

THE SEASON OF LIGHTS

Ed Dunn

I remember Christmas time as a child. I remember riding together with my brothers and sisters in the backseat of our old family station wagon. As the days were short on sunlight during the wintery months in our particular part of Western Pennsylvania, many of our rides together took place after dark. We thought of ourselves as “country

a real seasonal treat.

As children, we were quite lucky. Our family station wagon featured a back seat that had been positioned smartly to face the rearview window. From that point-of-view, we could watch the world go by. You could bet your very best Christmas present on the fact that my brothers and sisters and I would fight hard for the view that backseat window

road, there was absolutely nothing to see as we’d look out that window. Just pitch-darkness all around us. And then, suddenly, there was everything to see.

Out of the darkness, the most beautiful lights, Christmas lights of red, green, blue and white, would burst into view and light up our world. Through the frosty glass we would “oooh!” and “ahhh!” as we watched the brilliant colors twinkle from the edges of a familiar farmhouse or the branches of a well-positioned pine. On, and then off, darkness, and then, light. We could’ve asked Dad to drive us around all night.

Our childhood memories can be one of the most precious aspects to any Christmas season. For me as a child, I must confess it was always all about “The Season of Lights.” The pure brilliance and beauty of the

“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” —Matthew 5:14-16

bumpkins” who grew up “in the sticks,” and as such, we knew if we could catch a glimpse of the Christmas lights from “town” on one of our rides, it would make for

would offer.

I remember the fun was in the anticipation. As Dad would drive us slowly out our long, wooded driveway and on to the paved “main”

colors, set against the darkness in places well-familiar, filled me with joy and hope. Whether drawing from memory or from anticipation, I knew I was home. We all were.

Remember, we live with Christ Jesus resident within us.

As we approach this Christmas season, a true season of lights, it is helpful to remember Christ Jesus is resident within us. We give thanks that we are no longer in the darkness. "You are the

light of the world," Jesus reminds his followers (Matthew 5:14). That light has a clear and visible purpose and cannot be hidden from view.

As Jesus has made his home with us, we make our home with him and with each other. We make our home in the world. In a very real sense, we together light up the world. Through our lives in him, we bring brilliant light to the darkness. We bring beautiful light, in many different colors, to each

other. To know this truth and to live from this light is to give joy and hope to the world. As that is what this Christmas season is truly all about, we share in this good news together. As Christ lives in us, he shines his light through us. By his grace, God illuminates the world with us, brilliant and beautiful lights, who reflect the Light of Christ. May you and yours have a brilliant and beautiful season of lights. □

Ed Dunn is an Associate Editor of CWRm and PT magazines. He is currently publishing his first book, Peripheral: The Journey from Partial to Perfect Sight.

