

The
Light



Shines in the Darkness

A Themed Devotional Series
For CVM Students and Professionals
By CVM Staff



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This series of devotionals was created around CVM’s annual theme of “The Light” from John 1:5. We hope you enjoy getting to know the CVM staff better while studying the true Light of the world. We encourage you to prayerfully journey through the study with your Bibles open, looking up the *scriptures* (in italics) and contemplating the **questions** (in bold). The devotionals are really just intended to be a jumping off point to go deeper in God’s Word.

The Light

Exposing the Dirt

When I was a boy, my father bought what I thought was the coolest thing I had ever seen. It was a bug zapper! At dusk, I would run outside and plug that thing in. Two lights would come on surrounded by an electrified grid. Then, being drawn to the light, the bugs would start flying in. Bzzzt. Bzzzt. Bzzzzzt! One by one, the insects would meet their demise as they touched the grid. I would watch in awe for hours.

Fast forward a couple of decades. I loved to go fishing and had discovered night fishing. All you needed was a light above the water. Turn on the light and the insects would be drawn to it. This brought in the tiny fish to eat those bugs. Which brought in the big fish to eat the tiny fish! I love catching big fish.

Lights draw in. “The Light” refers to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Hope for the world. He is referred to as “The Light” throughout Scripture, including our theme verse:

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.” – John 1:5 NLT

In His case, “The Light” draws in people. Not because He is bright and shiny, but because He is Love. We find in John 17 the reason that Jesus agreed to come to earth and carry out everything needed to save humanity. In praying to God just before heading to the cross, Jesus says:

“I have revealed you to them, and I will continue to do so. Then your love for me will be in them, and I will be in them.” – John 17:26 NLT

Jesus is Love, and He knew a Love that was so incredible that He willingly gave Himself as a sacrifice so that we could know the same. As followers of Jesus, we are to show that same Love, i.e., let our “light” shine, drawing others in. However, I want you to be aware of something. Do not assume “The Light” that you are displaying will draw everyone in. In fact, it may have the opposite effect on some.

Think about it, when you encounter someone from a different culture, and you do not understand their customs, oftentimes, what is your reaction? Is it curiosity making you want to explore it? Sometimes. But my guess is other times, you dismiss it as odd or even repulsive.

Christian Veterinary Mission is based in Seattle. I can tell you that as a southern man, I find the Pacific Northwest an odd place. When I went as a region rep to visit headquarters, I had a nice time, but I left there thankful that I do not live there. If the roles were reversed, and those from Seattle came to see me in Arkansas, I can assure you that they would go home thinking the same thing.

The same may occur when non-Christians encounter Christians. The non-Christian may just try to avoid you thinking you are weird. Also, you have to take into account that the devil will not want non-believers to convert. Always remember that Spiritual forces are at play. Even more

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Exposing the Dirt

than that, when non-Christians encounter “The Light” they may not like what is exposed in themselves.

“Anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God’s one and only Son. And the judgment is based on this fact: God’s light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil. All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed.” – John 3:18-20 NLT

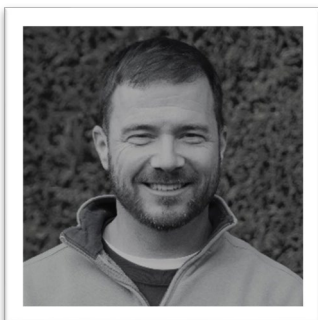
Darkness hates “The Light.” Christian, if we display “The Light”, and stake our claim that we follow Him, then we can expect hate. *“Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you.” – 1 Peter 4:12 NLT*

Jesus warns us: *“If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first.” – John 15:18 NLT.* So do not take it personally when you encounter hate. Do not draw back. Draw near! Pursue it. Ministry, done correctly, is dirty.

Light exposes dirt. Jesus sought the dirty. Even when, and maybe because, they treated Him poorly, He washed dirty feet (John 13:5). In fact, when a miracle was needed and all that would have been required was a word from Him to cure them. He spit and made mud to cure the blind (John 9:6). He touched the leper (Mark 1:41). He stuck His hands in a man’s ears and mouth (Mark 7:33), all to heal them. These people were the outcasts of society, despised by all. In today’s culture, that includes the devil worshipers, drug addicts, the hostile man, and the hateful woman.

Be like Jesus. Be “The Light.” Love people. Embrace the dirt!

- 1. Can you think of an example of when a light draws something into it?**
- 2. Have you ever been offended when you were treated poorly because of your “Light?”**
- 3. Have you ever considered how Jesus drew near the dirty and embraced them when a word from Him could have done the same?**
- 4. Which outcast, ostracized, hateful, “dirty” person can you be “The Light” to this week?**



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The Light

Dawn

I have been thinking a lot about light since we chose to focus on this theme. I have been seeing its effects in all new ways. I imagine you will too if you study The Light with us this year.

Yesterday, we explored Mammoth Cave, the world's longest (known) cave system. My favorite part of spelunking is always when they turn off the electricity and you cannot see your hand in front of your face. Then when the tour guide lit one little candle it illuminated the room for over 100 of us to look around.

How much could just one of us do to bring light into a dark world?

Darkness is literally the absence of light. Where light exists, there is no longer darkness. And unlike anything else in the physical world, light is eternal. Sound like anyone we know?

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." – John 8:12

Do you notice the difference between the atmosphere of evening and morning? At dusk when the sun is going down, and the darkness is creeping in, there can be a chill in the air both literally and mentally. It is not the pitch black of a cave yet, but twilight can be eerie. The shadows are getting longer because the sun is being blocked.

At dawn, the world begins to return from darkness to light, and with it, the sun's rays bring warmth and hope. Hope of His mercies which are new every morning. (Lamentations 3:22-23) Hope of renewal and opportunity.

For many, the joys of our profession have been overshadowed by the challenges.

