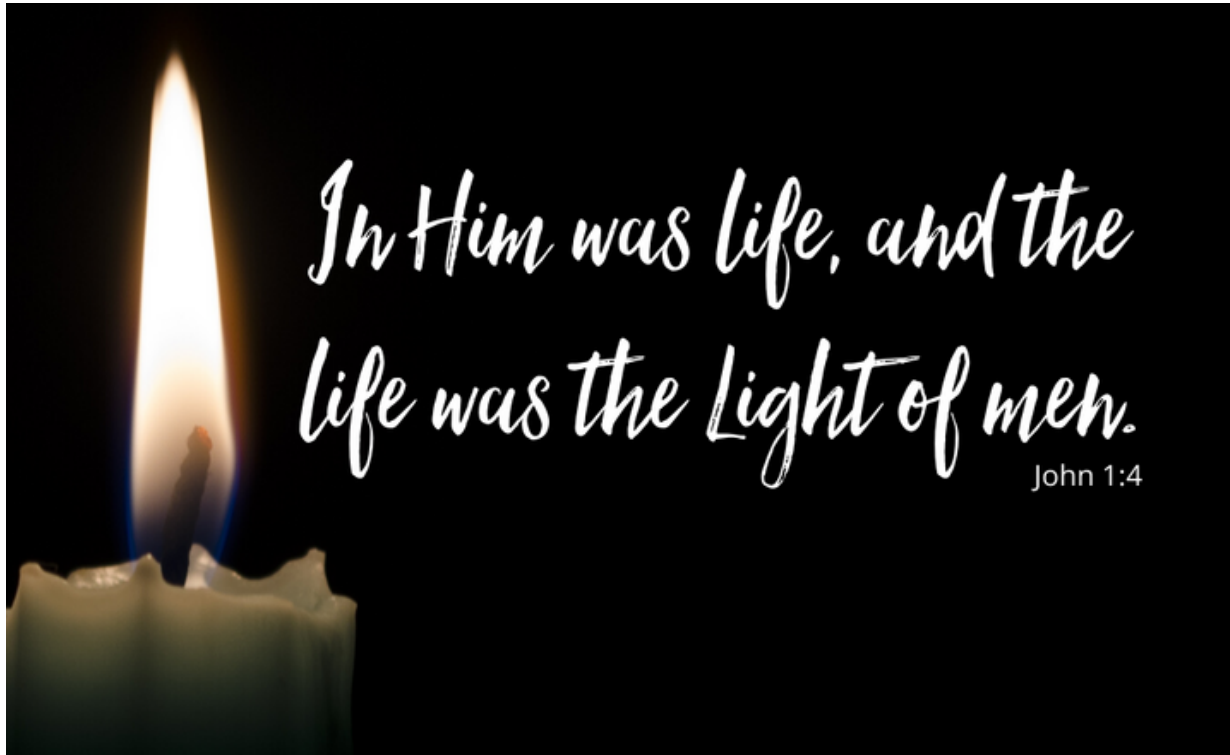


# Shine

Hope to  
Light Your  
World



# Shine



## Hope to Light Your World

*Everything looks different in the glitter of Christmas lights that spark hope in my heart.*

Tucked away in our heart is longing for the light of Christ, experiencing the gifts of hope, peace, and joy. Created to shine His light, don't we ache with frustration as we find ourselves jammed tight in an over-crowded schedule of commitments and expectations, especially this time of year?

*Longing for the light.*

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Light shines joy and love throughout the Christmas season, but it is also the power of God at work overcoming the darkness. Has the pace of life threatened to eclipse the true light of Christmas, as worshipping the Christ-child becomes one of many loved traditions of the season?

Honestly, some days it's a struggle to make time for the holy in this blessed holiday.

In the beginning, before time began to tick, before land separated seas, and before love lived in the hearts of men, the Word was with God.

And the Word was God.

*He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. —John 1:3 NASB*

# *Life + Light = Hope for this world.*

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Good news breaks the chaotic confusion of darkness with words that radiate life-giving power and presence of Christ.

*In Him was life and the life was the light of men.*  
—John 1:4 NASB

And the world has never been the same. The light of men, Christ is the light that breaks the power of death.

Jesus is life, *the eternal life*. And He is the life-giving light in the darkness of this lost and hurting world. The word life holds so more than the facts of biology. This God-life offers us the blessing to enjoy true life that comes from Christ. It's energetic, fresh, and strong, bringing the vitality of God into the way we live and act. It is the essence of His very life.

