

## Message for August 16, 2020

There's a valuable lesson we could all learn from plants. (yes I know, I've already written several messages on similar things, such as seeds, weeds, gardening and the like, but this is what I believe the Lord wants me to say this week. So please bear with me on this).

Have you ever noticed that most plants, in order to grow and bear seeds or fruit, always face the sun whenever possible. This is more noticeable for certain kinds of plants such as sunflowers, vines, and plants growing in partial sunshine. Of course there are exceptions to this rule as some plants do reasonably well in shade. But as a general rule, the sun is necessary to provide the light, energy and warmth required for growth. And if one of these is transplanted and oriented away from the sun, over a short period of time it turns so that it again faces the sun. It's a remarkable thing to observe. It seems to recognize its source of life.

Now consider our own source of life and light. Spiritual light that is. It's not the sun, but the Son. He is the source of all that is necessary to sustain life. And His light shines continuously. Shouldn't we always be turned toward Him, seeking His presence, grace, and blessings, just as plants are always turned toward the natural light to receive its benefits? Yet how easy it is for us to be distracted and our attention directed elsewhere. When that happens we are not receiving the full benefit of our light and our growth is stunted. If this happens over too long a period of time, our fruit does not blossom or ripen, and we begin to wither just like a natural plant would if deprived of its sunlight. The bad news is that because this is a gradual process, it can go unnoticed until serious problems arise in our Christian walk. This might require drastic action of some kind to remedy the situation. But the good news is that our light, the Son, is ever ready to shine anew upon us to impart forgiveness and new life into our being. All it takes is a recognition of our need, and a steadfast return into His life-giving

light. So if you're struggling right now with something, make sure you are turned into the radiant face of Jesus. He will brighten your outlook with hope and shine His love upon you. Even if you're not struggling, keep gazing upon Him and He will keep you in His glorious love and peace. Either way, may you live your life fully in His light, and may you be blessed in all you do.

Plants may not have a brain, but as I said, we could all learn valuable lessons from them.

Blessings of grace, wisdom, peace, and love,  
Pastor Joe

*"Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." --- John 8:12*

*"This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." --- 1 John 1:5-7*

## OUR TRUE POWER SOURCE

The story is told of someone who plugged a power strip into itself and then couldn't understand why the system wouldn't turn on! We get a kick out of such tales, yet how often do we try to "power" our own lives? We frequently think we need to be the source of our own strength, joy, peace, energy and wisdom.

Jesus doesn't teach us to find life within ourselves — or in any human being or earthly circumstance, object or philosophy. Rather, calling himself the good shepherd, Jesus says, "I have come that [my sheep] may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

We don't access that abundant life by "plugging into" ourselves. Instead, Jesus invites us to plug into his power — and joy, peace, hope, truth — through prayer and Scripture, worship and service, fellowship with other Christians and the beauty of God's world.

### "GOD IS THE FOUNTAIN"

God is the fountain whence  
ten thousand blessings flow;  
to him my life, my health and friends,  
and every good, I owe.  
The comforts he affords  
are neither few nor small;  
he is the source of fresh delights,  
my portion and my all.  
He fills my heart with joy,  
my lips attunes for praise;  
and to his glory I'll devote  
the remnant of my days.

—Benjamin Beddome

"If you want to touch the past, touch a rock. If you want to touch the present, touch a flower. If you want to touch the future, touch a life."

—Author unknown



I AM THE

LIGHT

OF THE

WORLD

J O H N 8 : 1 2

*"The Little Church That Could"*  
*"Believing is Seeing"*