

# God's Word Will Keep Your Light Shining Bright



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When I was a boy growing up on a farm in southern Missouri, life was very different than it is today. We had no Internet access, no mobile phones, and no Netflix or cable TV. Our entertainment came primarily from four channels we could access on our TV (on a good, clear day) and whatever fun things we could find to do outside.

Today, our avenues for entertainment are virtually endless. We have Internet access everywhere we go, mobile phones to keep us connected at all times, and sophisticated video games to keep us occupied. We can watch almost any movie ever made and have access to a worldwide network of information.

There is no doubt these advances provide many valuable benefits over days of the past. However, the same avenues of information that can provide us with many good things can also give us access to bad things as well. The barriers to communication that once inhibited us from enjoying many good things also protected us from many harmful things.

It's almost certain we will never go back to the "old days," and most of us would never choose to. However, this new situation now places on each of us a greater responsibility to be more diligent in guarding our hearts against those things that can fill us with darkness and steal our joy.

Proverbs 4:23 (NIV) says, "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." Everything you do and everything you are flows from your heart. You are a product of the things you collect there. That's why it's so important that we fill our hearts with good things and guard them against the bad.

The most effective way to guard your heart against the darkness of the world around you is to fill it with good things, and the best thing we can fill it with is the truth of God's Word. That's why the practice of regularly filling your heart and mind with God's Word is so essential to becoming the man God created you to be. Sometimes the things you read may have direct relevance to a situation you are facing today while at other times it may be something you store away for a later date. Sometimes God gives us something to feed our own hearts while at other times He may

give you something to share with others. Regardless of how or when it is applied, the practice of regularly reading the Word of God will fill your heart with the good things of God while keeping the darkness of this world at bay.

The Swordsman program is a feature of Royal Rangers where leaders and boys are encouraged to develop the daily practice of reading the Bible and to allow the Holy Spirit to apply what they've read to their lives. Being a Swordsman is more than just being part of a program or wearing an insignia. It's a personal commitment—a daily choice to guard your heart against the darkening influences of this world and feed your heart with **good** things so God can do good things **in** you and **through** you.



Matthew 5:14–16 (NIV) says, “You are the light of the world . . . let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

The new life God placed within you makes you a light for all to see, but the Word of God provides the continual source of renewable energy that will keep your light burning bright. Keep reading, keep listening to the Spirit, and keep shining your light. Someone out there needs to see you shine!



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