During Christmas, difficulty and hardship often mingle side-by-side with celebration. Truly, darkness comes in a variety of forms. When storms rage, we are caught off guard when the lights go out. We lose our bearings.

Disoriented, we grope and grasp, trying to find our way. It's all too easy to depend on ourselves to light the way--the how's and the why's of trying to somehow survive the confusion of the dark.

Darkness blankets hope with the heavy weight of difficult days. Hurting relationships, depleted finances, lost dreams, or broken hearts, life has no shortage of situations weary us under the weight.

Deep in the dark, we strain to see the choice to make or which way to walk. Reaching into our thoughts and emotions, shadows of anxiety, depression, grief, bitterness, or fear reveal our need for the light of hope.



# *Light for my way brings life for my soul.*

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On our dark days, whatever the cause, we look for the light. Difficult times can be especially hard at Christmas. Echoes from ages past, the prophecy becomes reality the blessed night Christ was born.

*The people who walk in darkness  
Will see a great light;  
Those who live in a dark land,  
The light will shine on them.--Isaiah 9:2 NASB*

The beautiful truth about light is the darkness cannot overcome it.

There is no dark so deep that the light of a single candle cannot shine. And there is no deed too dark that the purifying light of Christ cannot bring the saving grace of forgiveness.

Christmas beckons with the shimmer of true joy--the Light that ushers God's best into our worst.

## *Believe God's light will shine this Christmas!*

Turn out the lights and sit in the flickering glow of a candle or the twinkle of your Christmas tree. Reflect on these holy words, "In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men."

In what way do you need to experience the life and light of Christ this Christmas?



## *Light To Receive Your Life*

Soft light of a candle caresses the room, making shadows dance. A treasure of Christmas, light creates an ambiance that adds a special glow to these days we mark the coming of Christ. Yet, what we see is only a fraction of the full spectrum of light. From cosmic rays to infrared rays, our limited vision isn't equipped to see the full extent of light's power and presence.

There's so much we cannot see.

Doubt blinds our eyes to the light of Christ, distorts our view and diminishes our experience. Paul wrote words to penetrate the deep doubts that block our sight when we don't understand. "We live by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 4:18 NASB). Comparing faith with sight, believing is a way of seeing.

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With the birth of Jesus, the glory of God took form, visible to our eyes. Generations scoured the night skies searching for a sign of the Messiah, faith looking forward with expectation.

Glory of God cradled His head in a meager manger stall. Stars beckoned His birth as angels lit the night sky announcing the miracle. Even so, light of expectation tarnished with doubt. Many didn't recognize prophecies fulfilled before their eyes. So many didn't notice. Didn't believe.

Many still don't.

*The Light shines on in the darkness, and the darkness didn't understand it or overpower it or appropriate it or absorb it [and is unreceptive to it].--*

*John 1: 5 AMP*



Faith to light your life, let the wonder of Jesus open your eyes this Christmas. Open wide your spiritual eyes as you embrace the gift of grace, given for you. Light to receive your true life.

# From cradle to cross

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From cradle to cross, the Lord Jesus is a divine gift to receive.

*He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.--John 1:11-12 NASB*

Receive the light, the power of His life given for you. Welcome His presence daily as you appropriate His life. Trust God beyond what you see today. Make room for Him moment by moment. Relish the power of God lighting your life, overcoming the dark of every doubt and shining hope into every difficulty.

Reckon by faith every word of truth, each promise of God is this Word that grew flesh and lived large among us. Faith to light your life, let the wonder of Jesus open your eyes this Christmas. Open wide your spiritual eyes as you embrace the gift of grace, given for you.

Receive your true life.  
The one you are destined  
to live when you  
shine in the light of His glory.





## *No Longer Alone*

Nothing makes you feel more alone than living in the dark.

Isolated, unable to see, we grope for our way with steps tentative and every movement measured. Are you living a careful life, trying hard not to trip over the unseen or run into an obstacle you cannot see coming?

The dark has a way of sparking fear-based living and self-protective loving.

Hard days or days shut away in doubt drive us to protective measures where finding our way takes priority over people and the dreams we hold close. Every ounce of energy focuses on getting through, getting out, and getting on. Weight of the undone and unfulfilled hangs heavy in the black, while we obsess over every misstep and missed blessing.

*There it was--the true Light [the genuine, perfect, steadfast Light] which, coming into the world, enlightens everyone.--John 1:9 AMP*

# Grace to enlighten your heart.

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Disconnected, discontent, or dejected, spiritual darkness keeps us separated from God, ourselves, and others. What we miss, when we don't live in the light of Christ. Sight adjusts to lack of light, yet we miss the blessings before us. The ones beside us.