It is impossible to know if the sun is figuratively setting on the veterinary world and it is getting darker, or if the sun is rising and the break of a new day is around the corner. But instead of hypothesizing, what if we decide? What if we choose to reflect His glorious Light so brilliantly that the darkness has no chance?

*"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned." – Isaiah 9:2 NIV*

In King David's last words, he said that he who rules in righteousness and in fear of God, *"is like the light of morning at sunrise on a cloudless morning, like the brightness after rain that brings grass from the earth."* – 2 Samuel 23:4

What if our righteousness through Christ reflects His Light like a cloudless morning after the rain?

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Dawn

We will feel the presence of darkness in us sometimes as well. I have felt overwhelmed with darkness, and I have walked alongside some of you through both short and prolonged nights that seemed like they would never end.

But we know Who wins. The darkness has not overcome the Light, and it will not. If you are in the Light, there is hope of morning even when it seems dark.

“In Him was life, and that life was the Light of all mankind. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” – John 1:4-5

*“You are all children of the light and children of the day.
We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.” – 1 Thessalonians 5:5*

Allow me one more enlightening analogy. Remember your last middle-of-the-night farm call or trip far outside of town. In the countryside there are no city lights, when you look up into the vast open sky, it could be as dark as Mammoth Cave, but instead, the stars shine so brilliantly.

While we wait for the darkness to lift from our profession, we Christians can shine like the stars (Philippians 2:15) with His Light and illuminate the darkness in the veterinary sky. What a beautiful sky that could be!

- 1) What are some practical ways that you could brighten a classmate or colleague’s world?**
- 2) Dream even bigger, are there ways you can envision brightening your campus, clinic, or the whole veterinary profession? God is able...**
- 3) If you are comfortable sharing, which level of darkness would you most identify with today? Like dawn, like dusk, like you are in a cave, or maybe it is a cloudless, sunny day...**
- 4) In the evening, the shadows grow longer as the sun becomes blocked. Is anything blocking the light of the Son in your life that might be causing shadows that you could avoid?**



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Shining Like Lights

“Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.”

Philippians 2:14-16 (ESV)

What does your typical day look like? I know for me, when I was in the vet clinic, it went something like this. “Why is that client coming in, they never do what we recommend.” “Ugh, that client does not use prevention. Don’t they know what is good for their pet?” “Look at this client, they got a puppy from a breeder, and yup, the breeder contract does not want to do specific vaccines or preventions. I bet they will go with the breeder recommendation over ours.” “I have to work with them today? They will not even help when asked and then I am stuck helping everyone even when I do not have the time.” Sound familiar? Our days typically start and continue with complaining, grumbling, and gossiping. But should they?

For our monthly staff meetings, we once had a consultant come in to help us create a positive culture. This was not a Christian company, but ultimately, they pointed out that when we recognize something as triggering, we need to take that thought and put ourselves in the other person’s shoes so we can empathize with them. This was what they called “conquering the villain voices in our heads.” We need to try to understand them so that we can understand why they may be resistant to our recommendations or in a bad mood. I found that idea to be similar to what is stated in 2 Corinthians 10:5 where we are to take every thought captive and make it obedient to Christ.

If the world can recognize that we should conquer the villain voices, maybe we as Christians should not be complaining or grumbling. In Philippians, Paul tells us that we should not be doing these things so that we can stand out from the people around us, shining like lights. Paul sees the people of this world as complainers who are crooked and twisted. They are in darkness and do not have hope. But Christians can rejoice and stand straight because of the perfect standard we have in God’s Word. Through Christ we can be bright lights in the darkness offering hope because we offer the word of life, salvation, to those around us.

When we act differently than those around us, shining like lights, and offering hope, people notice. They begin to ask you why you are different. This becomes a great opportunity to share Christ with them. Many times, my friends have invited coworkers and old classmates out to our Bible studies because they have been asked why they are different and explained. Those asking the questions were interested enough to learn more that they then came to the Bible study. Some have even accepted Christ since! So, be bold for Christ and shine like a light.

Recognizing how much I was participating in complaining, grumbling, and gossiping in the clinic, I prayed about it. I decided that I should not be participating in that but instead shining like a light and bringing hope. I resolved to start my day off with prayer every morning before I started my shift so that God could help me have the right attitude. I still catch myself

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Shining Like Lights

participating at times but to a lesser degree. Instead, I try to counter some of what is said even if the client or employee is a difficult one. It is hard, but by leaning on God and His Word, this change can happen, and I can be a light to those around me.

1. **What does your normal day look like? How much complaining, grumbling, or gossiping do you notice yourself participating in or hearing from others?**
2. **What does it mean to shine like lights?**
3. **Read Philippians 2:1-11. How does Paul call us to live?**
4. **Philippians 2:5-11 shows how Christ lived. What was his example and how can we imitate that?**
5. **Describe a time when someone recognized you as different, in a good way, because of your beliefs and the impact it had on them.**
6. **What step(s) will you take to better shine like lights this week?**



Dr. Kara Song is an Ohio State grad, class of 2018 with roots in New England. It was during school that she found a heart for missions and a passion for CVM. After graduating, she moved to Northeast Ohio where she worked in a busy companion animal general practice for four years. During that time, she and Sadie, her Australian Shepherd mix, added to their family. First with a Golden Retriever named Caspian and then with her wonderful husband, Paul. Despite thinking she would stay at her clinic for some time yet, Kara felt God calling her to join CVM where she now serves as the Northeast Region Representative. Email: ksong@cvm.org

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This Little Light of Mine

“You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.”

Matthew 5:14-16

If you are anything like me, the children’s song “This Little Light of Mine” was a staple in your household growing up. I learned it in our church’s kid’s program and sang (belted) it every day. The great thing about classic children’s songs from the church is that they never go out of style. Years later, I have three young children who love singing my favorite childhood tunes. Every night, my two oldest ask me to read a Bible story, pray, do our handshake routine, and...sing a song. It thrills this dada’s heart to watch them uncover their finger and yell “No!” when expressing how they will not hide their light under a bushel. I pray they grow up to never hide it nor let Satan blow it out, but instead, let it shine until Jesus comes.

