



GOD'S FIREWORKS

Devotion

(Remember: two readers, three copies of devotion. If suggested hymn is used, need musical accompaniment and accompanist, hymnals.)

Reader One: Do you remember your first fireworks display? Do you remember “ooing” and “aahing” under a canopy of brilliant colors bursting into the night? You are not alone. According to the July 2013 issue of *Reader's Digest*, Americans are enthralled with fireworks and spend about \$600 million dollars for them in celebration of the Fourth of July.

Reader Two: Wow! That's a whole lot of pops, bangs, and fountains of exploding lights, that all go up in smoke!

Reader One: It surely is! Now here's a thought – what if we tried to HIDE all this pyrotechnic glory under some huge black canvas canopy? Wouldn't that be a waste? Fireworks are made to be seen!

Reader Two: That reminds me of what Jesus said about us in the Beatitudes. *“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).

Reader One: Yes, since we are children of God, we should let our lights sparkle and glow as witnesses to others and to this perverse generation. There are those who would throw a wet blanket over our enthusiasm in the faith. There are those who desire to extinguish our lights!

Reader Two: St. Paul encourages us to remain in the light, and not be drawn back into the darkness. *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them* (Ephesians 5:8-11).

Reader One: The first book of John in the New Testament gives further identity to the Light: *This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by 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, his Son, purifies us from all sin* (1 John 1:5-8).

Reader Two: Dear Friends, we are God's little lights, and we are meant to shine and sparkle like all the stars in the universe. Each of us should be a firework, ignited by our faith in God.

Reader One: Therefore, let nothing cover up our brilliance. Let us stay connected to our Power Source through Word and prayer.

Reader Two: This reminds me of a favorite song we used to sing in Sunday School: (sing or say) "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine. This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine."

Reader One: (sing or say) "Won't let Satan blow it out. I'm gonna let it shine. Won't let Satan blow it out. I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine."

Reader One and Two together: (sing or say) "Hide it under a bushel – NO! I'm gonna let it shine. Hide it under a bushel – NO! I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine."

Reader Two: Don't put your fireworks under a basket! Let others see your good works and glorify our Father in heaven. Let's spread the Good News that Jesus spoke when He said, "*I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life*" (John 8:12).

Reader Two: Great amounts of money spent on one huge brilliant firework celebration could never equal the majesty, beauty and wonder of the Gospel! What a breath-taking display of love from our Savior, Jesus, when He died for us! Let's give God the glory and radiate even brighter than ever, our fireworks of faith!

Both readers join in the Prayer: Dear Lord God, we praise You and thank You for giving us the great honor of being light-bearers for You! Forgive us our sins, lead us in ways pleasing to You, and let us be always filled with Your Light! Amen.

Suggested closing hymn: "Lift High the Cross" *LSB* 837, *LW* 311

Scripture references are from the NIV.

God's Fireworks
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Published by Lutheran Women's Missionary League, 2015