

Send forth Your Word, Lord, and let there be light.

The season of Epiphany begins with the story of a star – a star we see only as a pinpoint of light by the time it reaches us, but at its source a giant ball of energy. It ends with this strange story of a moment in which a living man, Jesus the Christ, is revealed for an instant as pure light, as brilliant as a star in space. For one moment, his God self is revealed right alongside his human self, and Peter, James and John get to see who he truly is. The light of the world.

Physics tells us that we – indeed everything in creation – is made up of energy, and energy is expressed in different frequencies. Light that we can see is one frequency; sound is another; ultra-violet rays are another; infra-red is another; electricity another. And all this energy has its source in the Creator whose energy generated the universe, whose life sustains all life. And we claim that Jesus was One with that Creator, even as he was fully man. He conducted that energy into this sphere.

Could it be that Jesus as God was pure energy that could be transmitted in any number of frequencies? Is that why he could walk on water? Control molecules? Could he have been speaking literally when he said "I am the light of the world?" He told his disciples, "*Don't hide your light under a basket – let it shine to reveal what is true, so people can see it.*" James refers to God as the "*Father of Lights.*" Paul exhorts the Ephesians to live as "*Children of light.*" The writer to the Hebrews said, "*When you first received the light...*" In the beginning of John's Gospel we read of the Word made flesh who was coming into the world: *In him was life, and that life was the light of humankind.* In our creeds we say "*God from God, Light from Light, very God from very God...*" We can't get away from this association of God with light.

So here's a question: Has that light gone out of the world? Did Jesus take it with him when he rose from the dead and ascended into heaven? At one point he said, "*You are going to have the light just a little while longer.*" But then he added: *Trust in the light while you have it so that you may become sons and daughters of light.*"

Jesus wasn't just training his disciples during the time he was with them – He was increasing their capacity to conduct his power, to bear his light. He said *“Let your light so shine before humankind that they may see your good deeds and praise your father in heaven.”*

Are these just metaphors? Or are we talking about real light, real energy at a high frequency that we carry and conduct into transforming power? Well, light is just energy you can see with the naked eye. My friends, I can tell you the energy is real.

We carry this light, this God-life, God-energy in us. And it does have transforming power. I've felt it. So have you, I bet.

I've spoken before about Agnes Sanford, an ordinary woman, wife of an Episcopal priest, who had an extraordinary gift of healing. But the way she described it was that she simply had a high capacity for conducting God's love and life into people. She used the image of electricity as one way of understanding conducting power from the Source into an outlet. If we are a clear conductor, God can work. She says, When we turn on a lamp and it doesn't work, we don't conclude that we can't believe in electricity – no, we look for where the connection is broken. Her book, *“The Healing Light,”* contains story after story of this simple method resulting in remarkable healing. In it she talks about projecting God's love and light into those who are suffering. She writes, *“Christian love is the love of Christ, an energy so overwhelming that it led our Lord to give His life for His friends, and to give it with a joy that carried Him through untold anguish...”*

She recommends a simple method: get in touch with God and God's love, and then direct it into others – through touch, or simply by holding them in our mind's eye and seeing them as surrounded, filled with God's healing light. I've done that, and have known tumors to disappear, depressions to lift. And I know it's real energy. Once I prayed with someone and I really felt God wanted her to know his love and his life so I tried to channel that – and as we prayed she began to tremble; I thought she was trying to hold back tears. But afterward she said she shook because of this energy she felt coming into her. She knew it was the Holy Spirit; she had never experienced God that way before.

Think about someone you know whose energy is running at a low frequency – either because of illness or stress or depression. Shouldn't be hard these days. Get comfortable, get in touch with God in prayer, and then hold that person in your mind's eye and see them being filled with light from above, from within, all around, bathed in God's healing light. Go further: See them as entirely well, or as the happiest, most fulfilled person they can be, the most "them" they can be. Ask God to make that Kingdom reality visible. And keep giving thanks each time you do this. In fact, let's practice that right now....

Don't be surprised if something begins to change in that person or situation. This really works with people we have conflict with! Things begin to change. I know a woman who always complained about a clerk at the post office, who was a really mean-spirited person. So I recommended that my friend start praying for her in this way, holding her in God's light. And darned if over a couple of weeks she didn't start being nicer! Of course, the prayer also worked on my friend, giving her more compassion.

It's not the power of our imagining that changes the other – it's our inviting the God of love to raise their energy frequency with God's own unlimited energy that heals. As bearers of Christ's light to the world, we learn to handle frequencies higher than might be natural to us. As conductors for God's power, we increase our capacity to carry that voltage. I want you to pray for someone this way every day for two weeks. Set a timer – pray for at least two minutes. Keep a little log of any words or images that come to you as you pray. And then write down at the end of two weeks if anything has changed. If we were all praying in this way for other people, for ourselves, for the wounds of the world – what a light we would shine!

Friends, we are called to be salt and light. We are the light of the world. Today is Valentine's Day, a day we associate with love, love, sweet love. I can't help but think of love songs that talk about the "love light in your eyes." It isn't just "this little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine." It isn't just "Jesus wants me for a sunbeam." – although that's closer to it. Christ's light is not just a metaphor – it's power.

The power is real – and in this world, we experience it as energy.
And we can direct it to others – for healing, or reviving their spirits.
As Agnes Sanford wrote, *It is a powerful, radiant and life-giving emotion, charged with healing power both to the one who learns to love and the one who is loved...*

Jesus wants us to conduct his light and power to the hurting people and hurting places in this world. We are the channels of his light and power now.
If someone were to take an infra-red map of Charles County,
I'd want them to see our homes shining so bright with all the heat and life being conducted and channeled through this congregation,
that they would say, "What on earth is going on there?"

What in heaven is going on here?
This is God's Light and Power!
The power of love made visible, just as light makes energy visible.
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

Amen.

Mark 9:2-9

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

2 Corinthians 4:3-6

Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, "Let light 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.