



Pairs with Promise

Salt and pepper. Fish and chips. Bacon and eggs. Bread and butter. Some things were simply made to go together. Like pineapple and pizza.

While the previous pairings might be up for debate, God's Word makes it clear that some pairs are not. Woven together by God Himself, these pairs are intimately tied to each other because they are pairs of *promise* not *preference*. Pairs like repentance and forgiveness. Love and sacrifice. Light and life.

Light and life. It's easy to see the connection, isn't it? How often in our early education did we watch seeds grow in paper cups on a windowsill or discover the budding crocus reaching for the spring sun? As children, we learned that light brings life to the natural world.

The same is true of Christ. John 1:4 reads, "**In him was life, and the life was the light of men.**" Jesus, true God and true man, calls Himself the Light of the world. As THE LIGHT, He came to bring life to a fallen people. His sinless life and perfect death defeated sin and death for us. His love and sacrifice banish the darkness of despair and death, replacing them with hope and life.

This same Jesus continues to bring light and life into dark places today.

Whether public, charter, private, or parochial, schools can be dark places. Why? Because schools are filled with sinners, and sinners practice brokenness. Youth are not immune to life issues; they are exposed to and experience parental divorce, eating disorders, addiction, and abuse. They fall prey to anxiety, loneliness, and loss. They question their identity, are tricked into sexting, and are tempted to commit self-harm. Even homeschool families face darkness that comes from the disease of sin.

Yet, Christ comes to dispel the darkness with light and life. How? Through Word and Sacrament and YOU. Powerful enough to create an entire world from nothing, God's Word is also powerful enough to transform His people. His pronouncement of faith and forgiveness does exactly what He says – builds faith, forgives, renews, strengthens, and heals.

It is Christ, the Light of the world, who walks the halls with youth. And because He lives in His people, He transforms them into lights to the world. Yes, wherever there is the message of Christ, there is light and life. Wherever a Christian walks in faith, there too is the light.

Christians have hope despite the darkness that surrounds us because we have God's promise. Whether we are at school or at home, we can be confident that **"... the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1:5).**

May God continue to equip us to shine His light in dark places. And on this day, may we pray for and uphold the youth and adults who do so in schools. His light will not be overcome!

Prayer: Dear Jesus, our Light and our Life, may Your light shine brightly in every school and in our lives. Amen.