In Matthew 5, we have the privilege of reading Jesus’ longest and most well-known sermon. Jesus was beginning his earthly ministry after being baptized by John. Both the Lord’s Prayer and the Beatitudes are included in this sermon. His message served as a life-altering wake-up call for people to not simply keep the law but to live their lives completely devoted to their Savior.

In verse 14, Jesus uses the examples of a city on a hill and a lamp on a stand to show us how we are to live. We have the world’s best-kept secret. Yet, we often keep that to ourselves. We attend a weekly Bible study, read Scripture, sing worship songs, and serve on Sundays. For many believers, that may be the extent of our witness for Christ. Unless someone sees us in church or could listen to our thoughts, they often might not even be aware that we are Christians.

Penn Jillette, magician and atheist, once said, “I will never believe in Jesus. But how much do Christians have to hate me to have this amazing news that will save me from hell and not tell me about it?” That struck me. Do I hate my family members, friends, and neighbors who do not yet know Jesus? Do they know I am a Christian? Worse yet, they know I am, but I do not share that with them. In my heart, does sin cause me to subconsciously have an apathy or even hatred for them? At the very least, sin causes me to not love them enough to share with them the message of salvation. What other reason makes sense to explain why I am too selfish to have that conversation with them?

Romans 12:2 states *“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.”* If there was ever a verse to encourage us, this would be it. Every social media outlet serves to appease our desire for acceptance. At the same time, we want to be special and one-of-a-kind. Allow me to share a secret. You are unique...just like everyone else. We need God to transform how we think so that we can not only accept but thrive in the fact that we are set apart to be light in a dark place. We might watch the same shows, wear expensive clothes, listen to popular music, and more. But, in our desire to fit in, we lose the incredible opportunity to be different. Being a follower of Christ is

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This Little Light of Mine

different, weird, and abnormal. Matthew 5:15 reminds me to make sure my *“lamp is placed on a stand.”* Why do we try so hard to fit in with a dark world that is lost and without hope? The more we try to fit in, the faster we lose our effective witness.

This week, be bold and courageous no matter the consequences. Be that friend someone needs. Be that light that boldly screams, *“Christ loves you and wants to have a relationship with you!”* If you are going through hard times, perhaps that is not a bad thing. God allows us to suffer, in part, to be a light with our words and deeds to others who are also experiencing pain. The person who is truly in trouble is a Christian who, after such a long period of no trials, must ask themselves why Satan no longer views them as a threat to his cause and deserving of his focus. This is why the phrase, *‘The safest place you can be is in the center of God’s will,’* is a lie. When you struggle and the desire to simply coast safely through life comes, read 2 Timothy 1. As Paul is encouraging Timothy to grow, so too is the Lord reminding us in verses 6-8 to *“Fan into flame the gift of God that is in you. For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. So, never be ashamed to tell others about our Lord.”*

We have the greatest news in history. Have personal goals and desires, but shine your light bright for the world to see a better way. I will leave you with a poignant reminder from Nik Ripken who said, *“Our greatest fear should not be of failure, but of succeeding at things that do not really matter. Perhaps the question should not be: ‘Why are others persecuted?’ Perhaps the better question is: ‘Why are we not?’”*

- 1) When was the last time you directly shared the plan of salvation with someone?**
- 2) Although unfounded, our fears are usually legitimate. What reasons do you have for not being more outspoken about how God can save the lost and heal the hurting?**
- 3) What things are you striving to succeed at that may distract you from being a light to your community?**
- 4) Matthew 5:16 states, *“Let your good deeds shine out for all to see.”* What are some good deeds you could do for others this week to let your light shine?**



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The Light

Illuminate the World

“For at one, time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true) and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light.

Therefore, it says, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

Ephesians 5:8-14

I asked my 7-year-old what he thinks about when I say the word “darkness,” and he said, “Scared; I am scared of the dark.” I asked him the same thing about light and, as a 7-year-old might say, he responded “Not being scared.” This got me thinking about my struggles with anxiety which has been a darkness in my life. I know the true Light now because of Jesus; I do not have to be ‘afraid of the dark’ anymore. In these verses, Paul is saying that because we are in Christ, we no longer have to walk in darkness. As light now, we can bear fruit of the light (of Christ) and expose the darkness in the world around us. Our hope and this light are possible because of what He did on the cross.

Google defines darkness as “the total absence of light” and “evil or wrongdoing.” In Genesis 1, there was total darkness. But then God said, “*Let there be light; and that light was good!*” Then sin entered the world. With this came illness and disease, natural disasters and war, anxiety and depression, and all kinds of darkness.

The dark, old self that Paul is talking about in Ephesians is our sinful nature that we were enslaved to before we knew Christ. Even when we have Jesus in our hearts and have a relationship with Him, darkness can still creep in. Remember that anxiety I mentioned? Yep, it still weasels its way in, I can’t always keep it out. Sometimes I let it control my actions. Unfortunately, darkness and sin go hand in hand.

You might wonder, what hope there is in our darkness – in our sin and our difficulties? However, God does not leave us in that darkness. Micah 7: 8 says, “*...When I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD will be a light to me.*” That is our hope! God is the ultimate Light which we can derive our light, goodness, righteousness, and truth from. We have a new self through the death, blood, and resurrection of Christ! We are to put on the new self like a new, clean shirt. We do not have to keep the old dirty rags we wore before.

After the Fall described in Genesis, humanity was trapped in sin’s darkness, Jesus brought hope back with His light; a light that we have within us. We can demonstrate this light by the fruit we bear. You cannot force or boast about your light, instead, it is by Christ’s blood that we can let this light show; let it shine naturally through your actions and your words. The new self we have through Christ should produce actions in love and patience. Even if, and when darkness creeps in, we have the brightest of lights, who we can turn to and ask for help. As we show light in the darkness that we struggle with, others will see that light within us! We need to make different choices than what the world expects. Our life of godliness sheds light on the world’s evil. Paul is speaking about a lifestyle; a life that we should live, how we act, how we speak. A life that

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obeys and glorifies the Lord. We are here to make the truth visible. Your light will shine as you live differently. See Galatians 5:22-23.

