

Light Has Come, All Fear Is Gone

Isaiah 9:2-7 NIV

Like many of us here tonight, I was really afraid of the dark when I was a kid. I remember wanting to overcome that fear of the dark in my younger days and I did several things to accomplish this. I was about 9 years old when I began to make short trips to my backyard at nighttime hoping to get rid of this fear I had.

After trying hundreds of times, I have to tell you that my strategy did not help me to get rid of my fear. But my efforts were not in vain, because I developed a super-fast running speed as I sprinted back into the house. As a four grader, I was one of the fastest boys in my elementary school. The reason, I practiced every night.

I remember this specific night when my dad saw me tiptoeing my way into the dark backyard and he also saw me running back into the house as fast as I could. So, when I got inside of the house dad got me, looked at my eyes and said to me, *“what’s wrong with you? What are you trying to do?”*

Obviously, dad was confused. I said to him: “Dad, I don’t want to be afraid of the dark anymore.” So, he looked at me and said, “I am going to show you a better way to do that.” He took me to his bedroom where he had a flashlight and took me back outside and said, “This is how you do it”, he turned the flashlight on and said, “Light is what you need to get rid of your fear of the dark.”

Today I have overcome part of those fears, but I have to confess that still I feel uncomfortable when I am in the dark. But who likes dark places anyways? I am pretty sure that you don’t like darkness. Unless you are Batman, you don’t like the dark. I don’t think Batman is here tonight. The truth is that many of us don’t like darkness, just the word gives us

this idea of confusion, lack of clarity, fears, despair, anxieties and so forth. Of course, nobody wants to live with that.

Just a few minutes ago, we heard the prophecy Isaiah spoke to a people walking in darkness. It was a dark time because the people whom Isaiah was speaking to were living in a kind of a cold war. There was hostility, pessimism, oppression, hopelessness, financial insecurity. Isaiah was speaking to people who were expatriates, who were surviving rather than living. In the midst of chaos, to people who were despaired and fearful because of the darkness they were living in, the prophet said, there is a great light and such light will wipe out all your fears.

Part of **the Christmas message is that we don't have to be afraid of shadows** because the Light of the world has come to us. I love the prophecy in the book of Isaiah because it tells us that even though God does not always lift people out of difficult situations, God Himself comes into the situation. I see this throughout the entire Bible, even though God does not pluck us out of the darkness, he becomes the light in our darkness.

My dad gave me the perfect solution for me to not be afraid of the dark anymore: "Son, what you need is light." So, going to my backyard in the dark with a flashlight really helped me get rid of my fear of the dark. Everything was fine until one night my flashlight ran out of batteries and I had to resort to my old method of coping with my fear: I ran as fast as I could back into the house. The absence of light brought me back to a position of fear.

Friends, I know we live in a world full of shadows. And, no one here is exempt from experiencing gloomy moments. I know the darkness we see around us is the source of many of our fears.

There are times when we face difficult moments and these moments come to us in various ways. Perhaps, you are facing Christmas for the

first time since losing a beloved spouse, a partner, a parent, or a child. It is possible that you are separated from someone you love because of deployment, or illness, or an unresolved conflict.

Perhaps, you or someone you know are facing an uncertain future defined by cancer treatments, or the progression of a terminal illness, or the slow disappearance of physical and mental vitality. Whether we are troubled, tired, anxious, or fearful, what we need, what the world needs is light. Not any kind of light, but Jesus, the Light of the world.

Tonight, we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the time when the eternal Light of the world came to dwell among us and be with us. I have great news for you this evening. Jesus, the Light of the world, is with you and is also shining a way forward for all of us. Unlike my flashlight, Jesus, the Light of the world, will never leave you in the dark because he will never, ever, run out of battery. He has eternal power.

John, the Gospel writer, put it in a beautiful, poetic way. Talking about the eternity of Jesus, the light of the world, John wrote, *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 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... The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”* **John 1:1-5, 9, 14**
ESV

Tonight, as we celebrate the birth of Jesus we are reminded of the message of the gospel: **light has come, light is available. Even when darkness seems overwhelming, the Light is overcoming all shadows.**

Dear church, I want you to be joyful, hopeful and have a sense of

endless peace even when the present and the future seem uncertain. I want to bring a word of hope to all of you this evening. I want to remind you that the Lord wants to shine his light on you and be gracious to you. Jesus, the Light of the world, wants to drive away our fears because he wants us to live confidently and fearless knowing that his *light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

It is my hope and prayer that this Christmas you receive the light of God in your life anew. It is my hope and prayer that you let Jesus be your light in the years to come. I hope and pray that you let Jesus' light shine over you and through you at all times and guide you in every step. If you can take one thing home with you this evening, then let this be it: *God wants you to have the light of Jesus.* God, who loves you, does not want you to live in fear; instead, he desires to give you the glory of his light in Jesus Christ. Like my dad, God the Father is telling us, "my son, my daughter, what you need is my light."

Tonight, we are going to receive the light of Christ. Receiving the light of our Lord Jesus is an invitation to keep alive the message of Christmas throughout the days to come. God is calling us to hope, to love, to be at peace, to always remember that **the Light of the world has come and wants to chase away our darkness and fears.** So, let us receive the Light of Christ. I encourage you to let this light shine in and through your lives. Amen.