of both has given them the same name...light. They must be connected, and they are, as we will see (pardon the pun).

John 14:16-17 (NASB1995)

[16] “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever;[17] that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

1 John 2:5-6 (NASB1995)

[5] but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: [6] the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

Psalms 119:105 (NASB1995)

[105] Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

1. Both physical and spiritual light allow reality to be seen.

God Himself is described as the "light of the world" (John 8:12), in which God the Son was claiming to be the exclusive source of spiritual light and truth. From a biblical perspective, only in the light of God's Word can understanding about the universe around us become illuminated. In a pitch-black room you can convince yourself, or believe through blind faith, that the room has nothing in your path to cause you to stumble and fall. But a flashlight will show you for sure! At birth, we receive physical light and through it can see the craftsmanship of God's hand in His creation. In full, John 8:12 declares, "When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'" Following this light is important. If a light, perhaps a candle, is used in a dark room, as you carry it through the room, darkness will flee, or dispel. However, the light continues to move and continue into another dark room, illuminating the darkness. If we do not follow the light and move with it, the darkness can and will engulf us. It is as Paul noted when he spoke at Mars Hill in Athens, quoting the Cretan philosopher Epimenides, "'For in him we live and move and have our being'" (Acts 17:28). In Jesus, we live and move and have our being, and in Him we have eternal life (John 3:16-18).

2. Both physical and spiritual light are necessary for good health

Physical light is necessary for physical life. The Earth would certainly change very rapidly if there was no longer any sunlight. A forest full of trees with very thick canopies of foliage high above has very little plant life on the ground except for moss or lichen, which needs little sunlight. Plants will never move away from the light – they are said to be positively phototropic, drawn to the light. In the same way, spiritual light is necessary for spiritual life, and this can be a good test of our standing in Christ. The believer will always tend towards spiritual things; he will always tend towards fellowship, prayer, the Word of God, and so on. The unbeliever always does the opposite (John 1:5, 3:19-20) because light exposes his evil and he hates the light. Indeed, no man can come into the true spiritual light of Jesus Christ, unless He is enabled (John 6:37). Earth's moon reflects the light of the sun, and in like manner, we reflect the light of Christ, and should carry out the commission to spread the truth to the people of the world, as "Christ's ambassadors" (2nd Corinthians 5:20). We should not attempt to hide the light or be ashamed of Jesus but spread this light and be prepared to give an answer or defend our faith (1st Peter 3:15).

3. Both physical and spiritual light are both caused directly or indirectly by God.

According to 1st John 1:5, God is [the] light; in Him there is no darkness at all. He radiates the light of His perfection; there is no darkness in Him. Therefore, He is the source of light, or truth. ...If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. This is a profound concept. God Himself, the infinite, perfect, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent being radiates perfection since He is always and in every time and place, perfect. God created physical light on Day 1 of creation week

when He said, "Let there be light" ("hayah 'owr," Genesis 1:3). Genesis 1:3-5 states, "And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light 'day,' and the darkness he called 'night.'" Now, some have noted that in the Genesis narrative, the sun was not created until Day 4 (Genesis 1:14-19). However, light can exist independently from the sun. The day and night cycle was present in each of the three days prior (Genesis 1; Exodus 20:11), and with the knowledge that God is light (1st John 1:5), it can be reasoned that light emanated from God.

When natural light first appeared it had a purpose...

Gen 1:1-2, NASB 1995, some words with Strong's numbers

¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

² The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

³ Then God said, "Let there be [lightH216](#)"; and there was [lightH216](#).

⁴ God saw that the [lightH216](#) was good; and God [separatedH914](#) the [lightH216](#) from the [darknessH2822](#).

⁵ God called the [lightH216](#) [dayH3117](#), and the [darknessH2822](#) He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

Vine's definition of [lightH216](#)

‘Or ([אור, H216](#)), “light.” This noun appears about 120 times and is clearly a poetic term.