When reading verse 13, I think about the middle of the night when I need to walk to the bathroom or get some water. When I use the light on my phone or a flashlight, it exposes my son's Legos and hot wheels on the floor! The small things I would not have been able to see and may have stumbled over. Jesus' light can expose all the darkness in the cracks and corners of our life. Only by grace are we rescued from the darkness and can see the Legos. We can do this by sharing our own story of being in darkness. God chose us to show His light to others who are still struggling in darkness. What a privilege that is for us! Jesus is calling us out of those areas that we still struggle with, the parts of our old self that we might still hang on to or that return. Darkness once claimed all of us, but it did not have the final say!

Darkness is completely eradicated in Christ! He, and only He, has the power to break the sin and darkness over us! Revelation 21:5 says; *"And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever."* Regardless of what darkness you are suffering from or see around you, your light can shine so that it illuminates the world. We have hope! We have that light at the end of the tunnel – eternity with Christ!

- 1. Do you know of any darkness within your life or a loved one's? How can you help shed light on this darkness? How has Christ taken away your darkness?**
- 2. What fruit do you bear with the light you have? Can others see the glowing fruit, or do you need to ask Jesus to help feed your garden with more of His light?**
- 3. Exposing the darkness is not easy, yet we are called to do so. How can you ask God for help in this area? Are there any cracks of your own that you can ask Jesus to expose in your life?**
- 4. Write a prayer below, asking Jesus how His light can be more active in your life. Pray that God uses you as a light in this dark world. Thank God for His hope and light!**



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Rise and Shine

“The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.”

Romans 13:12

Are you a morning person? I am not! It takes me a while to get going after that first sound of the alarm lets me know that a new day is starting. I am thankful for Spotify because instead of the annoying buzzer, at least I can wake up to my favorite song.

In last year’s CVM devotional series, “Transformed,” we walked through the 12th chapter of Romans. There, Paul, lays out core tenants for Christian living. In Romans chapter 13, Paul continues to give instruction in living worship-filled lives. He teaches us to respect governmental authorities, give honor where honor is due, and fulfill the law as we love our neighbors as ourselves.

Romans 13:11 begins with a fervent wake-up call. (Much like the ones I would rather avoid in the morning!) Paul writes, *“And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake from your slumber, because salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.”*

The verse starts, *“...And do this...”* Paul is saying that based on what we have been taught in the preceding chapters about holy and worshipful living, we must get ready.

Comparing Biblical translations can sometimes help expand our knowledge of a passage. The Message translation gives insight into the importance of being awake to what God is doing:

“But make sure that you don’t get so absorbed and exhausted in taking care of all your day-by-day obligations that you lose track of the time and doze off, oblivious to God. The night is about over, dawn is about to break. Be up and awake to what God is doing! God is putting the finishing touches on the salvation work he began when we first believed. We can’t afford to waste a minute, must not squander these precious daylight hours in frivolity and indulgence, in sleeping around and dissipation, in bickering and grabbing everything in sight. Get out of bed and get dressed! Don’t loiter and linger, waiting until the very last minute. Dress yourselves in Christ, and be up and about!”

Romans 13:11-14, The Message

Instructions for dressing ourselves in Christ with the “armor of light” come straight out of Ephesians 6:

“Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on

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Rise and Shine

the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance.”

Ephesians 6:11-18

We must not wait any longer to start serving God. We are like rescue workers who serve with great passion. Our schools, practices, and communities need to see Christ's light shining through us into the dark world. My friend, Pastor Sergio from Mexico, says that **where it is the darkest, one small light shines the brightest**. If the sunrise is Christ's final return, we, as the Church, are sunlight on the horizon *before* that final sunrise. We proclaim His truth and the coming eternal glory for those who trust only in the Lord Jesus Christ for their salvation.

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

1 Peter 2:9

1. In your roles in vet practice and school, identify areas where you may slip into a drowsy, daily routine.
2. In Romans 13:14 Paul writes that we should “...*put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh.*”
 - What can you practically “put on” to become more like Christ?
 - Where can we “put off” sin so that sin has a zero-tolerance policy in our lives?
3. Review the pieces of the “*armor of God.*”
 - Has there been a recent time when you have become more aware of a spiritual battle going on around you?



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The Light

A Lantern in the Night

Psalm 27

¹The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?

The LORD is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?

¹⁴Wait for the LORD;
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the LORD!

My first short-term trip to the Karamoja region of NE Uganda was in 2004, two years before the government disarmament exercise began. In those days, it seemed like every Karamojong man between 15-30 years old carried a rifle; almost every cattle herd we visited was guarded by a handful of AK-47s casually slung over the shoulder of youth warriors. After a day of field work in the cattle corrals, one evening we sat in the house of our host, a round hut of brick walls topped by a grass-thatched roof. Playing cards around a low table, leaning in close to read the numbers by the dim light of a single kerosene lantern, we heard the sound of machine gun fire somewhere in the dark. Our host casually reached behind her to push the wood plank door closed before drawing her next card. Noticing her sly movement in the shadows beyond the reach of the lantern, I asked if she expected that homemade door to stop the bullets. Her response, "No, but it might slow them down," was only mildly reassuring. I realized very quickly that the dimly lit stronghold I was seated in was insufficient for the task.

King David writes in Psalm 27 of the armies encamped around him and the evildoers ready to assail him. War arose around him and yet he did not fear, yet he was confident (v.2-3). Why should he be afraid, David asks rhetorically, when the Lord is his light, his salvation, the very stronghold of his life. Considering God's history with Israel, David rightly equates the ideas of light, salvation, and stronghold as the people had been dramatically rescued at the Red Sea by God interposing the pillar of cloud between Israel and Pharaoh's assailing army: "*And it lit up the night without one coming near the other all night,*" Exodus 14:20. The Lord had already proven himself to be the light of his people, a stronghold to hold them safe.

