



LET'S VISIT

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MUSINGS ABOUT 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

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In Search of the Lord's Way



Tune in to this Television Ministry
KSHV 45 - 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



When Jesus Wrote On The Ground

For The Pantry. . .

August 24 – Rice

Offering – August 17, 2025 . . \$ 2,290.00

The Lord's plan of giving ... "as ye have prospered"

Musings About 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)

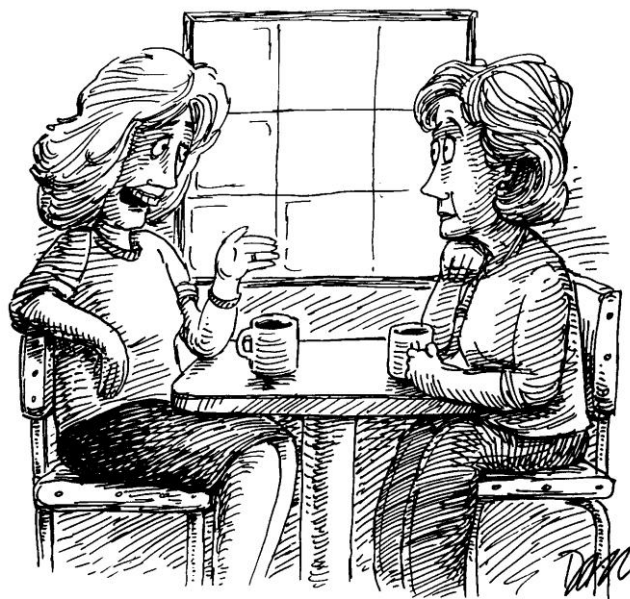
There is a better day coming for the faithful child of God. For the non-Christian, this is as good as it will ever be. For the Christian, this is as bad as it will ever be.

Someday, take a walk and enjoy the warmth of a sunny day. As you enjoy its 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.

tp

On The Lighter Side. . .



"By the time my out-patient surgery got to the end of the prayer chain, I'd had all my limbs amputated, died, and left \$100,000 to the building fund."



September 7, 2025

Mark this date on your calendar, make your plans to be here and invite ALL your family and friends to come and join us for worship and lunch!

Let's make this the greatest "Friends and Family Day" in the history of the Center Church of Christ!

Hospitality group 3 will be in charge of this luncheon. The members of this group are: LaJuan Baugh, Sheri Burgay, Liela Klein, Lieza Klein, Tiffanee Klein and Trish Lout.

Someone will be in the fellowship hall before and during Bible Class for you to drop off your food. However, the outside door will be locked at 10:40 so please bring your food prior to that time.

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Communion Preparation for August
Manny & Brittany Ortiz



Wednesday FELLOWSHIP MEAL

Make your plans to join us for our next Wednesday night fellowship meal on August 27th. We will share a meal together and then spend the time singing gospel songs. We hope you will be here.



OUR "CHURCH FAMILY"

Cissy Amos, LaJuan Baugh, Martha Jean Golden, Alice Hall, Thelma Hinton, LaResa Livingston, Mike Lout, Debra Pate, Jerry Pate, Betty Willis

"EXTENDED FAMILY" AND FRIENDS

Tami Abernathy (friend of Isaiah & Amanda Molloy hospitalized) Richard Barbee (Gene Bradshaw's nephew) David Bissett (Mike O'Brien's brother in law- cancer) Dwayne Brister (Cissy Amos' cousin) Jane Adams Burkhalter (Diedra Hughes' cousin) Debra Clifton (friend of LaResa Livingston) Coleen Dickerson (friend of Cissy Amos with leukemia) Leta Dozier (Ryan Perkins' grandmother) Hugh and Pat Fletcher (Sarah Fletcher's brother and sister-in-law dealing with multiple health issues) Joyce Fontenot (Debra Pate's mother) Suzi Hogan (Mike Bostick's sister-in-law) Ted Holt (former member of this congregation) Wynell Lawson (Diedra Hughes' aunt) Debbie Lynn (Abbey Perkins' mother dealing with memory issues) Norma Magby (Melonie Bradshaw's mother) Lamar McCormick (friend of Sarah Fletcher, multiple health issues) Calvin Smith (Debra Pate's uncle); Heather Simmons Stewart (Friend of Cissy Amos) cancer; J. C. Tate & Pat Tate (Jana O'Brien's father and mother) Max Windham (Friend of LaResa Livingston) additional cancer treatments.

THOSE IN THE MILITARY AND FOREIGN SERVICE

Cole Barbee, Adam Bradshaw, Michele Bradshaw, Rosie Tate and Lucas Tate

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER!

Make a note of the dates of these activities on the Calendar for 2025.

December 7, 2025 – No Excuse Sunday
December 21, 2025 – Annual Christmas Party

PUT THESE DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR!





Across The Preacher's Desk

It is an exciting time when a toddler abandons crawling and takes those first faltering steps. Once that happens, it is not long until they are going to attempt to climb the stairs. If they have reached the talking stage, they will inform you that they will do it "all on their own". However, parents are standing nearby to see how they make out and make sure they do not fall. To be sure, that little toddler will reach the top safely if they just keep going. For them, the last step is just as easy as the first one. Trouble comes only if they begin to wonder why they are so high and they get in trouble if they turn back. It is then they will take a tumble.

Paul would write, "Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:13-14) As Christians pressing toward the goal, we can learn some things from a toddler. You see, our heavenly Father is standing by, ready to assist us when we stumble. We also can learn that the struggle is not greater as we climb higher, but it is easier because we have experience behind us. Then, it is dangerous to look back, we must forget what is behind.

It is a big adventure for a child to climb the stairs. It is the greatest possible adventure for us to climb the heights toward God. Are you moving closer to God day by day? If not, you should be.

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

**The Lord's Plan
For Evangelism –
Each one Bring one!
55 in '25!**