The first occurrence of ‘or is in the Creation account: “And God said, let there be light: and there was light” ([Ge 1:3](#)). Here “light” is the opposite of “darkness.” The opposition of “light” and “darkness” is not a unique phenomenon. It occurs frequently as a literary device... “In Hebrew various antonyms of ‘or are used in parallel constructions: “The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined” ([Isa 9:2](#))...”The “light” given by the heavenly bodies was also known as ‘or’.

What did God create on the first day? List them under one of the headings below:

Created separately:

Created then combined to be:

- The whole earth was initially only in darkness everywhere (v2) and then
 - God illuminated the earth by light without the Sun and also
 - separated the light from the darkness (v4) so that half of the Earth's surface is night and the other half is day at all times. Notice that creating darkness or night

(v5) was unnecessary since it was already there. God had only to separate the darkness by causing light to shine on one side of the earth, the side He called day (v5). The earth now has a “circle of illumination” where night meets day. This circle would go through the north and south poles if the Earth’s axis of rotation was not tilted. This circle is commonly known as the place where the Earth’s rotation brings people to see daylight change into night and 12 hours later, see night change back to daylight. In John 11:9 (NASB1995) Jesus said “...Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world.

- Notice how wisdom (Proverbs 8:12) describes this same step of creation in Proverbs 8:27b (NASB1995) using the same Hebrew words for surface and deep that are used in Gen 1:2
 - [27] “When He established the heavens, I was there, When He inscribed a circle on the face of the deep,
 - Similarly, Job 26:10 (NASB1995) says “He has inscribed a circle on the surface of the waters at the boundary of light and darkness.
- Since the earth rotates on its axis taking about 24 hours, God has now made a clock to measure time in such a way that we can understand...a clock must be observed to be repetitively changing at a constant rate.
- So God used light and darkness to fashion a celestial stopwatch to be used to measure time as “days of creation”. Defining exactly what a day is must come at the earliest time in the creation narrative...and it does!
- So the first purpose of light was an essential ingredient in the creation of the first day because even though the earth turns, light allows us to experience the Earth’s turning and therefore be useful to mankind for measuring time
- Can you hazard a guess as to why the bible has the order of words “evening” before “morning”, not the reverse?

Now read Genesis 1:14-19

Genesis 1:14-19 (NASB1995)

[14] Then God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; [15] and let them be for lights

in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. [16] God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also. [17] God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, [18] and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good. [19] There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

Comparing day 1 with day 4 we notice that

- God is the source of light on the first day since He spoke and light appeared (v3) but on the fourth day of creation He created sources of lightH216 - the luminaries lightsH3974. Consequently, their light is a different word 215. אור 'ôr: A verb meaning to give light, to shine, to become light, day.
- For what purposes were the sun, moon and stars created?
 - Separate the day from the night (v14)
 - For signs, seasons, days and years (v14)
 - For lights in the heavens to give light on the earth (v15)
 - To govern the day and night (v16)
 - "...to **separateH914** [same word] the **lightH216** [same word] from the **darknessH2822** [same word]..." (v18)...this is the same purpose as stated in Gen 1:4 where God was the cause.

4. Both physical and spiritual light have sources

All light must come from a source such as the sun, moon, or stars from the fourth day of creation. Other sources are fire, lightning, electric light globes, fluorescent tubes, luminous insects such as glow-worms and fireflies, etc. In the Bible, we also find many examples of light without the sun but originating from a supernatural source – from God who made everything. God made all that we fashion into a lightbulb. Without creation there would be no source since nothing was created.. Some are associated directly with the glory of God, which in the Bible is usually manifested as light, although sometimes as fire. This is not surprising, as the Bible tells us that God is light (1 John 1:5; cf. John 8:12), and also that God is a consuming fire (Deuteronomy 4:24; Hebrews 12:29)."[6] Light can travel at approximately 186,282.397 miles per second. It is able to make 7 trips around the earth in less than 1 second. With this fact in mind, consider what occurs when we turn on a light switch. When the light is turned on, it permeates the area, and darkness must flee. Darkness does not have a choice in the matter. In like manner, writing about God in the flesh, John noted that "In him was life, and that life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.... The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world" (John 1:4-5, 9).

