

The character of God has long been associated with the idea of light, as opposed to darkness. For instance, in 1 John 1:5 we read that 'God is light and in him is no darkness at all.' Another verse that sort of caught my eye is John 9:5, where Jesus says 'as long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' Thinking for a moment of only the physical sense of Christ's presence, who is to be the light of the world once Christ is gone? Someone must continue to 'carry the torch.' It is clear from Matthew 5:14-16 that it is members of the church who must do so. '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 men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.' The children's song, 'This little Christian light of mine' has tremendous meaning for us as adults. Our light is to illuminate the path for others to follow.

But what if the light goes out? If a light bulb goes out at home, we replace it. The same is true for the church, for God makes it very clear in Revelation 2:1-7 that the church that does not reflect the character of God is not fulfilling its purpose. The result is 'the removal of the candlestick (which represents the church) from its place!' We must devote our energy to keeping the light burning, guiding the lost.

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