The Lord alone is my light, my salvation, and the stronghold of my life. Therefore, the only reasonable response is to seek more of the Lord, to dwell in his house, to gaze upon his beauty, and to inquire of him (v. 4); simply to praise the Lord with a joyous heart (v. 6). God's work in providing light, salvation, and safeguarding for his people is an act of grace, freely given. These saving actions are attributable only to the Lord, not to the efforts of his people. David's pleas were not for his own efforts to be good enough in satisfying the demands of a holy God, instead, he cast himself wholly onto the actions of that gracious God to work on his behalf (v. 7-12). David does not claim any success for himself in lighting his own path, justifying himself through his own efforts, or overcoming his enemies in his own strength. The work is the Lord's, not our own. Considering my weaknesses, I am so grateful for that fact!

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A Lantern in the Night

Only because we recognize that our hope is the action of our gracious God, we can heed David's advice to simply wait for the Lord (v. 14). Despite the seeming hopelessness of my situation, I can still be strong, I can be courageous, I can wait for the Lord because my hope is in him and not in myself, others, or the 'safety' of this world. Whether in a hut in Karamoja with bullets flying in the darkness, in the assault of a belligerent client, or in the wearing chaos of a vet clinic, I have a choice to consider: Will I overcome by my own cunning, clinical knowledge, and business strategy, or will I cry out to my compassionate, gracious, and capable God? My own lanterns, efforts, and structures will always remain insufficient for the challenges of this world, but I can trust my God to faithfully be my light, my salvation, and the very stronghold of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid?

- 1. What are some situations in your own life where you have tried to light your own lantern, strive in your own efforts, or build your own structures? What would it look like to transfer the responsibility for these things to God rather than attempting to maintain them yourself?**
- 2. When challenging situations arise, what are some practical ways to hold your confidence in the Lord rather than slipping into a mindset of fear?**
- 3. If God is my light, my salvation, and my stronghold, how does remembering that God's work is an act of grace (rather than earned in response to my works) impact my response and subsequent actions?**



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The Light

Lighting the Way

There are 31,102 verses in the Bible most of us use, and it takes us all the way to the third verse to encounter light. It is the first thing God creates, after making the heavens and the earth. *“Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good.”* – Genesis 1:3-4a. Light has been associated with God from the very beginning. Light is foundational to life.

Here in Seattle, where the CVM home office is located, it is easy to verify light being good. On the first sunny day of spring, running paths become suddenly more used. Parks become full. A local radio station host advocated that everyone should be given the day off, as the first warm, sunny day arrived after a few months of gray drizzle. Where the sun once set before 5:00 PM, it now sets around 9:00 PM. Light makes us feel better. However, light also carries more meaning than just making us feel better.

In the previous verse in Genesis, light is associated as good and one of the first things God creates. Light continues to be associated with God, and that carries over to Jesus. In John 1:4, around this year’s theme verse, we read that *‘in Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.’* Jesus verifies this out of his own mouth, testifying about himself, in John 8:12, *“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.”* Lastly, and more practically for you and me, the association with light is transferred to those who follow Jesus. Once again, from Jesus’ own mouth during the Sermon on the Mount: *“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”* – Matthew 5:14-16. So, with us in mind, I would like to suggest a few ways to be and to use light.

Light is a revealer. Light reveals things. If I turn on a light in a room, I will be able to see what is there. Light did not create the objects in the room – it merely revealed them. I think one of the most important things we can do is shine a light in some areas of our lives that may be a little bit in darkness. Some might be more comfortable shining a light on others in this world, but I am encouraging us to set a good example as believers and always be learning at the feet of Jesus. I recently hit the wrong button on my television and turned ‘closed captioning’ on and it made me think, “Wow, I’m glad all my thoughts and inner dialogue are not written out for the world to see.” I’m glad I’m not the center of a reality show where my whole day is filmed for all to see. I’m guessing I’m not alone in that. It is both humbling and wonderful that God can and does see our thoughts and know our motives – and he loves us fully anyway. Allowing light to reveal dark areas of our lives is not about beating ourselves up. It is about allowing God to be the Lord of our life and help us to purify our hearts while becoming more like Jesus. Some people are naturally more self-aware than others, but I encourage all of us to sit with the Holy Spirit and be honest and truthful about our lives while letting the light of the Lord reveal things to us that are already there. And, in some cases, find some help from others. We may not be well emotionally or financially or whatever the case may be, but keeping areas of our lives in the dark and off limits to God is not beneficial.

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Lighting the Way

Light shows the way. Like Jesus said in one of the verses above, we will never walk in darkness if we follow him. This is true of our salvation, and it is also true of the time we have on this earth. Psalm 119:105 declares, “Your word is a lamp unto my feet, a light on my path.” God’s word lights our way. Together with the Holy Spirit, we can find direction on the next steps of our lives, but this is far from a purely scientific exercise. Often, God lights up the next step. We may not see the end, but we can, in faith take the next right step. This can be a very challenging exercise. Often, we want to take control and get things done. But, what if God is walking with us to build our patience, which is a fruit of the spirit? There may be situations where the next step is specific or there may be situations where God is just with us, wherever we go – but the truth is that God’s Word is a light for our path.

Being the light. Jesus calls us to be the light of the world. Wow. That is a pretty big statement. I would suggest this is our primary vocation in life, no matter what we do to make a living. We are to be lights in this world. We are not to hide our lights. We are to do good deeds. And the credit and glory for this is to go to God. Without God, where would we be? The good news of Jesus Christ is meant to be shared. It is meant to be lived out in the world. It is the one truth that will truly change lives. Hopefully, our lives are continually shaped and changed by Jesus, and, in turn, we are to be image bearers of God – light in the world – to others. May we all continue to light the way for others together.

