

# Vicar's Pastoral Letter

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**Subject :** The Light of the World.

Dear Friends,

I heard recently that the government is thinking of introducing an "outlook tax" by which if your house is situated in open countryside with a lovely view then you would pay for the privilege. I wonder what will happen to those unfortunate enough to live by the motorway? Perhaps they'll have something knocked off their council tax! Somehow, I doubt it. It's almost as ridiculous as the "window tax" that was inaugurated in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century whereby you paid for the number of windows in your house and that's why you see a lot of Georgian houses with their windows bricked up. The less light coming into the house the less you paid. For some reason I've been thinking a lot about windows recently and being reminded of how important they are to our state of health, mind and well being. I think it began when someone told me of how they were offered a cabin on a cruise liner without windows. You pay a good deal less but at what cost to your general health! I would hate to travel round the world or even to France in a sealed up room! Even prison cells have one window.

As human beings we thrive on light and we need it both for our physical and mental health. We need not only the light to enter a room but also to see outside the room to people and things beyond. But what is true of our physical and mental health is also true of our spiritual health. It's not surprising that the very first thing that God created was "light": "Let there be light" He said "and there was light."

The Bible contains many references to light and supremely in the person of Jesus who described Himself as "The Light of the World." He is the One who brought light to a world shrouded in darkness: hence "the people who dwelt in darkness have seen a great light!" Jesus is our light for He is the window on our soul and, without Him, we stumble as we try to move forward in the twilight of our lives. Jesus is the One who gives us purpose: He is the One who gives life, including our own, its meaning: He is the One who reassures us that we are special and loved: He is the One through whom our sins are forgiven: He is the One who shows us which way to go when we don't know which way to turn.

And so I ask "is there a light shining in your life and do you have a window in your soul through which the light of God can shine?" Unfortunately many people neglect their spiritual health and then wonder why they get sick and feel lost and alone. If you feel lost and in the dark then please know that there is a light that shines for you: "a light that shines in the darkness and which no amount of darkness can ever extinguish."

I wonder how many windows there are in your house? I hope there are lots and that natural light floods every room. But even if you live in a house that has dozens of windows you're still in darkness without the light of God. The good news is that you can have this light and you won't even be taxed on it! Indeed it will light your path and set you free!

With every blessing.....

*Peter*

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