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**From the Desk of**

**Rev. Chuck**

Unity Church of Bakersfield  
1619 E Street, Bakersfield CA  
93301

[www.ucob.org](http://www.ucob.org)

Church: 661-327-8614 or  
Home Office: 661-391-0302

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Dear Friends,

One of my favorite passages is the statement made by Jesus to the people who gathered around to hear his message. He told them, "You are the light of the world...go and let your light shine."

What is that light he's talking about? It may have seemed strange to the people of his day to hear such words. After all, they lived in dark times. Rome ruled much of the known world and they were subjects of that Roman power, rule and taxation.

Throughout human history we have endured many a dark time. And yet, we always managed to move through it into something better. Today is no different than the dark days of the past. We have challenges coming at us from all sides. So what are we to do? Put into practice what the Master Teacher taught.

The light that Jesus is talking about is the light we were born with. The divine light of God in us as His child. It is our spiritual nature, our spiritual ID (made in the image and likeness), our spiritual DNA that is our light.

We let it shine on the dark places allowing wisdom, guidance, understanding, peace, and love to illuminate our minds, our hearts, our souls. It is in our minds that we get to choose the thoughts we wish to hold onto and it is here that the light is needed most.

Here's a test for you. For one day jot down every negative thought you have, word you say, phrase you affirm about your life and affairs. Then on another day do the same thing with your positive thoughts, words, and phrases. Start with the TV or radio. What programs do you watch and listen to? Are they life affirming

and positive or are they life denying and negative in tone and attitude. Do they support and focus energy on what is right with the world, allowing you to find solutions to your challenges. Or do they focus energy on what's wrong with the world thus keeping you locked in fear and desperation?

Think about this for a moment: All the wonderful, awesome, life changing, life affirming, life enhancing inventions throughout history did not come from those who lived in darkness and preached fear. All the great advancements in human history came from those individuals who lived by the spiritual principle of letting ones light shine. They looked out into the world of darkness and said, "There has to be something better. Let me shine my light into those dark places and see if I can find a solution to the challenge we are facing."

You have the power within you to do the same thing. It does not matter what you are facing, you have the power to choose to let God guide, direct, inspire, uplift, comfort, heal, and bring peace and harmony to any and all situations in your life. But it will not and cannot happen if allow yourself to be controlled by those who live in darkness and preach a doomsday message filled with fear.

This is what was going on in Jesus time when he said, "Go to God first, then to man as directed. Love God, love self, love neighbor as self. Forgive your enemies. Let your light shine. And when you do these things then you will do what I have done and greater will you do." His short life here with us was to teach us how to share our divine light with the world. He came, he taught, he left. Now it's up to us to continue that work.

As I begin my 18<sup>th</sup> year as your spiritual leader I promise to continue, to the best of my ability, to let my light shine. Will you join me? We need all the light bearers we can gather to help illuminate the dark places of the world.