Do we see the light coming for us, waiting for us? Pure, perfect, and steadfast, the holy life of Jesus illuminates every dark corner.



Did you catch a glimpse of hope to light your world? Grace to enlighten your heart and lighten your load is yours. Embrace the truth that you don't have to create the light out of your lack. You don't have to see the solutions or somehow, someday, do one more thing to muster the power to get through.

The life of Jesus lights us up, purifying hearts with holy fire. He is our great gift of righteousness--His right way of living, thinking, relating, and being.

Casting out the dark of loneliness and confusion, His light sets right our heart. Basking in the light of His glory, we see the saving of our souls from every dark thing. Informing, teaching, giving, understanding . . . transformation dawns day by day, even moment by moment.

# God with us.

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Blessing beyond all that glitters in this bent world, we don't have to search for the light, for love came down to us at Christmas.

Unwilling to leave us in the dark, separated from God, Jesus set aside His God-glory, the radiance of heaven. When light enters the dark, we see things differently. Shadows take form, confusion becomes clear, and we know we are no longer alone.

*And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

*--John 1:14 NASB*



Taking on flesh, tender covering of infant skin, love lives among us. His name is Emmanuel, God with us. Living and dying that we might see. Raised again that we might share His life, to shine with the light of His glory.

No longer alone, the dark loses power to separate. To isolate. To devastate. Glory Baby, the eternal life and light of the weary world lives among us.

And we are no longer alone.





## *Saved by His Light*

*The Lord is my light and my salvation;  
Whom shall I fear?--Psalm 27:1 NASB*

The dark has a way of sparking fear-based living and self-protective loving.

Have you noticed how hard it is to make declarations in the dark? Fear growls fierce in the absence of light. The Psalmist David faced dark days with a decision to hold fast to the light.

Naming the light, calling it forth and telling it true, David boldly put his eyes on God rather than the threat rising against him. Words of an earthly king defeat the dark with a simple practice to push back fear.

Salvation's light brings us to heaven, but it is also the light that gets us through the day. Light of God saves us from fear in our moment of need.

Faith forward, we find the words of John declaring Jesus is the life and light of men.



# *Saving grace for this holy moment.*

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Circumstances and emotions may run wild, but God never changes. What a difference light makes in the dark. Light for this very moment, what ever that may be, the word for salvation is translated *yesha'* in Hebrew. This saving grace includes deliverance, salvation, and rescue, but also blessings of safety, welfare, prosperity, and victory.

Salvation for heaven is also light for the moment. Consider the variety of the saving power of God:

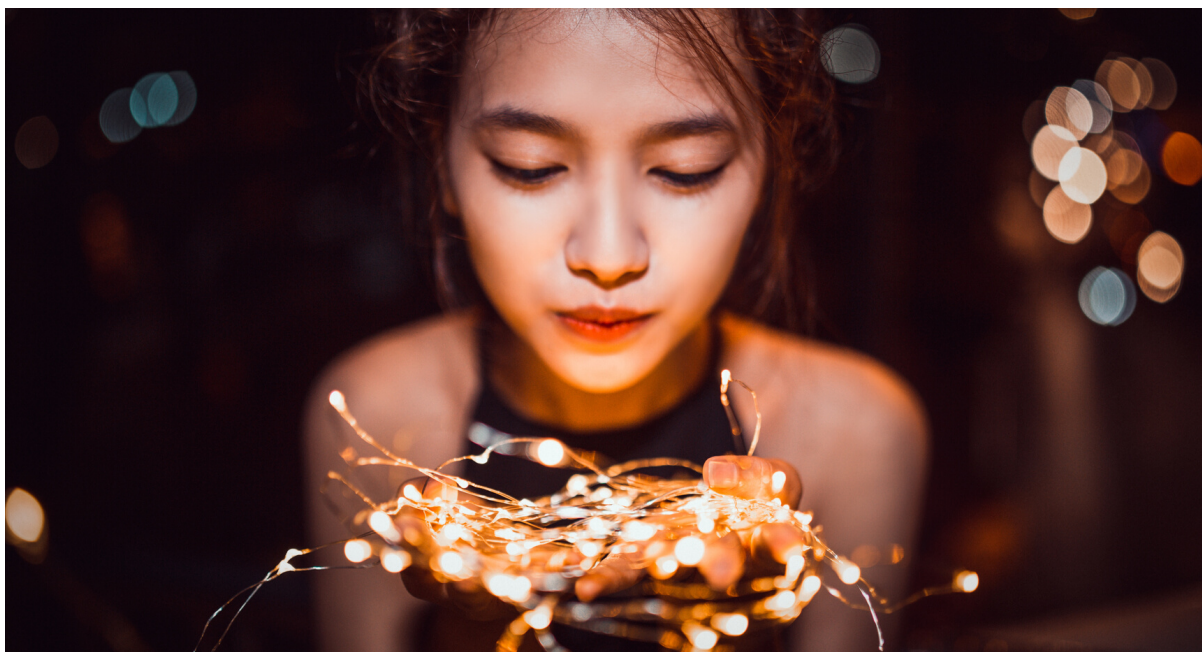
- Deliverance from power of sin
- Saving from death to life
- Rescue from habits, ideas, and situations holding us captive
- Safety of knowing security as a child of God
- Welfare--our well being in the provision and life of God.
- Prosperity to fully live the light of Christ's life
- Victory over sin, lies, behaviors, failures