That great speed for light is the speed we measure in our reference frame. But science believes the speed of light measured in the same reference frame as light, not our own, is instantaneous! This means that light does not take time to travel anywhere in its reference frame. Now, considering how Scripture relates God with light (God's perfect qualities together radiate blinding light). *Perhaps* God also takes no time to travel, therefore He can be everywhere at the same time. Speed is distance divided by time and no matter how large the distance, the denominator of zero time divided into any distance always results in a speed of infinity. He is infinitely powerful for the same reason. Power is work done divided by the time it takes to do the work. If time is zero, the power is infinite.

5. Both physical and spiritual light carry information

The book of Job makes a few statements concerning light. When God is speaking out of the storm (Job 38:1), He asks, "What is the way to the abode of light? And where does darkness reside?" (38:19). Up until the 17th century, it was generally believed that light is transmitted instantly, whereas now we know that light travels at over 186,000 miles per second. The Hebrew word for "way" is derek, meaning a traveled path or road. In other words, God was questioning Job about light's transmission. Shortly thereafter, in Job 38:24a (NASB1995), God asks Job "Where is the way that the light is divided..." By asking this question, it presupposes that light can be divided. Divided is chalaq (חָלַק, H2505) meaning "to divide or distribute. Scientifically, we now know that light can be divided. Sir Isaac Newton (c.1642-1727) studied light itself and made the discovery that white light can actually be divided into seven colors, after passing through a prism and combined again after passing through a second prism. Matt 17:2 describes Jesus' face "as bright as the sun" and His clothing as "white as light". Only white light shining on something will reflect back the true color. When white light, which has all colors, shines on a blue shirt only blue will reflect back to our eyes while all the other colors stay in the shirt having been converted to heat. A red shirt reflects back red while absorbing the other colors. This is why a black shirt is the worst color to wear on a hot day as it reflects nothing, looking black and converts all colors to heat. Conversely, a white shirt reflects all colors as white and nothing is absorbed so it is cooler to wear. The point is that Spiritual light is able to reflect back the truth as it is deficient in nothing. A great example of how light contains information is illustrated in astronomy. An astronomer with a spectrometer attached to his telescope, can divide the star light into its separate colors - its spectrum - where all the following properties of the star can be determined

- The temperature of the star
- The chemical elements and their relative amounts present in the atmosphere of the star
- The star's motion through space toward or away from earth and its speed
- The star's rotation rate
- The size of the star even though its diameter cannot be observed due to its great distance
- If more than one star is present even though it cannot be seen through the telescope
- The elements in the atmosphere of a planet when the planet covers a star behind it

Now consider how much more information that Spiritual light can hold. Spiritual light deals with all of life – everything! It is truly mind-blowing to ponder the riches in the spiritual light God gives us!

6. Both physical and spiritual light can benefit others

Subsequently, Jesus taught, "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16). As such, we are to "follow God's example" (Ephesians 5:1). Light is present all throughout Scripture, in both the Old and New Testament. For example, Exodus 34:29-30 describes the radiant face of Moses, "When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the LORD. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him." Yet another example is Matthew 17:2, which says, "There [Jesus] was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light" (see also Revelation 1:16). Stars are also mentioned throughout Scripture, one of which is of course our sun.

Be the Spiritual light to those who can only see natural light. They will observe you walk on a different path than they are walking on by your priorities, decisions, etc. Pray that God will grant them the ability to see Spiritually.

2 Timothy 2:24-26 (NASB1995)

[24] The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, [25] with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, [26] and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

7. Science still does not fully understand light...why?

Do you remember in school being taught that light exhibits both properties of waves and also of moving particles? So significant is this dual nature of light that scientists treat light as a series of particles – called photons – when that works best for them and treat it like a wave when that approach works best. When I first learned this, I thought science really does not fully understand what light is or we would not pick and choose what works! I am confident that God really knows what light really is...His thoughts are higher than ours. Perhaps one day we will know why light is such a mystery. Until then, God knows. After all, He invented it.