

FOURTH QUARTER STRATEGIES - November 7, 2015

In 2015, the United Nations designated 2016 as the International Year of Light to recognize the world's light-related scientific and technological advances. Recently, four Nobel Laureates converged on our local university here in Santa Barbara to celebrate the advances in light technology and share their knowledge with the crowd that gathered for a day-long symposium. I've always found it interesting how academia promotes itself as if it actually created something rather than giving credit where it's due. You see, we do not truly create - we discover what God has already created. Mankind amazes me in their accolades for what God has put in place from the beginning of time. We simply need to go to the first page of the Bible to see, "And God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light." (Genesis 1:3)

The antipathy of light is darkness. What I find quite intriguing is all this emphasis on light when Jesus tells us, "This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil." (John 3:19) Certainly there's nothing wrong with our ongoing efforts to improve light sources so we will not be caught in darkness. We know that most criminals prefer darkness so they cannot be easily detected by those who might be nearby. Infrared technology can truly help to detect crimes and incidents caught in the dark that cannot be seen by the human eye. Now, let's look a bit deeper into this subject of light and darkness.

Through my many years in business, I've seen my share of schemes that did not disclose their true intention. There are some in my profession, as in all disciplines, who simply deceive their prospective customers to secure the almighty sale. They place their well-being before the needs of the client. Full disclosure sheds the light needed for the buyer to see what they are really purchasing. Oftentimes, we are not aware of the risks associated with particular investment opportunities. King Solomon instructs us to: "Cast your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will find it again. Give portions to seven, yes to eight, for you do not know what disaster may come upon the land." (Ecclesiastes 11:1-2)

In all aspects of life, we would be wise to ensure adequate light is shed on whatever we are considering: whether a financial decision, relationships or whatever we believe to be true. There are many in this world who preach and teach a different message than the one presented in God's Word. Their words may tickle the ears and sound awfully good, but they cannot pass the acid test of scripture. We would be wise to seek counsel of trustworthy men and women who are blessed with the wisdom found in their deep faith in the Creator of this wonderful universe. In Proverbs 15:22 we are instructed that, "Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."

Many years ago, the philosopher Plato presented an intriguing analogy about prisoners chained in a cave all their lives unable to see anything but shadows of whatever passed by the cave's entrance. One of the prisoners finally breaks loose his chains and runs out into the light and sees true forms for the very first time. We too can become prisoners and not see the reality of Christ. Shadows are not real and this world unfortunately does not represent what truly lies ahead for eternity. Do you need to break loose from the chains of this world and place your trust in the Truth found in Christ?

Here to serve,

Jim Langley. CLU

Passages to Ponder: Genesis 1:3-5; 2 Samuel 22:26-29; Psalm 27:1-2; Psalm 119:105-106 & 129-130; 1 John 1:5-8

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Genesis 1:3-5 New King James Version (NKJV)

³Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ⁴And God saw the light, that *it was good*; and God divided the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

2 Samuel 22:26-29 New King James Version (NKJV)

²⁶"With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful;
With a blameless man You will show Yourself blameless;
²⁷With the pure You will show Yourself pure;
And with the devious You will show Yourself shrewd.
²⁸You will save the humble people;
But Your eyes *are* on the haughty, *that* You may bring *them* down.
²⁹"For You *are* my lamp, O LORD;
The LORD shall enlighten my darkness.

Psalm 27:1-2 New King James Version (NKJV)

27 The LORD *is* my light and my salvation;
Whom shall I fear?
The LORD *is* the strength of my life;
Of whom shall I be afraid?
²When the wicked came against me
To eat up my flesh,
My enemies and foes,
They stumbled and fell.

Psalm 119:105-106 New King James Version (NKJV)

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¹⁰⁵Your word *is* a lamp to my feet
And a light to my path.
¹⁰⁶I have sworn and confirmed
That I will keep Your righteous judgments.

Psalm 119:129-130 New King James Version (NKJV)

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¹²⁹Your testimonies are wonderful;
Therefore my soul keeps them.
¹³⁰The entrance of Your words gives light;
It gives understanding to the simple.

1 John 1:5-8 New King James Version (NKJV)

⁵This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. ⁶If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

⁸If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.