

Let's Visit

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Reflections on Darkness

Have you ever noticed how dark it is when the lights go out? I don't mean at night, when you have turned out the lights in the house, but you still have the light from the digital clock, the street light filtering in from the window and the night light on in the hallway. I'm talking about when the storm comes, the electricity goes out, the stars are hidden, the wind is blowing, and there is no light, none at all. That is the image of the darkness I see in Isaiah 50:10. *"Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God"*. The kind of darkness where you can't see your hand in front of your face. There are times in our lives as God's people that we have to serve God in the dark. There are times we must serve on faith. We can't see very far ahead.

You see, life is filled with melody and misery, high times and hard times. It is interesting that as Christians we want to be "overcomers", but we don't want much to overcome. We all want to go to heaven. It's just that we would rather not have to die to get there.

There are occasions when we experience dark times in our life. We can't make sense of what's happening. There are seasons when we are not able to mentally grasp what is taking place in our lives. We have studied our lessons, learned our formulas, memorized the promises of God's word, we think we have it all figured out, and suddenly we are plunged into deep, deep darkness. When that happens the first thing that comes to our mind is why? What do we do when the lights go out? What do we do when darkness comes into our life?

It is often those of greatest devotion who know the deepest darkness. This is not someone who has wandered away from God. This person fears and loves the Lord. The "fear of the Lord" means "love on its knees". The person who fears God the most is the person who loves God the most. This is the person who obeys the voice of God.

There is a distorted idea of God being spread in our world today. It is a distortion that comes primarily from the "pretty hair and pretty teeth" crowd on television. You know, those TV preachers who smile all the time and are always telling you how great things are and never condemn sin or try to correct wrongdoing. They are spreading this distorted idea that if a person becomes a Christian, it will all be honey and no bees. Life will be sunlight and roses with no rain, no weeds and no thorns. Yet, if you read your Bible, the reality is often those who love the Lord experience darkness. Job experienced a period of darkness. John was put in prison for speaking truth to power when he told Herod it was not lawful for him to have Herodias, his brother Philip's wife.

Think back to the greatest period of spiritual growth in your life. Was it in the sunlight or the darkness? Is it not true that when Mr. Trouble knocks on our heart's door we have matured more

Continued on page 2

In Search Of The Lord's Way



Tune in to this Television Ministry
KSLA 12 – Shreveport -7:30 a.m. Sunday
DISH channel 239-6:00 a.m. Sunday
DIRECT TV channel 307 -6:00 a.m. Sunday

Gathered Here and There



Today's Sermon

"A Resurrection Day Walk With Jesus"

Our text comes from Luke 24:13-31. Cleopas and his companion waked home to Emmaus with a stranger. They didn't realize they were walking with Jesus.

FOR THE PANTRY....

Salsa/Picante Sauce

Reflections On Darkness – continued from page 1

than at other times in our life? Faith is like film, it is best developed in the darkness.

In the darkness we are to look to the Lord. We live by promises, not by explanations. Just because it does not make sense to us, does not mean it will not make sense to God.

We must live God's way, even though tough times come. We continue to give to the Lord, even though we may have had a financial reversal. We continue to trust in the Lord, even though we may not understand Him. We continue to attend God's house even though tough times come to our family. We continue to have our quiet time with God even though sickness comes to us. The promises of God remain the same whether the sun is shining or darkness comes.

You see, sometimes God removes all the answers in order to give us himself. A relationship is more important than a reason. God desires to use us even in the midst of darkness. God wants to develop our faith, our trust in Him. The test of our character is not what we do in worship. The test of our character is what we do in the dark.

Some day, we will realize that in the darkness we were learning some truths. There are treasures of darkness. Have you heard someone say, "the

stars are out tonight"? The fact is, the stars are out in the daytime. You cannot see them because of the sunlight.

In the light we see what is near, in the darkness we see that which is far away. In the light we may see more clearly, but in the darkness we see further. We may think our brightest thoughts during the day, but we will think our deepest thoughts during the night.

We may be in darkness now, but there is a better day coming. If it seems darkness is all around us, we must trust in God. The Psalmist would write, *"weeping may endure for a night, but joy will come in the morning"* (Psalms 30:5)

There is a better day coming for the faithful child of God. For the non-Christian, this is as good as it will ever be. For the Christian, this is as bad as it will ever be.

