



Prepare ye  
the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight.

—Luke 3:4



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**Bible Lens**

**Christ  
Jesus**

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# Christ Jesus

## from the Golden Text

### Revelation 22:16

*I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.*

“The bright and morning star” is seen as a reference to the planet Venus. At this time planets were believed to be wandering stars, and Venus was the brightest star in the predawn sky. Shining with a steady rather than a twinkling light, it was sometimes called the Shepherd’s Star.

Like this herald of daylight, Christ heralds spiritual light. The writer of Second Peter alludes to “the day star” in urging close attention to prophetic light: “Ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts” (1:19, Citation 1).

## from Section 1

### 1 | II Peter 1:19

*We have also a more sure word of prophecy.*

In this verse readers are assured that their knowledge of Christ Jesus isn’t based on “cunningly devised fables” (v. 16) but on eyewitness accounts. Prophecy, no longer an unfulfilled promise, has been verified by this witnessing. “The basis of faith,” a commentary notes, “is not mythology spun out of speculative imagination, but authentic apostolic testimony of actual events (16–18) and the prophetic word of Scripture (19–21).”

## from Section 2

### 5 | Isaiah 60:1

*Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.*

“Arise, shine” is a reminder of Zion’s divine heritage—uprightness and light, not prostration and darkness. Later Christian interpretation is presented by a scholar this way: “The light here referred to is evidently that of the gospel; and when the prophet says that that light ‘is come,’ he . . . sees in vision the Messiah as having already come, and as pouring the light of salvation on a darkened church and world.”

### 6 | Matthew 4:12, 14, 16

*Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; . . . that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, . . . The people which sat in darkness saw great light.*

John’s imprisonment marks the end of his ministry and the beginning of Jesus’ broader outreach—a shift depicted by one source as “the promise of dawn [giving] place to the daybreak.” Like other events surrounding Christ’s advent, this one is accepted by Christians as fulfillment of prophecy (see Isaiah 9:2).

### 6 | Matthew 4:18, 19

*Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they*



# An exploration of Bible citations from the *Christian Science Quarterly*® Bible Lessons

“...a lesson on which the prosperity of Christian Science largely depends.” —Mary Baker Eddy

*were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.*

Jesus does not offer simply to teach Simon and Andrew to be better men, but to make them fishers of men—to give them usable skills. The Greek word generally translated *disciple* (*mathēetēs*) also means apprentice. And the term *master* is often a translation of the Greek word for teacher (*didaskalos*). The teacher-apprentice relationship guaranteed that the disciple would learn the master’s trade so thoroughly as to be able to practice it independently.

Fishermen occupied a lowly status in ancient times. Yet, as a Bible authority writes, “God’s empire welcomes them with a new focus (follow me) and mission (fish for people). The story models Jesus’ call, their instant response, and the communal nature of discipleship as a new household based not on genes but on doing God’s will.... In his call they encounter God’s rule, presence, salvation.”

## from Section 3

### 10 | Matthew 6:6, 7

*When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.*

In Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus prefaces his prayer with a few guidelines. Since most people didn’t have separate or private rooms, his counsel about entering a closet

and closing the door symbolizes quiet individual communion with God.

“Use . . . vain repetitions” is translated from the Greek verb *battalogeō*, meaning to stammer—interpreted as repeating the same words or using many empty or idle words. Jesus warns against this form of praying and affirms that God knows every petitioner’s needs.

## from Section 5

### 19 | I Thessalonians 5:11, 15

*Comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.... See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.*

Paul is addressing the inhabitants of Thessalonica, a melting pot of Greek, Roman, and Jewish cultures. The principle of “eye for eye, tooth for tooth” (Exodus 21:24) underlay most legal traditions of the time. So despite their varied backgrounds, the Thessalonians would have agreed that law was based on retaliation—rendering “evil for evil.”

Echoing Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, the apostle enjoins Christians to follow the law of love, not revenge (see Matthew 5:38, 39)—and to apply it universally.

#### Resources quoted in this issue

**Cit. 1:** Laymon, Charles M. *The Interpreter’s One-Volume Commentary on the Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1971.

**Cit. 5:** Barnes, Albert. *Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Whole Bible*. New York, 1834–85. Also available at biblehub.com/commentaries.

**Cit. 6:** Buttrick, George Arthur, Nolan B. Harmon, et al., eds. *The Interpreter’s Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*. Vol. 7, *New Testament Articles, Matthew, Mark*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1951–57; Harrelson, Walter J., ed. *The New Interpreter’s Study Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2003.

# Christ, the light shining in darkness

By Marjorie Russell Tis

From the December 1999 issue of *The Christian Science Journal*

There's something so natural about a feeling of hope. It's our normal inclination to trust in God and to expect to see His goodness and love prevail in our lives. Sometimes, though, when the going is rough, it's not easy to see that things will work out.

Yet even then, even in what seems like the darkest of hours, it's possible to remain hopeful. It's possible because of a constant presence in our lives called the Christ. There is no hopeless case where Christ is.

"The light shineth in darkness," says the Bible, and Christ is that light—"the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:5, 9). The "true Light" shines right through adversity and can never be defeated. This pure influence of divine goodness is present now in human consciousness. It always has been. It always will be. Nothing—not the severest circumstances, not medical predictions, not others' opinions, not even our own doubts and fears—can ever snuff out Christ.

We might say that Christ is God's way of communicating His healing truths to humanity. In *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, explains it this way: "Christ is the true idea voicing good, the divine message from God to men speaking to the human consciousness" (p. 332).

It doesn't matter what the extent of our need, or how clueless we may feel, we can at any moment listen for and respond to God's saving message and find our need cared for. But how do we do this when it seems hard to pray? I've found that an important first step forward is to humbly acknowledge that Christ, Truth, is here, speaking to me, and

that I can hear the divine message; that I'm not waiting for the Messiah to come, but that it is already here. Right here. Then the way begins to open up.

The fact is, as the Bible puts it, "we live, and move, and have our being" in God (Acts 17:28). We don't live at a distance from God; we are one with Him and are like Him in quality—Godlike. What a relief it is to realize this even in a degree. It means that our genuine, spiritual self is never on the brink of disaster or failure, never in danger of being wiped out.

But let's say we've struggled with an illness for a long time, so long that we, and perhaps others, believe it may be too late for healing. The Christ is showing us the way out of that belief right now, leading us at this moment to forsake the conviction that matter can keep anyone the prisoner of pain and fear. Christ is calling on us to believe the gospel—in other words, to surrender unconditionally to the truth that our Father-Mother Mind maintains our substance as forever sound, healthy, and harmoniously secure in Spirit. It's never too late to wake to the reality of diseaseless being. In fact, this awakening is inevitable in every case.

Whatever we're facing, we can remember that Christ is in our midst, showing us all we need to know, enabling us to keep the faith and to demonstrate our God-blessed dominion. Take heart. Christ is lighting the way to your freedom and progress at this very moment.

To read the entire article, which has been shortened to fit this page, go to [jsh.christianscience.com/christ-the-light-shining-in-darkness](http://jsh.christianscience.com/christ-the-light-shining-in-darkness).