



## January

# Let It Shine!

{ a New Year's Women's Ministries Program }

The holidays have ended and it is tempting to cross everything off the calendar and do nothing for a while! With the hustle and bustle of the holidays behind, people begin thinking about the new year ahead of them: resolutions to do better, reviewing what has been accomplished (or not!), and all the possibilities that newness brings.

Bible Verse	Decorations	Theme Song
<p>Ephesians 5:8 Walk as children of light in all goodness, righteousness, and truth</p>	<p>Light pastel colors Make the area cheery &amp; light filled. Use candles of various heights and sizes Gold or silver star cut-outs</p>	<p><i>This Little Light of Mine</i> or other songs that refer to light</p>
<b>Food</b>		
<p><b>Quick and Easy:</b> Offer a 'light' assortment of snack foods - vegetables and dip, popcorn, cheese and crackers, beverage, and something sweet.</p> <p><b>Potluck:</b> Ask each lady to bring a dish to pass that makes them feel good or a comfort food</p> <p><b>Elegant:</b> Offer a candle-lit dinner with several courses: salad or soup, entree with steamed vegetables, rolls w/flavored butter, sparkling beverage, and dessert</p>		
<b>Activities</b>		
<p><b>S.I.P. Sisters In Prayer</b> Have a basket of star cut-outs and pens. Encourage women to write a prayer concern on a star - send each person home with a 'star concern' and ask them to include this concern in their daily prayers.</p>	<p><b>Handout</b> Create a bookmark with for this poem</p> <p><b>Brighten Your Corner</b> by Helen Steiner Rice</p> <p>In a world of fame and praise, But it's doing unpretentiously In an undistinguished way.</p> <p>The work that God assigned to us, Unimportant as it seems, That makes our task outstanding, And brings reality to dreams.</p> <p>So do not sit and idly wish For wider, new dimensions Where you can put into practice, Your many good intentions.</p>	<p><b>Ministry</b> <b>Sharing Your Light</b> How many people do you come into contact with each day. Why not get in the habit of sharing your light with these people?</p> <p><b>What you will need</b> Blank business cards, or cardstock Colored pens, stickers, stamps and ink, paper shapes, markers to decorate cards with</p> <p>Print various Bible verses or words of encouragement on blank business cards - you should have one sheet of cards per participant. Decorate and cut out cards.</p> <p>Encourage each lady to hand out cards as they go through their week. Store clerks, postal service workers, bank tellers, co-workers, people at the gym are all good candidates for your light. But don't let it stop there! Think of other ways to reach out to these people and keep the light shining!</p>

## Devotional Thought

### Walking In Light

January seems to be the bleakest, darkest month of the year. The holidays are over, the good will and cheer have dissolved into exhaustion, and to top it all off-snow seems to fall constantly. Many times the cheeriest sight is a simple candle burning brightly in a window.

Light is important. Doctors recognize that depression is often triggered by the dark days of winter. Light is used to show the way, provide a sense of security, and brightens everything it touches.

Light is so important to us that we even incorporate the word into many of our figures of speech. (Have women think of ways that the word 'light' is used on a daily basis-some ideas-'to bring to light', 'she had only seen him in a good light', 'light at the end of the tunnel', 'she finally saw the light', things 'come to light')

The Bible talks quite a bit about light too.

- It is the first thing God created
- The word 'light' is the base word for lighten- as in lighten your brothers load
- Used many times to symbolize truth, understanding, knowledge
- God calls Himself the Bright and Morning Star
- Jesus will return to earth surrounded by light so that all will see Him

There are two references to light that I want to talk about today.

First, let's look at John 8:12. In this verse Jesus calls himself the light of the world. He goes on to say that whoever follows him will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life. So, according to Jesus, just as light is the cure for depression brought on by the darkness of winter, He can penetrate the dark areas of our hearts and lives and bring a new brighter perspective. Walking in His light brings joy, hope, and blessing.

But walking in His light isn't enough if we keep that light to ourselves. We have to share that light with those around us. That brings me to the second reference to light in the Bible. Ephesians 5:8 says *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.* Live as children of light! Don't keep it to yourself! Each person in this room can very likely think of 5 or 6 people who need to feel the healing power of God's light. The fun part is-it is so easy to share that light! Being kind, generous, and caring reflects the light to those we come in contact with each day.

God doesn't want us to simply spend our time walking with Him, soaking up the light that He provides. He wants us to get out there and share the light! Read Matthew 5:14-16 then list ways you can let your light shine.

An old Sabbath School song written in 1913 by Ina Ogdon is a great reminder of the importance of letting your light shine. She wrote this poem when she realized that her dream of ministry was not going to be realized because she needed to stay at home and care for her ailing father.

### Brighten the Corner Where You Are

Do not wait until some deed of greatness you may do,  
Do not wait to shed your light afar,  
To the many duties ever near you now be true,  
Brighten the corner where you are.

Brighten the corner where you are!  
Brighten the corner where you are!  
Someone far from harbor you may guide across the bar;  
Brighten the corner where you are!

Just above are clouded skies that you may help to clear,  
Let not narrow self your way debar:  
Though into one heart alone may fall your song of cheer,  
Brighten the corner where you are.

Here for all your talent you may surely find a need,  
Here reflect the bright and Morning Star;  
Even from your humble hand the Bread of Life may feed,  
Brighten the corner where you are.