



YOUR LIGHT WILL RISE

June 2019

*. . . if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the oppressed,
then your light will rise in the darkness,
and your night will become like the noonday.*

Isaiah 58:10

In the early days of Living Room support group, I spoke much about what I called other-centeredness—the opposite of self-centeredness. This way of living holds much benefit for people when they go through depression. By focussing on others' needs instead of their own, it's possible to start feeling better. Their *night becomes like the noonday*. Well . . . almost.

In my own life other-centeredness helps me feel that I'm not alone when I have emotional pain. When I hurt I'm able to understand the pain of many. It helps me see injustice where it exists, find the words to show what's wrong and hopefully create change in some way.

When we live like this, we are in some small way reflecting how it was for Jesus.

Jesus' most common adversaries were the religious elite of the day, the Pharisees. They were

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legalistic and believed they stood above everyone in their holiness. They separated themselves from the common people, considering them unclean.

But Jesus was different. He went out of his way to extend love where it wasn't expected—to society's outcasts. He included those who others excluded. Jesus' message differed from that of the Scribes and Pharisees. His was a message of love, acceptance, and forgiveness. Theirs was a message of judgment and condemnation.

Jesus suffered in many ways. He was rejected, falsely accused, mocked, treated with disdain. He saw the wickedness of the world around him. Deeply felt its ugliness. To all who were affected as he was he showed his love and compassion.

When you find yourself in a dark place, try helping another. Jesus, the most other-centered person who ever lived, will be your best example. Ask him to fill your heart with his love and to help you share that love with others. These are prayers he would be happy to answer.

May your light rise in the darkness, just as the prophet Isaiah told us it would.

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