1. **Do you take much time to reflect on your life? In general, how do you allow God to reveal areas in your life that could use change?**
2. **How do you make big decisions? Do you have a general process for steps you might take in life or goals you may have? Can you recall a specific time God or Scripture has ‘lighted your path?’**
3. **Where can we as Christians improve in being the light? Where are we doing well? How can we be a ‘city on a hill’ and let our light shine bright, rather than give in to the temptation to ‘put it under a bowl’ and not shine?**



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The Light

The Great Illuminator

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.” -Isaiah 9:2 ESV

What a powerful prophecy. The words of Isaiah, penned around 700 years before the coming of Christ, stark and hopeful. *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.* This short verse depicts the contrast of Israel’s sin and repeated rejection of God, with the promise of His presence and deliverance. Even with their history of turning away from the Lord and choosing to live in their own strength and frustration, He would one day restore His people through a “great light” who would lift them out of oppression and war, and redeem them from their darkness. But how would this happen? Isaiah goes on to describe some of who the light would be a few verses later: *“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” - Isaiah 9:6*

Thinking about this passage, I wonder – had I been there when He came, would I have recognized the Child? Would I have taken in the light of this Prince of Peace?

We know from the Gospels that some did. Among them the shepherds, the wise men, the prophetess Anna. They listened to the angels, followed the star, responded to God’s Spirit. Luke tells us that Simeon was filled with the Spirit when he spoke over the infant Jesus in the temple, recalling the promise and recognizing its fulfillment. *“For my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to Your people Israel,” -Luke 2:30-32.* We also know that throughout Jesus’ life, many who were studied in the Scriptures did not recognize Him and rejected Him.

A couple of years ago, I opted to have early lens replacement surgery (in my 40s), to remove congenital cataracts which had progressively been obfuscating the light from my retinas. The years of muddied vision made my post-op eyes highly sensitive to unhindered light, much more so than I anticipated. At first, it was downright painful to encounter the sunshine, any bright interior lighting, or even a computer screen. For a number of weeks, I wore dark glasses and sought the comfort of dimly lit rooms.

Though it wasn’t exactly “deep darkness” I had been living in, it was surprising how much time it took to *want* to be in the light while my brain adjusted and my body healed. It was so different to what I was used to. There was something else too. This new light brought into sharp focus things which I had been largely oblivious to before – like the dirt and dust on nearly every surface, cobwebs in the light fixtures, dog fur on the clean laundry, and details everywhere. As much as I was gobsmacked with the gorgeous, vibrant colors I was now seeing, the magnificent fine detail in nature, I also was confronted with the ugly and the undesirable. These things were no longer hidden, and they required my action. The selfish part of me actually lamented this new knowledge.

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The Great Illuminator

In our relational and spiritual lives, Jesus is The Great Illuminator - of the good we want to see and the bad that we'd rather not. What was hidden is exposed. His character and teachings reveal truth and uncover our human nature and our own sinful hearts. That is definitely uncomfortable. The Apostle John put it this way: *"And this is the verdict: The Light has come into the world, but men loved the darkness rather than the Light because their deeds were evil,"* -John 3:19.

We each face a choice when we encounter Jesus today, similar to those who met Him in the flesh two millennia ago. I can't say that I would have been among those who recognized Him then, but, like He didn't give up on Israel, praise God He doesn't give up on me or you. Today, we can choose to lean in. We can allow His light to wash over us and illuminate the uncomfortable and dark corners of our lives, accepting His love, forgiveness, and learning to live by His example. *The people walking in darkness have seen a great light!*

- 1. Do you think you would have recognized Jesus as the Savior if you had met Him when He walked the earth? Why or why not?**
- 2. God's Spirit was on Simeon when he held Jesus and blessed God for sending Him. Is there a time when you have experienced the Spirit leading you in an unmistakable way?**
- 3. Leaning in to Jesus and His truth is more than a one-time decision – it's a choice we make daily. What are some areas where you are doing well with this? In what areas are you struggling?**
- 4. Consider Matthew 9:35-38 and Philippians 2:5-8. What can we learn from the example of Christ in these verses about walking in the Light?**



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The Light

Casting Out Darkness

The book of John was written to conclusively prove Jesus is God's Son in the flesh.¹ God our Creator is relationally personal. In Genesis 1, God spoke the universe into existence.² Though, man's creation was unique and personal. Man was made in the image of God, and God breathed life into Him. However, man was made from dust, keeping Him humble.³ God spoke initially to humanity through the Old Testament prophets. Later, John wrote to show Jesus is the incarnated Word who fulfilled the Messianic description given by the prophets.

3 examples are:

1) Jesus is *the Life*... Just as repentant Israelites bitten by snakes looked upon Moses' bronze snake up on the pole for God to save them from death and live, it foreshadowed looking to Christ – He was raised up on the cross and crucified (and later exalted) for people to be saved from the eternal, deadly "snake bite" of sin to have eternal life... Have you ever wondered about the biblical understanding of the snake in the veterinary caduceus symbol?⁴

2) Jesus is *the sinless Lamb of God*...⁵ God came to humanity as Jesus being fully man and being fully God could be the perfect sacrifice on the cross (innocent human death) to pay for the death penalty for humanity's sin. In this sacrifice of God's Son, Jesus is the Father's last Word to the world.⁶