This light that saves is victory in the battle. Light of truth to overcomes despair. A few lines later in this Psalm, David admits, "I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living (NASB)."

David experienced victory by not allowing his emotions to define his faith in the moment. He held tight to the unchanging truth that God is good even when dark days come. Light comes to our rescue as we embrace the life of Christ in this moment, this holy now.

The saving of God is both a one-time act, but also a daily relying on God's goodness. Look for the light, resist fear, and believe you will see the goodness of God in your life.

Isn't today the perfect time to step into the light with your own declaration of truth?



## Reflect His Light

Dusk descends early on the shorter days of winter, but Christmas lights twinkle and shine like garlands of grace. Rays of joy, the lights of Christmas brighten the darkest season of the year.

Ever feel like if you don't do all the details, they won't get done? Like it's all on you to ensure the traditions, the gifts, and the goodies wait for your hands to do the work? Another aspect of darkness is the disorientation of our perspective.

Relying on self is a daily temptation. Here's the relieving and restoring truth: we are not the light. Bustling through the activity of this season, distraction dims the true light of Christmas. Short-sighted, this not-seeing the holy in our holiday comes easy in the busy of December days.

Too much to do, we get up earlier, work harder, and try to move faster. With visions of the perfect holiday dancing in our heads, we face the temptation to shift from living in the light to trying to be the light. *Trying to get it all right in order to be all right, every detail Pinterest-perfect.*

# Plug into the power.

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On these days, I come weary to the light as my resource as if the Holy Spirit merely gives a little boost to power me through the day. I forget, losing sight of the truth that I don't have to be the light for those around me.

*There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light.*

*--John 1:6-7 NASB*

John understood he was not the light.

No false sense of responsibility or self-importance dimmed his view or derails his purpose. Maybe today, you need the reminder, a relieving ray of hope that you don't have to produce the light with your own effort or performance.

Take a breath. Inhale deep and rejoice in the truth that God never asked you to create your own light, or anyone else's for that matter. Like John, simply tell the story of the Light. Reflect the wonder of His light in your life as you testify to His goodness.

Like the bulbs bright and sparkly on your Christmas tree or illuminating your front door, your role is to shine His light. Plug into your power source, the vital current of Christ's life to radiate joy. Share the light through encouraging words and acts of love, free from the burden of trying to be what we are not.

Clear about how to shine in the call of God, John understood he was to tell about the light, preparing the way for Jesus. Making room and making way, he tirelessly told the story of the Light that shines in the dark of sinful hearts separated from God.

# *Moments to share are moments to shine.*

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Light of the world and life for our souls, Jesus is the story to be told. Tell of His goodness in your life. Share the words that shed light in every dark place. These are words we need to hear, reminders of grace and beacons of hope.

*We all live off his generous bounty,  
gift after gift after gift.  
We got the basics from Moses,  
and then this exuberant giving and receiving,  
this endless knowing and understanding—  
all this came through Jesus, the Messiah.  
No one has ever seen God,  
not so much as a glimpse.  
This one-of-a-kind God-Expression,  
who exists at the very heart of the Father,  
has made him plain as day.--John 1:16-18 MSG*

We finally see it, grace to light the load as the true light penetrates with each expression of God's love. What a blessing to let go of the pressure of creating the light with our efforts. Tell the story of His light in your life, the wonderful words that only you can tell.

