



DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS

Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

December 5, 2023



Photo: Our Daily Bread

SHINING STARS

You will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life.

Philippians 2:15-16

READ Philippians 2:12-16

The first thing I noticed about the city was its gambling outlets. Next, its cannabis shops, “adult” stores, and giant billboards for opportunistic lawyers making money off others’ mishaps. While I had visited many shady cities before, this one seemed to reach a new low.

My mood brightened, however, when I spoke to a taxi driver the next morning. “I ask God every day to send me the people He wants me to help,” he said. “Gambling addicts, prostitutes, people from broken homes tell me their problems in tears. I stop the car. I listen. I pray for them. This is my ministry.”

After describing Jesus’ descent into our fallen world (Philippians 2:5–8), the apostle Paul gives believers in Christ a calling. As we pursue God’s will (v. 13) and hold to the “word of life”—the gospel (v. 16)—we’ll be “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation” who “shine . . . like stars in the sky” (v. 15). Like that taxi driver, we’re to bring Jesus’ light into the darkness.

A believer in Christ has only to live faithfully in order to change the world, historian Christopher Dawson said, because in that very act of living “there is contained all the mystery of divine life.” Let’s ask God’s Spirit to empower us to live faithfully as Jesus’ people, shining His light in the world’s darkest places.

By **Sheridan Voysey**

PRAY & REFLECT

Dear Jesus, thank You for being the Light of the World who brings me out of darkness. Amen

How can you focus on Christ today, rather than the world's evil? How can you shine His light today in your neighborhood?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

As believers in Jesus, we're to "shine among [nonbelievers] like stars in the sky" (Philippians 2:15) as we obey the Great Commission: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). Christ said, "While I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (John 9:5). He brought light into the world, yet many people still loved the darkness (evil) (3:19). Knowing He'd be with His followers on earth for only a short time, He called them (and all of us) to spread the good news of the gospel—to be "the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). As "people of the light" (Luke 16:8), we have the Holy Spirit to help us "not run or labor in vain" (Philippians 2:16). – By **Alyson Kieda**

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