

JESUS, OUR LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

"The true light that gives light to everyone, was coming into the world."

John 1:9

REFLECTION

Complete darkness is hard to find in modern Singapore. Even as we go to sleep, the blinking of little LEDs on our electronic devices or the soft glow of our night-lights continue unabated in many of our bedrooms. Things would be even worse if we were to go outdoors at night. A scientific analysis found that Singapore is the most light-polluted country in the world, "where the entire population lives under skies so bright that the eye cannot fully dark-adapt to night vision" (this study is available at <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.1600377>).

In short, we live in a land where light is plentiful, even over-abundant, to the point of light pollution.

So when we read a verse like John 1:9, many of us in Singapore may not fully appreciate it. Most of us can't deeply empathise with Jesus' early disciples, for whom light at night-time came only in miniscule amounts. No constant glow of streetlamps, no electric lights available at the mere flick of a switch, not even the warm glow of a kerosene lamp. Just a candle, a small oil lamp, maybe a bonfire outdoors – barely enough to keep the darkness at bay, much less dispel it. Most of us in Singapore may not feel the emotional intensity of sitting in the darkness, waiting for the light of dawn. But in Jesus' day, apart from the sun, it was near impossible to imagine a light source bright enough to illuminate an entire town, much less the whole world.

Yet John 1:9 boldly proclaims that the true light is for *every person*. The light is not just for a home, not just for a city, but for the whole world.

This light is Jesus. He is the One who illuminates every person. He is the One who gives light, warmth, and hope – to every home, to every city, to every person. Indeed, our BRMC church theme is: "Jesus, our light in the darkness, a lamp in every home".

As the prayer attributed to Catherine of Siena (refer to Prayer heading) reminds us, Jesus is the Light that surpasses every other light. Even in our light-saturated society, may the light of Jesus shine forth brightly in every heart and every home. May we be bearers of His Light to the world.

PRAYER

Shine upon us, O Lord,

with the light that surpasses all other light.

Cleanse us

with the fire that consumes all other fires.

And fill us

with the love that transforms all other loves.

For your own name's sake. Amen.

- *Attributed to Catherine of Siena (1347-1380)*

SUPPLICATION

- Have you been too accustomed to the darkness around you and in the world, and thus taken God's light and love for granted? Ask God to grant you a fresh, renewed glimpse of his wondrous light, that you might break forth with great thankfulness and great joy.
- Shine upon us, O Lord, within and without, with the light that surpasses all other light. Outshine all the other little flames which draw our sight and attention away from you. Pray for those who have strayed from the Lord, asking that His light will illuminate their hearts and minds and bring them back to the One True light, Jesus Christ the Lord.
- Cleanse us with the fire that consumes all other fires. Pray for yourself and for other Christians in your biological and spiritual family – that God will reshape and redirect our longings so we might desire Him above all else. May the Lord's cleansing fire dispel all darkness in our souls and refine us for His purpose.
- Fill us with the love that transforms all other loves. Ask that God will renovate our hearts, that we might love Him fully, that His love may flow in and through us unto others. Come, Lord Jesus, into our hearts, our lives, our homes, and our community. Shine, Lord Jesus, shine!

As those who see the light are within the light

and partake of its brilliance; even so,

those who see God are in God,

and receive of His splendor.

And His splendor vivifies them;

therefore, those who see God do receive life.

St Irenaeus of Lyons (2nd century AD)

If you need any prayer or pastoral care support, kindly contact the pastoral care team via:

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