The God Spot

Light of the world

'In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.' If you go to a service at church this Christmas, then you may hear these words read from the first chapter of the gospel of John. The light in the darkness is Jesus and John is using this picture language to help us to understand the significance of the baby born in Bethlehem over two thousand years ago.
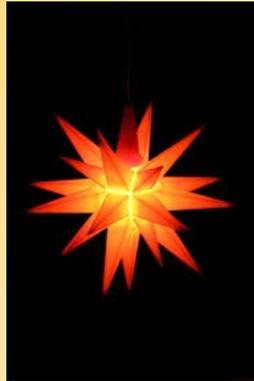

Light always beats darkness. If you turn on a light in dark room, then the darkness is banished instantly. On a dark night, fireworks illuminate the sky. In this passage, John is stating the obvious—of course darkness cannot overcome light.

At Christmas, it can be tempting to limit Jesus to the circumstances of his birth. We like to treat him as the baby who is worshipped by shepherds and wise men, and protected from harm by his parents. As a baby, he can have no authority over us. However, by reading the first chapter of John then we see that Jesus' birth—the light coming into the world—made the banishment of darkness and sin's power over the world inevitable.

In verse 9, we see that Jesus is the true light and he gives light to everyone by coming into the world. Jesus' teaching shows us that everyone needs the light he brings—that without him, we will always be walking in darkness and not be able to make things right with God. But as the light, Jesus conquers the darkness, banishing our sinful status, wrongdoing and death—and brings us in a right relationship with God the Father.

Christmas is full of light—twinkling trees, flickering candles, glaring decorations—reminding us of Jesus, the light of the world.

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