

Blackout

In 1965 I remember being in my college dorm room when the lights went out. Looking out the window it quickly became evident the power outage was widespread. It was pitch dark as far as the eyes could see. Turning on the battery powered radio I soon found out that power outage extended throughout the entire Northeastern United States – the largest blackout in the history of the country.

The heaviest concentration of the nation's population was in total darkness, involving seven states and a portion of Canada. There was total darkness in every direction, creating a strange, uneasy feeling. When it is dark we are all without a sense of direction. People are lost in the absence of light.

There was no choice but to wait for someone to illuminate the world.

Can you imagine what it would be like if we were huddled in a totally darkened stadium, packed with some 100,000 other people? Then, one person in each section of the stadium lights a single candle. The fragile, faint flicker of each candle is a blessing to those near it, and when combined with others, casts illumination on the entire stadium.



As a Christian, you may be the single candle radiating to those around you. Sharing your faith enables others to find their way. *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. (Psalm 119:105)* Now, multiply that by other fellow believers also providing light to those around them. The result is light for an entire community.

We live in a dark world, with many people who don't have the Lord in their lives. Without a relationship with God people may worship money or other "idols" as their priority of life. Lost in the darkness of their lack of faith, we chase satisfaction from the wrong sources. They lack the feeling of unconditional love and forgiveness of sins. What a bleak, dark world.

A community without Christ is a community in darkness. As a Christian, you can provide the illumination of faith that helps others find the way. Isaiah 49:6, often considered the Great Commission of the Old Testament, says, *"I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."* What an opportunity to make a difference in the world!

It doesn't help for you to hide your faith, illuminating a lonely path only for yourself. You have the potential to help so many other people come to faith. Be the person that encourages fellow believers to do the same and you can change the culture of your community.

Scripture: *You are the light of the world. A city 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 men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:14-16)*

Question: Name three ways you can encourage your community to be a Christian community.

Prayer: Lord. Let me be a beacon of light, sharing your Word with those who live in darkness. Amen.