In many places around the world, we celebrate the Savior’s birth with lights. In some places, the lights are on houses; in some, on trees; in some, the lights come from candles lit to mark the advent of Christmas. All of these lights are symbolic as they mirror and reflect the great light that burst on the world with the Savior’s birth. There was a star so bright and so unmistakably new that wise men could use it to find the Savior. To the shepherds in the field, there were heavenly messengers clothed in heavenly light proclaiming the birth of the Holy One, the Prince of Peace. In the Americas, there was light so powerful that it overwhelmed the darkness when the sun went down. That light burned through the night, making clear to all who saw it that the Savior had come.

Lights at Christmas have long been a tradition in our family. Every year we pull out the many, many strings of little white lights. Then we all gather around the tree and plug in the first strand. Starting at the bottom, we string the strands around the tree, making sure the lights are densely packed (we like a lot of lights on the tree!). I love to get up in the morning and turn the Christmas lights on. When the tree lights up, I experience warm, good feelings of love, home, and family togetherness. I see the light; but, more significantly, in that light I see a symbol of the light of the Savior.

The birth of Christ was the beginning of those marvelous events that brought true light to all of God’s creations. When we celebrate His birth, therefore, we celebrate Him whose atoning sacrifice and glorious Resurrection gave the gift of light to us all.

If we could see the Savior’s life—his birth, ministry, Atonement, and Resurrection—from the perspective of the eternities, if we could look down on the land of Jerusalem in the meridian of time, we would see a great light bursting into the darkness of evil, sin, suffering, chaos, and death. We would see a great light spreading across all time and space, filling the universe, carrying all that is good, penetrating every soul—the Light of Christ.

This is the light “which giveth life to all things.” It is the light that illuminates our choices and decisions and “quickeneth [our] understandings.” In this Light of Christ “there should come every good thing” and “every good gift.” We all receive this light, but if we “[continue] in God, [we will receive] more light; and that light [will grow] brighter and brighter until the perfect day.” This is the light that must be in us so that we may hold it up “that it may shine unto the world.” This is the light of Christmas; the light that is in Jesus of Nazareth, born of Mary in Bethlehem, the Savior and Redeemer of the world. I know He lives. I know He is the true light.

May your holiday season and the coming new year be filled with the joy and peace of the Light of Christ.