

# Lutheran Women in Mission

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## Shine Like Stars by Susan M. Schulz

### Opening

Sing together "Christ be my Leader" (LW 365, *All God's People Sing* 81) or "This Little Light of Mine" from *The Other Song Book*.

### Afraid of the Dark

Were you afraid of the dark as a child? Did you insist on having a night light? Is it ever wise to fear the darkness?

This unchristian world is a very dark place. What dark forces war against us?

### 1 Peter 2:11

### 1 Peter 5:8

How can Christians expect to be treated by this dark world?

### John 15:19 and 16:33

Talk about times when you were aware of these dark forces at work in your life.

### Light, Please!

How does **John 8:12** describe Jesus?

According to **1 Peter 2:9-10** how did we receive the light?

### Reflecting the Light

The deep darkness of the night sky sets off the beauty and light of God's countless stars. According to **Philippians 2:15b**, the darkness of this world sets off whom?

What light are we to hold out?

### Philippians 2:16a

Who is the "Word of Life"?

Discuss what happens when we hold up ourselves instead of Christ.

What enables us to shine like stars and hold out the Word of Life?

### Philippians 2:1

### Philippians 2:13



How can we be reflectors of Christ's light?

**Philippians 2:2-5**

**Philippians 2:14**

According to **Matthew 5:16**, what is the purpose of our shining?

**What's with the Dimmer Switch?**

Often times our attitude is not the same as that of Christ Jesus. We don't consider others better than ourselves or look to their interests. We can be selfish, vain, quick to argue and complain.

How do these sins, especially arguing and complaining, hide the Word of Life and darken our personal witness and the witness of the church?

Where do we find comfort?

**1 John 1:9**

**1 John 2:1-2**

As we confess our sins, God's full and free forgiveness continually changes us, washing away the darkness of our sin so that, more and more, the light of Christ shines in and through our lives.

**Growing in the Light**

Read **Philippians 2:12-13**.

What does Paul say we are to do?

Does this mean we earn our salvation? See **Ephesians 2:8-9**.

What tools has God given us?

**Colossians 3:16**

**Acts 2:42**

What else might be included in "working out" our salvation?

**Galatians 6:9-10**

**Ephesians 5:8-11**

**1 Thessalonians 4:1, 9-10**

As we read these verses, we realize that we do become weary in doing good, and quite often our love is not more and more, but less and less. Think about situations, circumstances and habits in your own life that make you weary or cause your love for others to "dry up." Share with the group, as you are comfortable.

**Staying Bright**

Now read **Ephesians 5:25-27**.

What relief and strength do these verses offer when you are weary and "dried up"? How does God see you?

Read again **Philippians 2:13**.

Why is it so important that our shining like stars depends on God's power, not our own?

What a comfort to know that God's power is at work in us and that through the blood of Christ, He sees us as holy and blameless! His power is enough to keep us shining brightly for all eternity!

### Closing

Join together in the following prayer.

*Dear Jesus, Thank You for forgiving us and making us Your shining stars in this dark world. Help us faithfully persevere until You bring us home to eternally rejoice in the shining brilliance of Your presence. We pray in Your name, Jesus. Amen.*

Now read together **Philippians 2:5-11**, rejoicing in all that the Light of the World, Jesus Christ, has done for you-and continues to do in you-as you shine like stars in the darkness.

<p>Susan M. Schulz is a pastor's wife and stay-at-home mother of four. She has written several women's Bibles studies in the CPH "Under His Wings" series and is currently writing Sunday school lessons for CPH.</p>
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