3) Jesus is *the new Temple*...⁷ Following his death to pay our sin penalty, he rose from the dead, conquering death. His death was acceptable to God the Father to cover the cost of all humanity's sin (what a gift of life!). In these last days, Christ has returned to heaven and is now victoriously seated at the right hand as our advocate. God then sent the Holy Spirit to speak to, in, and through us as his children (guiding, reminding, counseling, and comforting us.⁸) There was never a point God didn't exist, yet there was a point when the universe didn't exist.⁹ John brings into focus God as The Creator, "*in Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.*"¹⁰ Notice John specifically refers to *that life*. This anaphoric word denotes it refers to other ideas in the text for its meaning: Jesus is "the Word" and "was with God..."¹¹ Jesus is preeminent; therefore, his earthly birth was *not* when he came into being... He is eternal, not created, and is called the great "I Am."¹² He is pre-existent, involved in the act of creation, and superior to all created beings. Jesus is light...who is sufficient to guide us out of the darkness of this fallen world by his victory on the cross.¹³ Light (Truth) exposes whatever exists... good or evil.¹⁴ In the darkness, good and evil might look alike...¹⁵ Light differentiates the two. Just as sin cannot co-exist with a holy God, light casts out darkness.¹⁶ It shows sinners they need a Savior. The Law (Ten Commandments) *reflects* the Light needed for revealing sin, yet the Law never can remove sin. Jesus fulfilled the Law,¹⁷ that is why He *is* the Light (Savior) of the world.¹⁸ Accept Him to light your life!

John 1:5 reminds us that "*The Light shines in the darkness...*" "Shines" is present tense revealing the continuation of light from Light. Darkness (evil) is defeated and knows it *always* will be defeated, though it has and will try to put out the light.¹⁹ The true Light is already shining! This Light (Jesus) reveals the truth to confront spiritual darkness. God warns us of this,²⁰ yet directly

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tells us he is the light of the world and therefore, we who choose to follow Him will have hope having the light of life.²¹

Discuss: If you were created to be something out of nothing, then do you see your value *not* in your efforts, but held by the Creator *gracefully giving* you value and uniqueness? Therefore, if God is your Creator giving you value... Do you agree without God, you are nothing? This means a life without the Lord abandons your purpose created by Him and for Him.²²

Ponder: Does what you love control your actions? Loving darkness is the opposite of loving light. Embracing guilt, fear or shame can be a place darkness has a stronghold, quenching the Light of God's justice, power, and honor that you are called to walk in as his child, saved by His grace.²³ Opposition comes when one does not understand Christ's light and the need for it. This is the very reason Christ died for us while we were sinning.²⁴ Jesus spoke in parables (earthly stories with heavenly meanings). Foresight is given in Genesis 1:3 when God speaks into darkness: God's first creation was light which He then brought human (physical) life into. He separated the light from darkness. In the book of John, He shows *that light* (Greek translation of light in John 1:4 is *zoë*) means eternal life is *with* God... God sent Christ as first-born over all creation, being *the light of the world*... First, do you have this light of Jesus? If not, you can ask the Lord to come into your life and pay for your sin and accept this eternal life He offers you. That is letting His light cast out the greatest darkness – eternal separation from God. Next as a believer, have you invited the Lord to reveal any area of darkness you have avoided inviting His light to shine into?

Believers: What situation has made you feel like you were an Israelite following the Pillar of Fire? This Exodus description of God as light is a Christophany (pre-incarnate manifestation of Jesus) as the Light. Consider when a circumstance required you to move forward only by faith because Christ was lighting the path.²⁵ Perhaps this was through specific, intentional prayer time, patience, listening, and looking for His answer? Maybe a confirming of His Word hidden in your heart through outward evidence through a circumstance or another believer? Was the answer brought to you through a model in Scripture?



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Footnotes: **1)** John 1:12-14; Ps 33:6, 9; Colossians 1:15; **2)** Genesis 1:3, 14, 20, 24; **3)** Genesis 1:26; 2:7; 3:19; **4)** John 3:14; John 3:20; John 8:28; Numbers 21:8; **5)** John 1:29; **6)** Hebrews 1:1-4; **7)** John 2:19-21; **8)** Ephesian 1:20-23; John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7; **9)** Genesis 1:1-2; **10)** John 1:4; **11)** John 1:1; **12)** Exodus 3:14; **13)** John 1:4, 1 John 1:5-9; **14)** Luke 8:15; **15)** Isaiah 5:20; **16)** Ps 36:9, 1 John 1:5; **17)** Matthew 5:17-18; Romans 8:3-11; **18)** John 8:12; **19)** 2 Kings 11:1-2; Matthew 2:16; 4:1-11; **20)** John 12:35-36; **21)** John 8:12; **22)** Colossians 1:16; 2 Corinthians 3:16-4:7 **23)** Ephesians 2:8-9; **24)** Romans 5:8-9; **25)** Psalm 119:105

The Light

Living in the Light

One of our favorite camping spots in the Pacific Northwest is on a bluff overlooking the Strait of Juan de Fuca. This is the large channel of water separating the USA from Canada that allows the Pacific Ocean to ebb and flow in and out of Puget Sound. The Strait is a major navigation channel for many cruise ships going to Alaska from Seattle, cargo ships, fishing boats, naval boats, and submarines. At dawn, you can look east down the Strait and see the sky start to glow near Mt. Baker. Before long, the darkness gives way to the sun which quickly becomes too bright to gaze upon. Each evening you can look west and watch the brightness of the sunset over the Pacific Ocean as the darkness begins to fill its absence. It is interesting that the Bible uses the illustration of light and darkness to help us to understand the importance of God, Jesus, the Bible, and fellowship with each other.

Watching the sun rise and set is always a great reminder of the magnificence of God as the Creator of light (Genesis 1:3), but He is more than the creator of light. 1 John 1:5 says, **“God is light** and in Him there is no darkness at all.” Like the sun coming up on a new day the light drives away all darkness. Have you thought about the fact that darkness is the absence of light? This is the same for us as we live in the presence of God, our life reflects His light and darkness has no place. The Bible tells us several times as Christ’s followers that we are to live in the light and in that light is eternal life. This life of light or fellowship with the Father has been given to His disciples and can also be ours. We are told in 1 John 1:4 that John “writes these things (about fellowship with God) so our joy can be made complete.” John explains in vs. 9-10 that the fellowship of living in the light results if “we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” We can see from this verse that John wants to make us aware that God, through the death of His son, and the confession of our sins allows us to live in the light and find joy.

