



Week Four

Lamp and lampstand, light and warmth, love and hope

“No one after lighting a lamp hides it under a jar, or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light.” (Luke 8.16)

I have always been a fan of candles and I really love the soft light that they emit and how gentle the light is on your eyes, yet also how strong the light can be in a dark room and greatly it can affect the ambiance of a room.

So much so that I will often light as many candles as possible in a room and have them burning throughout the day, whether they're pillar candles, standard taper candlesticks wedged into the top of old wine bottles or fragranced candles, which can either be a blessing or a curse, depending on your sense of smell!

Now a candle can be incredibly representative. A candle can be a prayer, a parable and a symbol. A candle remains alight, even if we walk away from it, which represents how God is constantly working, even when we may not be specifically praying for something. A candle can be a representation of Jesus, who was constantly giving of himself to the world around him, just as a candle lights all that is around it. However, just as a candle will eventually burn out, Jesus gave completely of himself and died, so that we might have life. Finally, a candle gives off light and warmth, just as our faith gives off love and hope to those around us.

A candle can represent our faith. As a candle gives off light and warmth so our faith is to give off love and hope to those around us. And just as a candlestick supports the candle, so our personal time with God builds a strong foundation for us to then go out and spread the love and hope of God to those around us.

We must not hide away the light that is inside each and every one of us. We have a duty to have a faith that is actively lived out and visible in the lives of others around us. This has certainly been a challenge throughout lockdown, but I'm sure that with the gradual easing of lockdown, opportunities will arise for us to be more active and practical in our faith. St Paul's as a church is also further developing the online visibility of our social action projects and would love as many people who want to be involved to get involved (<https://stpaulsealing.com/community/community-projects/>).

As Christians we have a tremendous gift that we can offer to those around us, but let us not hide the light that we have, but let's make it burn brightly and offer the light and warmth that we know of and love already. Who today can you bless with the light and warmth, the love and hope, of your faith?

Lord, thank you for your light in my life. Thank you for this gift that you have given to me to enjoy. Thank you that you have also chosen me to spread your love and your hope to all around me. I'm sorry for the times when I have missed this opportunity. Lord, help me in the future to have the courage to show your love to others.
Amen



ST PAUL'S EALING