Someday, take a walk and enjoy the warmth of a sunny day. As you enjoy it's warmth, remember that though we can experience the warmth of the sun, we have never seen the full intensity of the sun.

In the same way, we can feel the warmth of God's presence. But we have never fully seen the glory of God. For the faithful child of God, there is coming a time when we will see the face of God. We will fully see what we slightly experienced in this life. Remember, when the lights go out, God is still there in the midst of our darkness.

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On The Lighter Side....



YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE HIM ... HE'S NEW TO THE FAITH AND THIS IS HIS FIRST EASTER

Miscellaneous



Those To Remember In Prayer



Save The Date! Sunday June 6th

Tentatively, this
will be our next
Covered Dish
Luncheon.

Special Announcement

"Pure Religion, and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." James 1:27

We send monthly financial support from the Center Church of Christ to two Children's homes:
Cherokee Children's Home in Cherokee, Texas
High Plains Children's Home in Amarillo, Texas

Additionally, we also partner with two other homes in supplying other needs they have:
The Children's Home of Lubbock
Sunny Glen Children's Home

Sunny Glen sends their truck here twice a year to pick up groceries from our pantry. This is where the majority of what we fill our little red wagon with goes to. The truck from Sunny Glenn will be here the week of May 11, 2021.

The Children's Home of Lubbock comes once a year to pick up a specific item they have requested. This year, they are requesting that we provide them with TOILET PAPER. They will be here May 27th to pick up the toilet paper. Let's make sure we remember to bring this and have a good amount for them to pick up.

The fact that we are in some way contributing to the support of 4 different Children's Homes is something that we can take pride in.

THOSE WITH ONGOING NEEDS:

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Roxie Bostick (back issues) **Gene Bradshaw** (recovering from surgery), **Martha Jean Golden** (recovering from a fall) **Betty Miller** (having tests) **Debra Pate** (waiting for more tests from a recent mild stroke) **Jerry Pate** (knee replacement surgery scheduled for April) **Wayne Sims** (cancer);

"EXTENDED FAMILY" AND FRIENDS

Cody Butler (Debra Pate's grandson) **Paul Cocklin** (co-worker of Norma Perkins) **Peytin Cook** (Betty Miller's great-grandaughter) **Gracie Elam** (6 month old baby recovering from heart surgery) **Dalton Hendrix** (Joyce Holt's great-great nephew) **Lamar McCormick** (friend of Sarah Fletcher, multiple health issues) **Jared and Natalie Tate** (Mike and Roxie's son and daughter-in-law) **Pat Tate** (Jana O'Brien's mother)

THOSE IN THE MILITARY AND FOREIGN SERVICE

Amanda Bradshaw, Leland Bradshaw, Lucas Tate

If you want someone added to the prayer list, please fill out a card and put it in the offering plate.

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Remember, that even though we are not requiring the wearing of masks in our assembly, we do still want to do everything we can to be safe both for ourselves and for others. We would therefore ask that we all remain aware of social distancing and being respectful of other's personal space.

-thank you

A pessimist is a man who looks at the world through morose colored glasses.

The amount of sleep required by the average person is about five minutes more.

If nobody knows the trouble you've seen, you don't live in a small town.



Across The Preacher's Desk

Jesus didn't quit assembling with the disciples because Judas was a hypocrite, or because Peter was always "buttin' in". Nor did he quit because James and John "flew off the handle" occasionally. His interest in these men was not lessened because they were envious and jealous of each other at times. He did not quit teaching the high standard of life because some of his close associates failed miserably to live as they should. He did not refuse to teach others because they were unkind and unbelieving.

Jesus did not quit as a leader because some could not see "eye to eye" with him and criticized him to his back. He did not cease to teach good morals, just because he associated with an adulterous woman, an unscrupulous business man or demon worshippers. When he didn't get everything his way he didn't stop praying nor did he give up the fight because all his disciples fled from him when there was danger.

Instead, he chose a course of right and was sure it was right, and let nothing stop his development and accomplishments for God. He drank the bitter cup of betrayal, crucifixion, death and burial. But he didn't quit there. He came from the grave to be the ruler of the universe.

If you ever feel like quitting or taking off, just remember Christ and Him crucified. I believe that will keep you at your post of duty.

it's something to think about. . . .tlp

**Great Churches are built with
Commitment!**