



***LIGHT* in the DARK**

Week 18 | September 30, 2024

We live in a **lost and fallen** world, surrounded by a *kingdom of darkness*. While this is easy to believe and say when things are going okay for us, it's quite another thing to **realize it for yourself** when we are *personally confronted* with that darkness. When we're neck deep in the pain of loss or face to face with the reality of suffering, the night can seem **unending** and the despair can quickly **overwhelm** us. *God knew this*, He knew these days were coming, and so He left us with an amazing gift to **overcome** this *evil time* we find ourselves in. (**Ephesians 6:12**; **2 Corinth. 4:4**; **Colossians 1:13**)

Throughout scripture Christ is referred to as the "light of the world", a **source of hope** in times of darkness, leading to *life everlasting*. Jesus then takes this already amazing promise a step further when He declares that we, as His followers, are also **the light of the world**. Because of Christ in us, we have the *capacity* and *responsibility* to reflect His light and reveal His glory to the world we live in. (**John 9:5**; **Matthew 5:14**)

So why does this matter? What does this mean in **times of trial** and how should it *lead us to pray* for the people, churches, and communities that we're a part of? This matters because the people of this world need the light of Jesus. They need to be **rescued** from the *kingdom of darkness* and **transferred** into the *Kingdom of Light*. It matters, because God in His wisdom decided that we as *His children* are to be beacons of light to all of the *lost souls* we are surrounded by, that through us they would **see Him**. This isn't easy even on our best days, let alone when everything is *falling apart*. Our only hope of success comes when we live in alignment with Him and are **filled with** and **focused on** *His light* that:

1. GUIDES: (**John 8:12**)

- a. **NOTE:** In times of loss, **confusion abounds**. It can be the hardest thing in the world just to put *one foot in front of the other* and keep moving in a straight line. When we're tempted to **wander**, or pulled to **drift**, the Light of the Lord keeps us on *the right path* and prevents us from stumbling. Like **a lighthouse** on the beach, God's light helps us navigate *treacherous waters* and make it safely to shore. (**John 11:9**; **Ephesians 5:14**)
 - i. **For Ex.** "Father God, thank You for **sending Your light** into this world and for placing it *in our hearts*. Please keep the focus of Your children **on You** so that their paths might be *illuminated* and You can keep them from falling. As Your followers, Lord God, use us to **shine Your light** into the lives of those around us so that they might *see, know, and find* the way to life and escape that path that leads to death."
 1. **REMEMBER:** When we **turn away** from the light we end up *walking in shadows*, and there we will surely stumble. (**John 11:10**)

2. **DRAWS:** (Isaiah 60:3)

- a. **NOTE:** Like moths **drawn to** a flame, God's light has *an attractive force* to it that pulls us in and **brings us close**. This force is even more *powerful* and *effective* in dark times, as it shines all the more prominently and offers **refuge** and **respite** to those in *desperate need*. As Christians, times of trial can be **opportunities** to *reveal this light* to those around us so that everyone can see the God we serve. (John 6:44; Matt. 5:15-16)
 - i. **For Ex.** "Holy Spirit, thank You for **drawing us to You** so that we could be saved. Thank You God for *calling us to Yourself* and pulling us away from our old lives. Please continue to do that same good work **in and through our lives** so that everyone around us *might see You* and come to *know You*. May the fruit of our lives offer **a good testimony** of the God we serve, bringing *glory to Your name* and advancing Your kingdom."
 1. **REMEMBER:** It is **not our job** to draw people to God, we are simply to be *faithful* and *effective witnesses* telling of His glory. (John 1:8)

3. **EXPELS:** (John 1:5)

- a. **NOTE:** The truly beautiful thing about light is that it has the power to **expel darkness**. No matter how *deep the night*, no matter how *hopeless the situation*, no matter how *painful the circumstance*—God's light can overcome. This same power **resides in** us, **fills** us, and **flows from** us as we *look on Jesus*. The Bible tells us that the "gates of hell" will not prevail against God's people when they are **firmly planted** in His word and that instead His kingdom will be *forcefully advanced*. In evil times, we must cling even **more tightly** to the light which *first set us free* and has the power to expel all darkness. (Luke 11:36; Matthew 6:22; Ephesians 5:8)
 - i. **For Ex.** "Dear God, thank You for the **freedom** that comes from accepting Your light. Thank You for *rescuing us from darkness* and dwelling in our hearts. I ask, Lord, that You would **fill us to the brim** with Your light that any and all traces of evil might be *expunged*. May Your light and glory flow through us and **eradicate** the *forces of darkness* in, among, and around our lives so that the Kingdom of Heaven might be **advanced** and the powers of Hell thwarted."
 1. **REMEMBER:** Those in **partnership with darkness** will *hate the light* and will work to *extinguish it* before it exposes their nature. (John 3:20-21)

Questions for Reflection:

- Have you **wandered** from *the right path* or **gotten lost** in the fog of this life?
 - Seek God and let Him **guide you back** to where you went wrong. Only then can you experience *true intimacy* with Him.
- Does your life **reveal God's glory** to those around you in a way that *points them to Him*?
 - Ask God to cut away anything preventing His light from **shining through**. He can then use you to *pull others to Himself*!
- Are you partnering with the **King of Light** or the *Prince of Darkness*?
 - Renounce every demonic agreement that has been made by **rejecting Satan's lies** and replacing them with *the truth*.