

The Story of Light

In the beginning, at the start of everything, the earth was formless and dark. There was nothing but deep, deep blackness. Nothing could be seen, and there were no eyes to see it. Then, God said, 'Let there be light!' And there was light, and it was good. And so the universe sparked forth, and the world was changed forever, as that first light of creation burst forth in dazzling splendour.

Time passed. Darkness and light danced together, as the world turned and spun. People were born, and as they grew they knew within themselves both the darkness and light, in their corruption, and their love.

Empires rose and empires fell. Nations learned new things, and then were forgotten into dust. Kindness and hatred intermingled in human souls, and often we kept our hearts hidden away, preferring to look after ourselves rather than others. We forgot what God wanted, that he had asked us just to love.

So God said to Godself, 'they need some more light'. And God found a young girl who was bold in faith and courage, and she consented to be the bearer of God on earth. Her spirit aflame with love for her God, she rejoiced and magnified the Creator, the bringer of justice and peace, counting herself blessed among all people. So into the world God sent his own Son, the holder of light itself. The glory of heaven spilled over into our sky, as angels sang

and the Christmas star shone
humdrum of another baby born
darkness saw a great light
of revelation and change. It
the darkness could not over

Now this baby grew up, with
cousin, John the Baptist, who
prepared the way for the coming
was like the glow of sunrise
new day is on the horizon. So
this baby, now grown to a man
bright in his heart. John told
ways, leave the darkness behind
where God's light can reside
For when we let go of ourselves
we allow God's light to fill us
followers.

And some of us listened. He
and the light grew slightly greater
Then Jesus came, doing in
opened, deaf ears heard first
the dead rose; his light was
drew people towards God. So
to put yourself last, and per
his brightness we saw that
Neighbour, encompasses a

proclaimed into the dust of our tucked-away souls: 'I am the light of the world. Through me you see God.'
And some of us saw. Sparks began to flash, as we encountered the light of God among us.

Jesus taught us so that the light would grow - 'Let *your* light shine before others'. Because having seen his light, we now each have the choice to shine bright, to draw people towards God with our own actions and words.

For there will always be people around us who are struggling, whose lives are in darkness and pain. But it is in our power to be a light in that darkness. It is our gift to be windows, of all colours and sizes, all glowing with the glory of the divine one we point towards.

So we shine! Brought forth into the light of God, we join our selves to that glory, like innumerable small candles illuminating hope in the darkness of a world so often turned away from the divine call to love.

'How?' you might ask. 'How do I shine when I am simply just me?' But there are so many ways to find the light within us. We can give, be there for each other, offer our gifts, build up and encourage, uphold and honour, seek out and delight in the holy sparks of each other's souls. We can be brave enough to not put ourselves first. We can ask someone the question, 'Did you know you are loved?' In all these ways, we cause the shadows to fade, a triumphant echo of the glory brought by the birth of a baby

at Christmas. A baby who carried the power of the creator of the earth and us.

God's beloved, we are joined to the creator, the son, and the Holy Spirit with our hands to raise the universe. So simple yet profound: let there be light. Let there be light - let us be light if we choose it.

For light loves to shine. It loves every soul, to banish shadows from the broken and touch the hearts of the lost. Light is infectious - bouncing from us in purpose as we take the darkness of all kinds. If we shine, love-light is what they see, our hands and voices. Let there be light. Let us be light by the word of God which is light itself.

So our challenge is the question: how do we shine? If someone looked at us and saw anything of God? Does the light of God haloing our journey through the world? For to Love God, and Love our neighbour, there is in the world to be done for everyone, earth would be transformed.

would shine with God's marvellous light blazing out through each of us.

Now it is not Christmas yet. We still wait in the dark. We are still on the Advent journey, holding our breath in anticipation, looking ahead for the light we know is coming. The light that will change everything. The brightness of God's love poured out, from Father, to Son, and through the Spirit to us. We pause again with joyful hearts on the brink of revelation, knowing that soon, so soon, in the ordinariness of another baby born, the pure love of God in all its brilliance dawned.

So beloved, as we travel through Advent together, take your light, take your small starry spark of the divine. And go forth to blaze it out, to carry God into the world, to tell the news, to sing the song, to proclaim the words of life! It is our calling, our joy, our gift, to shine with this brightness even in the darkest place. For light always wins, and we carry the flame of Christ's light in our hearts. So let your light shine!

Amen.