Moments to share become moments to shine, each testimony a light on the strand of His light in your life.





## Unwrap the Gift of Grace

Good things come in small packages, or so the familiar cliché goes. Visions of sweet babies and velvet boxes encasing iridescent diamonds come to mind. Value is not measured by the size of the gift, and our truest treasures are often disguised in the small things.

*For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.--John 1:16 NASB*

Riches beyond measure simply stated in 12 words. All we need waits in this one sentence. Every lack, every problem, every resistance, and every longing is filled in the life of Christ.

*And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.--John 1:14 NASB*

The ultimate gift was born, a baby with tiny fingers and toes. With the miraculous power of God, Jesus manifests the fullness of God given for us.

# Unwrapping grace this Christmas.

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Divine completion is what He offers, making us holy and whole through His life. The overflowing, uncontainable and unstoppable fullness of the Father comes with grace upon grace.

For it is grace that He offers to exchange His light for our darkness, His life for our sin. A completing gift to level our empty with God Himself.

Grace upon grace, look close in the light of the meanings of these words. The favor and mercy of God, grace is the undeserved blessing of forgiveness, restoration, abundance, and joy.

Grace of God given in Christ is a gift to be unwrapped with your life. How often have we left this precious gift unused on the shelves of self-sufficiency? How many times have we forgotten that we have the fullness of God's very life?





I hope there are gifts, wrapped and ready, waiting to be opened on Christmas. In the light of your Christmas tree, reflect on these questions:

What if you never open these gifts given with love? What will you miss?

Prayerfully open the gift of God's fullness with hands tearing at the wrapping of joy, eager for the light of grace to illuminate your heart in a fresh way this Christmas.

*I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints . . . --Ephesians 1:18 NASB*

If you have never truly accepted the gift of salvation, make this your moment to open the gift of eternal life. Don't wait and don't miss out. Opening God's gift of grace to light your darkness is simple: believe and receive.

*But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name...--John 1:12 NASB*



## *Shine in Light of His Glory*

Let the light of God's words spark hope to light your world. Holy moments to enlighten your heart, these Scriptures will energize your faith to shine. Take time to bask in the glow of all God wants to show you in these words. In the days to come, ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to the wonderful truths in these words. As we turn the calendar to a new year, let this be your year to shine in the light of His glory!

*Arise, shine; for your light has come,  
And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. . .  
Then you will see and be radiant,  
And your heart will thrill and rejoice . . . --Isaiah 60: 1, 5 NASB*

*"I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."--John 8:12*



# *Light for today.*

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*For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.--Colossians 1:14-17*

*For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light.--Psalm 36:9*

*The Lord bless you, and keep you  
[protect you, sustain you, and guard you];  
The Lord make His face shine upon you [with favor],  
And be gracious to you [surrounding you with lovingkindness];  
The Lord lift up His countenance (face)  
upon you [with divine approval],  
And give you peace [a tranquil heart and life].’ --Numbers 6:24-26 AMP*

*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.--Matthew 5:8*

*I sought the Lord, and He answered me, And delivered me from all my fears.  
They looked to Him and were radiant, And their faces will never be  
ashamed.--Psalm 34:4-5*

*For God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” is the One who  
has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of  
God in the face of Christ.--2 Corinthians 4:6*

# *Live in His light.*

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*So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life. . .--Philippians 2: 12-16 NASB*

*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light...--1 Peter 2:9*

*Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.--Matthew 5:18*

# Shine with the light of Jesus.



Dispelling the perception that holiness is a standard of conduct rather than a gift to receive, **Holy in the Moment** includes my personal journey in finding help and hope for anxiety, people-pleasing, perfectionism, discouragement, and insecurity as well as biblical insights and simple ideas to enjoy a deeper life with freedom in Christ. You'll also enjoy a story of a Christmas miracle from a dark time in my life (Chapter 1)!

The truth is that holiness is a secret to freedom and joy, empowering us to live out of our identity in Christ. How do we bring the reality of grace, healing, and holiness into our daily experience?

How do find the holy in the hard times of life? How do we bring our thoughts, emotions, and actions in line with our faith?

*One choice at a time.*

With each holy moment enjoy the life God created for you, and let His life radiate through you into the darkness of this hurting world.

## You were made to be holy, so let your light shine!



A close-up photograph of a birthday cake with red candles. One candle is lit, and a sparkler is being set off, creating a bright burst of light and sparks. The text "Let Your Light Shine" is written in a red, cursive script across the center of the image.

Let Your Light  
Shine