

Above the brightness
of the sun

SAMPLE

Gospel news for eternal salvation

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There comes a time in all our lives, when we stop to think about the mystery of life, its source, its object and destiny. When we are thus receptive we are immediately arrested by the things we see around us, the earth, the sea, the sky, the living creatures, and it may well fill us with wonder and amazement. Things we had always taken for granted, suddenly take on a new meaning and we may well ask, How did it all start and by whom is it all maintained?

We are born into this world, we grow, we go to school, to college, we go to work, we get married, we have a family, we grow old and, eventually, we die—and after death? But remember, you and I have a never-dying soul. The Bible, the holy, inspired, infallible word of God, tells us that, and it would be utter folly to ignore such teaching by God, the greatest authority there could ever be.

The cycle of life and death repeats itself

in all living creatures. We cannot deny it, we cannot escape it; the evidence is there for everyone. However, God is not against us and, according to God's promise, it is still true that, While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease (Genesis 8, verse 22). In other words, a faithful Creator will see us through and all will benefit by His beneficence.

Then, when we go more deeply into the witness of creation, we cannot help being arrested by the sun in all its brilliant shining and our source of heat and light without which all life would perish. It would remind us of the outshining of God's love for mankind.

We learn from the Bible that there was light before the sun was created (Genesis 1, verse 3) but think of God *creating* the sun! What a demonstration of His infinite greatness, of His almighty, limitless creative power! Who else could have done it? It could not possibly happen by itself!

The physical facts are tremendously impressive. Scientists tell us the sun has an internal temperature of approximately 15,000,000°C. The surface temperature of over 6,000°C is so great, that we can feel the heat of the sun even though it is 93,000,000 miles away. It has continued giving heat and light, year after year for thousands of years, without any apparent diminution in energy or power. It is, in effect, a self-priming nuclear furnace, converting something like 5,000,000 tons of matter into energy every second! With its diameter of 860,000 miles it does not become smaller in size, nor cooler in temperature. Well may we be staggered in amazement!

We are all entirely dependent on this magnificent item of God's creation. We say 'item' because relative to the whole universe, it is only the centre of what we know as the solar system, itself part of a galaxy known as the Milky Way, consisting of over two hundred billion stars, visible only through powerful telescopes. Even the Milky Way is only a small part of the

whole. There are over two hundred billion galaxies containing countless heavenly bodies still being discovered.

Not only does the sun give us heat and light, it is the source of all energy and photosynthesis whereby all plant life is fed. Its heat evaporates the water from all oceans, filling the air with moisture, forming clouds, giving rain and snow, filling lakes and rivers, all vital in maintaining life. How could it all happen by chance? We come to the conclusion, once again, that it is only the Creator God who could possibly bring all this about, so well-balanced, so perfect.

All this leaves us spellbound, but what we have said so far is but physical after all. God speaks to us loudly in creation and we bow to Him in awe and reverence. What we see is only for a time. We read in 2 Corinthians 4, verse 18, The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

If we had only the witness of creation we would never know God's thoughts of blessing for mankind, declared to us in

the Bible: the word of God, the greatest authority, the amazing book of sixty-six parts, mostly written thousands of years ago, but giving us the message of God's interest in us, having our eternal blessing and happiness in mind. The Bible has often been ignored, ridiculed and scoffed at, but it is still the book of books, the best-seller in something like 1,600 languages and dialects. It still gives comfort to hungry souls because it shows us how we can have our sins forgiven by repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the lamp to our feet (Psalm 119, verse 105).

Once there was a Pharisee who totally rejected Christ and Christianity, but something absolutely amazing happened to him when he was travelling on the Damascus road. Suddenly he was struck down at midday by a light above the brightness of the sun shining from heaven round about him. He tells us about it himself (Acts 26, verse 13). That shining was both physical and moral.

Just think of it, above the brightness of

the sun! Could it possibly be? This was how the Lord arrested him on his evil course and appealed to him not in judgment but in grace, resulting in a complete turn-round in his life, converting him from a blasphemer, an insolent over-bearing man, to a man who was fully devoted to his Lord and Master. He was greatly used by God to help others. He preached and taught that Jesus, who met him on the Damascus road, was none other than Christ, the Son of God (Acts 9, verse 20).

If you do not know Jesus as your personal Saviour, there is a light from heaven that could shine into your dark heart; the sun in its brightness gives you all the physical comforts but there is a light which cannot be measured in human statistics because that light has to do, not with your body, but with your soul. Your never-dying soul will remain in darkness if this light does not shine into your heart. A light above the brightness of the sun! Think of it. How can it be? It means that you have to recognise that you are a sinner, your need of a Saviour

without whom your position and mine is hopeless. We would remain in darkness. The physical sun would still shine on us, for, He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good (Matthew 5, verse 45), but to have this divine light, morally above the brightness of the sun, we must come in repentance confessing our sins and putting our trust in the finished work of Christ who shed His precious blood on that cross of shame, Himself bearing our sins. He became our substitute and died, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God (1 Peter 3, verse 18).

By faith we are saved. Without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11, verse 6) but with it a whole new vista opens up to us. Life will have a different meaning and He would give us the Holy Spirit so that the light of Christianity becomes living and real and we would wish to be pleasing to the Lord Jesus in a world where He has been rejected.

If you feel you have not faith, ask God for it and remember faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God

(Romans 10, verse 17). The Bible is the word of God so it is imperative that you should read the Bible every day and faith will come and it will also be increased as you go through life. How many persons there are who say they have not faith and then you find they have never read the Bible. What folly! How can you receive it any other way than from God speaking to you by His word?

Although the conversion of Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road was special, and the result unique—he became the great apostle Paul whose writings you will find in the Bible—you too can experience a conversion. It may be difficult for you because it will mean you have to judge your innate human pride and your desire to merit forgiveness by good works or payments of some kind. There is only one Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, and only one way to have permanent settlement in your soul, to have peace with God on a righteous basis, by trusting in the perfect sacrifice of Jesus; the shedding of His precious blood, without which there is no

remission, no forgiveness, no salvation (Hebrews 9, verse 22).

So my friend, would you not yield and let the light of the gospel shine into your heart? Raise the shutter, open the blind, and experience the joy of salvation and peace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. You will discover a new way of life and find there is indeed a light, morally, above the brightness of the sun.

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