Not only is God light, but it says in the Gospel of John 1:4-5 that **Jesus is light** when it states, *“In Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”* Isaiah 2:5 says, *“Let us walk in the light of the Lord.”* John 1:9 says, *“The true light (Jesus) that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.”* In John 8:12, Jesus says, *“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life.”* The death of Jesus on the cross restored our relationship with God (1 John 2:2) and this change allows us to know God in a personal way that orients our heart to walk in the light and obey His commands, 1 John 2:4, and love our brothers (1 John 2:9-10). These changes *“bringing forth fruit in keeping with repentance”* (Matthew 3:8). We were *“formerly darkness but now you are light in the Lord, walk as children of light.... trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.”* – Ephesians 5:8.

God does not leave us alone to battle the darkness. He has forgiven us and restored us to fellowship through His son. Jesus tells us that He will send us the Holy Spirit as a helper who will be with us always. (John 14:16) He gives us the Bible and calls us to **walk in the light of His word**. Psalms 119:105 says, *“His word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.”* Ephesians 5:11 says, *“Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness but instead even expose them.”*

The Light

Living in the Light

There is no better way to allow God's word to guide our daily actions than to expose them to the light of God's Word. 2 Timothy 3:16 says, *"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good deed."* His words are truth and light to lead us (Psalm 43:3) and sufficient for all things related to life and godliness (1 Peter 1:2-3).

Fellowship in the Light of one another. God did not create us to live in isolation but calls us to fellowship with one another (Hebrews 10:25), to confess our sins to one another (1 John 1:9), and to encourage one another (Hebrews 3:13, 1 Thessalonians 5:11). John writes in 1 John 2:5, *"but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected."* As we live in the light of His presence, are transformed by the light of Christ, and walk in His Word, may the light of God be perfected in us, driving away darkness and radiating His light through us like the rising sun!

1. **Why would fellowship with God be necessary for *"our joy to be complete?"* - 1 John 1:4**
2. **1 John 2:4 says, *"The one who says, 'I have come to know him.' And does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."* If God forgives us our sins (1 John 1:7), why does it stress in chapter 2 that we must obey His commands?**
3. **How has, or can, the Bible and the church help you to walk in the light?**
4. **Ephesians 4:8 says, *"For you were formerly darkness but now you are light in the Lord, walk as children of light..... trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord."* Are there steps that you can take to allow God, His son, and His word to radiate like the full-day sun in your life to drive out all darkness?**



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The Light

Hit the Lights

“For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

2 Corinthians 4:6

“Mom!” “MOM!” My son’s cries of panic echoed through the house. I was in the kitchen trying to figure out what to make for dinner, when I heard him. My husband was working in the dining room and our son, Nathan, had been happily strewing his Legos around the house. It was a typical evening in our home in Soroti, Uganda.

Suddenly, the lights flickered and went out. Nathan called out in the darkness. I knew he was scared. Power outages were a frequent occurrence in Soroti, and I had learned to be careful when moving around in the dark. I didn’t want to accidentally bump into him.

I took a deep breath and in my best *calm mom voice*, I directed my son slowly down the hall toward the kitchen where I was finally able to wrap him in a reassuring hug and start the search for all the solar lanterns we had stashed around the house.

While sitting in the glow of the lanterns that night, I thought about how much we rely on light. When we’re in the dark, we feel lost and afraid. But when we have light, we feel safe and secure. When we walk into a dark room or out into the dark of night, what is the first thing that we do? Hit a light switch. We want to illuminate darkness because well-lit spaces and places can be navigated with confidence and, frankly (as is the case with our dark house and a few basements I have been in), with less fear. It’s no wonder that Nathan was so scared when the lights went out.

There are so many references to light in Scripture. You have already encountered quite a few of them in this devotional series. It is significant that one of God’s very first acts was to create light. We are told that darkness was over the swirling, chaotic waters (Genesis 1:2) and God’s first act of ordering the chaos was to create light (Genesis 1:3). Suddenly, there was light, and the light was good. It is like God walked into a dark room and had the same instinct to hit the lights.

There is also an account in the book of Exodus in which Moses interacts directly with God to receive the Ten Commandments. After the encounter, he has an unusual physical response, in Exodus 34:29-35, we learn that his face shined. The Israelites were so scared of direct contact with the glory of God that they feared that even through Moses’ shining face, it would be too much for them. Moses covered his face with a veil to hide the brightness.

Interestingly, Paul revives both images in 2 Corinthians chapters 3 and 4 as he uses a literary hyperlink back to God creating light (2 Corinthians 4:6 and Genesis 1:2-3) and Moses’ veiled face (2 Corinthians 3:7-18 and Exodus 34:29-35). The connection of the two images highlights the importance of light in the telling and transforming work of the Gospel. The light of the “knowledge of God’s glory” shines out in the darkness, and through that knowledge, we are

The Light

Hit the Lights

changed! (Amen!) Moses had an encounter with God that changed his appearance in a temporary way for a temporary period of time. Light shone from him. We can have an encounter with God that can permanently change us with “ever-increasing glory”. We can shine the light of Christ!

My life, transformed by the gospel and reflecting the glory of Christ, might not have been a lot of help in our dark house that day, but I know that there are many other dark places around me where God’s glory needs to shine. In school, in our practices, in our families, and in our communities, where do you see a deficit of light? That is where a heart that is transformed by the Gospel can truly shine.

- 1. 2 Corinthians 3:18 says that “...we all, who with unveiled faces, contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory...” Unlike the fleeting shine that Moses experienced, followers of Christ are now able to be transformed with ever-increasing glory! Do you see this in your own life?**
- 2. Do you have a favorite reference to light in Scripture? Maybe even one you have heard in another part of this series?**
- 3. Read 2 Corinthians 3:7-4:6. Look at all the ways that Paul uses biblical imagery of light to communicate the glory of God and the Gospel.**



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