**YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD**

***Full Moon vs Lunar Eclipse***

For many years I have tried desperately to understand, and live by, Jesus powerful commandment to His disciples, “Y*ou are the light of the world, a city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden … Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven*” (Matt. 5:14-16). The one overarching desire of my life is to glorify God. That’s the only reason I am breathing. I am here for that purpose, and that purpose only. Unlike the world, Christians are not out trying to “find ourself.” We know who we are and what we are – the reflective light of Christ that illuminates God’s glory! If you are not striving to shine God’s glory into this dark world then you are nothing more than a lunar eclipse.

We need to understand the principle of light reflection. God, in His wise providence, gave us a wonderful object lesson on light reflection when He created the moon. God often teaches us through nature, such as “*go to the ant you sluggard*” (Prov. 6:6), so allow Him now to teach us how to let our light shine by considering one of the purposes of the moon.

The moon rules the night sky, and when there is a full moon it shines so brightly that you can read a newspaper by it. Who doesn’t love to stand outside on a summer night and stare up at that huge perfectly round light bulb, looking for “the man in the moon?”

Norman Rockwell’s famous painting called “Puppy Love” was drawn for *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1926. It has a young boy in overalls with his arm around a young girl with pigtails sitting on a flimsy home-made bench staring out at a full moon, with a puppy dog mournfully looking at the artist as he sits next to the boy’s fishing pole and can of worms. The puppy was forgotten by the boy’s new interest in girls and a romantic full moon. It’s classic Rockwell Americana.



But aside from romance what is a full moon’s purpose? One such purpose is to fully reflect the sun! Once every 29 to 30 days we earthlings experience this sensational phenomenon of a full moon (sometimes called a blue moon, harvest moon, or hunter’s moon – depending on the time of year). During this phase the moon is “looking at” the sun directly and reflecting its light. The moon itself is not giving off light, it’s only acting as a mirror. It is not the source of light, but the reflection of the source – the sun.

A lunar eclipse on the other hand occurs when the earth gets between the sun and the moon. In that unique occurrence the earth totally covers up the full moon’s light so that darkness prevails. In a brightly lit full moon it is looking at the sun and reflecting its glorious light, but in a lunar eclipse the full moon is looking at the earth and absorbing its darkness.

I firmly believe God meant for us to grasp this illustration. In this symbolic picture from nature we are to understand that when the earth (i.e. the world of sin) gets between the sun (Son – Christ Jesus) and the moon (i.e. Christians) then there can be no reflection of light. But when the full moon, represented by us, is not shadowed or eclipsed by the world, then we fully reflect the Son to the dark and sinful earth.

Paul illustrates this even further in his rebuke to the worldly-minded Corinthian church. Their reflection of Christ to the world had dimmed to a crescent moon (showing only a sliver of Christ), or even a new moon (which darkened Christ’s life completely). Paul challenged their carnal lifestyle by saying what Christians should be to the world:

“*But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord*” (2 Cor. 3:18).

What an absolutely beautiful picture of who we are supposed to be!

But then he expands that metaphor with these words:

*“For it is the God who commanded light to 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”* (2 Cor. 4:6).

If we spend our days “*looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith*” (Heb. 12:2), we will soon look more and more like Him. We will be “*transformed into the same image from glory to glory*.” Reflecting the face of Jesus Christ by letting His light shine in our hearts we will “*give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God*.” Thus, we become “*the light of the world, a city set on a hill that cannot be hid*.” In such reflection you “*let your light so shine before men that they see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven*.”

Our purpose on earth is fulfilled. Mission Accomplished!

What are you staring at? Or, better asked, *Who* are you staring at? Your answer determines whether you are a lunar eclipse or a full moon.

Let your light so shine. – Rick