

# Christ in Ten Thousand Places

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*For God, who said,  
“Let light shine out  
of darkness,” made  
his light shine in  
our hearts to give  
us the light of the  
knowledge of God’s  
glory displayed in  
the face of Christ.*

2 CORINTHIANS 4:6

**I**n Plato’s famous Allegory of the Cave, people live imprisoned in chains, staring ahead at a wall with a fire casting light from behind them. Unbeknownst to them, puppets and moving objects behind them are creating the shadows they see on the wall. They believe the shadows are reality. They have no idea that there is a bright sunlit world outside. Even when others tell them about the real world, they still don’t want to leave their cave.

The allegory reminds me of Paul’s words: “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Cor. 4:4). In contrast, when we are born anew in Christ, we

become children of the light—children of the sunlit world (Eph. 5:8). God illuminates our hearts and minds through the gospel so we can see Christ in his glory. As we fix our eyes on Jesus and remain in him, God progressively puts everything in its proper perspective. The result is that the church collectively and people individually are better able to discern good from evil. We grow to see and discern the details of beauty, goodness, and truth—to see the world and people aright. No doubt, we need each other to remain in the light to experience God’s shalom—to see and to love.

Ephesians 5:9 reveals something breathtakingly beautiful about the fruit born of light. The fruit is “all goodness, righteousness and truth.” Gazing at the face of Christ, we start to see him more and more in our lives and in our world. We see Jesus showing up in thousands of ways and in all sorts of places—sometimes quite unexpectedly. We’re enabled to find the goodness, righteousness, and truth present even in difficult or painful circumstances. Similarly, others see these virtues manifested in our own lives and give thanks to God.

The knowledge revealed to us through God enlightening our hearts fills us with overflowing joy and enduring hope (Eph. 1:18). It is hope for the present because of the “incomparably

great power” we have through the Spirit to do God’s will in the world (v. 19). This hope is further buttressed by the knowledge that God is ever for us. And we also have hope for the future because we catch glimpses of our glorious inheritance.

Indeed, as we remain in Christ and connected to one another, we know at a deep level that evil is the counterfeit, the shadow world. As Gerard Manley Hopkins described in his poem “As Kingfishers Catch Fire,” we grow to see Christ playing “in ten thousand places” and the glory of God shining everywhere. This is Advent light.

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*Consider* 2 Corinthians 4:4-6  
and Ephesians 1:15-23; 5:8-11.

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How do these passages describe what spiritual illumination looks like? How has faith in Jesus—the Light—enlightened your own life?