

Look on the bright side

Do you know that in spite of the global pandemic, we have reason to smile? Last week I went grocery shopping. While paying the cashier, I handed him a short article, saying with a smile, "Here's a few thoughts that give a positive perspective on the pandemic. I think you'll like it." He glanced at the first line, "The Corona pandemic has shaken the world. Could it be a *Wake-up call*?" and then smiled, "Thanks a lot," he said.

It may seem unusual to say that a wake-up call helps us look on the bright side, but think carefully, "What happens when you wake up in the morning?" **Sunrise!** The imagery of **sunrise** signals the dawning of a promising new day according to the prophets. Malachi said the Messiah is "the **Sun** of Righteousness (who) will rise with healing in his wings." Similarly, Zechariah described Christ as "the **rising sun** from heaven" and Jesus called himself "the bright morning star." (Malachi 4:2; NLT, Luke 1:78; Revelation 22:16, bold added) Elsewhere in the Bible we read that Jesus' "face shone like the **sun** in all its brilliance."

These verses remind me of Ecclesiastes 11:7, "Light is sweet, how pleasant to see a new day dawning." Christians know Jesus is "the **light** of the world," but isn't it interesting that recent research shows **sunlight** degrades the coronavirus and even destroys it! Truly, **light** is a beautiful metaphor of hope. It should be no surprise that Jesus Christ is relevant in these dark days as many people are grieving the loss of loved ones. Many economists in Canada where I live, warn that we're "enduring an economic collapse (which) will make the Great Recession seem tame by comparison." This crisis is a knock-on effect from drastic measures taken so as to minimize the death toll from the dread coronavirus. No one wants to die or see others die.

Seventy years ago, Ugo Betty wrote a book called, *Struggle to Dawn*, saying that, "Every tiny part of us cries out against the idea of dying and hopes to live forever." This statement echoes a wise saying of Solomon, "God has set eternity in the human heart." (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

Speaking of *dawn* it seems Ugo Betty hinted at hope, but was he also alluding to another proverb of Solomon? "The path of the righteous is like the **morning sun**, shining ever brighter till the **full light** of day ...

along that path is immortality." (Proverbs 4:18; 12:28, bold added) I remember quoting these beautiful words at my mother's funeral. Now, in this pandemic with so many people in mourning and unable to hold memorial services, maybe others are also drawing comfort and inspiration from these same Scriptures.

To be sure, Jesus said, "I am the **light** of the world," but he also said to his followers "you are the **light** of the world." In fact he went on to explain, "your **light** must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16, GNB, bold added) If ever there was a time for Christians to shine, it is now. Why don't you check out the article, Wake-up call, and think of ways it can help you point people to Jesus.

<https://tinyurl.com/ybxn49uj>

Endnote: Can sunlight kill the coronavirus?

Ultra-violet rays from sunlight come in three forms, A, B and C. The latter "can be used to quickly kill pathogens [like coronavirus] on surfaces in controlled settings," notably cell phones and face masks. (source) However, this doesn't necessarily guarantee that going out in the sun will protect us against becoming infected.

New York Times columnist Richard Schiffman says we should Let the Sunshine in, "These (positive) results might partly explain why flu transmission is lower during the summer, when people spend more time outdoors in the sun." Then he quotes Dr. Dabisch from the Department of Homeland Security, "It may be due to a combination of the fact that sunlight actually degrades the virus, and also that vitamin D has been shown to be effective in fending off infections". Schiffman also notes that Dabisch's "team and others are currently conducting research to determine whether sunlight also destroys the Covid-19 virus, or mitigates its effects. While few scientists believe that the sun will prove to be a magic bullet against the pandemic, medical research already amply demonstrates that exposure to sunlight can help to make us happier and healthier at a time when we are in need of both."

Richard Schiffman also quotes from a recent book by British researcher Richard Hobday, *The Healing Sun: Sunlight and Health in the 21st Century*.

Like physical exercise which has some value, sunlight has some value, but it is, of course, the Son who is the ultimate healer. For the healing of body and soul we must turn to Jesus.