

Light from the WORD

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Light from God's Word

"And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light" (Gen. 1:3).

Since the beginning, God has been giving light to darkness through words. So it makes perfect sense that John began his own inspired gospel writings with "In the beginning" (as Gen. 1:1) and then went on to describe Jesus as "the Word" (John 1:1) and furthermore as "the light of men" (v. 4). John was connecting Jesus' incarnation with this same important theme of creation: God communicates, bringing light to our darkness.

This is why we publish this devotional, and why we title it *Light from the Word*. God's Word shines the light of His truth upon our daily lives, giving meaning to what we otherwise could not see. God's inspired Word, the Bible, is truly a light for our path (Ps. 119:105). Through Scripture, we can see meaning and truth in even the most gray and mundane circumstances, or especially in those tragically dark moments of life.

John Marriott powerfully invoked the light of God's Word in his hymn "Let There Be Light." He poetically described how God's spoken words brought everything into existence: "Chaos and darkness heard / And took their flight." So also, our prayer for you is that the daylight of God's Word—of His good news—may shine away any darkness and chaos from your life. May this devotional tool, over the months to come, shed light from the Word of God into your life.

Hear us, we humbly pray,
And where the gospel's day
Sheds not its glorious ray,
Let there be light!

Sincerely,
Wesleyan Publishing House Editorial Staff

PS: Is *Light from the Word* making a difference in your life?
Let us know at editor@wesleyan.org.

SPIRITUAL THERAPY

I HAD MY FIRST JOINT-REPLACEMENT surgery at the tender age of thirty-two. I was not mentally prepared for the demands of recovery. The surgery was more painful than I'd imagined, and the physical therapy was excruciating. The medical team wanted me to lift, flex, and even stand on my leg, just hours after the procedure. The pain was almost unbearable, and I had difficulty complying.

When the doctor arrived for an examination the next day, I expected him to sympathize with my pain. Not so much. Taking hold of my leg firmly, he lifted and dropped it, forcing me to engage the muscles surrounding my knee. I cried out in pain, but he was unmoved and repeated the exercise. Afterward, he explained his rationale. If I didn't regain full use of the joint within a few days, I likely never would. The therapy was painful, but the goal was not to torture me. It was to ensure my success. Self-pity never helped anyone recover.

Confronting believers who continue to engage in sin is a painful exercise for all involved. It can lead to conflict, hard feelings, even broken relationships. But that is never the point. Though tough love may appear cruel, it is often the best way to ensure the redemption of a wandering soul. Pity never saved anyone.

—Lawrence W. Wilson

So that . . . his spirit [may be] saved on the day of the Lord. (1 Cor. 5:5)

Pray about a difficult conversation you need to have.

*If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you, to some extent—not to put it too severely.
(2 Cor. 2:5)*

LIVE UP TO YOUR NAME

WHEN I WAS A CHILD, my parents gave the same speech on the first day of every school year. It began with the standard lines: Be good, work hard, mind your teachers, and pay attention. It concluded with a gentle reminder: “Remember, you’re a Wilson. Live up to your name!”

I was less than enthusiastic about that speech as a child, but I found myself giving it to my own kids as I packed them off to school each fall. Being part of a family, or any community, means that your actions have the power to bless or harm many others. It’s not all about you.

This is Paul’s word to the Corinthian church. The behavior of one affects all. We are not lone rangers, responsible only to God. We are a community of believers, responsible also to one another. When one of us upholds the name of Christ, it brings honor to Him and advances the gospel. However, when one of us fails to live in a manner worthy of our calling, it is an affront not only to Christ, but also to the members of His body.

So be good, work hard, pay attention, and remember you are a Christian. Everything you do reflects on our family’s reputation. Live up to your name!

—Lawrence W. Wilson

Imagine yourself wearing a nametag today that reads, “My name is Christian.”

TYLENOL FOR THE SOUL

TYLENOL REDUCES THE EMOTIONAL PAIN of rejection. That sounds incredible, but according to *Psychology Today*, in a study testing the hypothesis that rejection mimics physical pain, researchers gave some participants acetaminophen (the generic form of Tylenol) before asking them to recall a painful rejection experience. The people who received the meds reported significantly less emotional pain than those who took a placebo.

Rejection is one of the most powerfully negative things we can experience, and that experience lingers. Human beings are able to recall emotional pain more readily and more vividly than physical pain. We have a powerful need to belong, so being cast out of any group produces long-lasting negative emotions.

Perhaps the apostle Paul understood this, because he urged the Corinthian church to welcome back a repentant sinner so that he or she would not be “overwhelmed by excessive sorrow” (2 Cor. 2:7). The pain of being corrected can be overcome far more readily than the pain of being permanently excluded from the group.

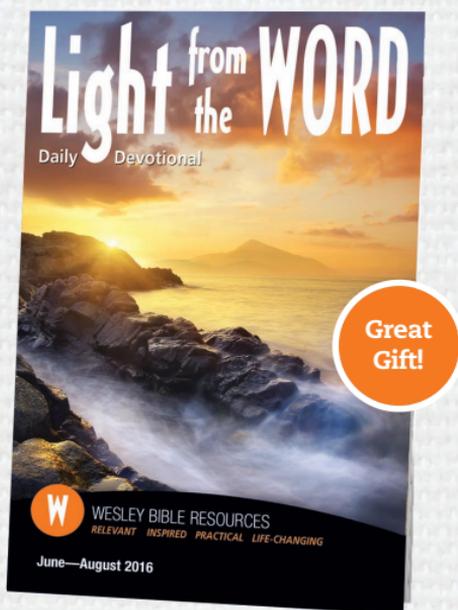
When you must correct anyone, be willing to reaffirm your love. Remember that the goal of correction is to restore, not destroy, relationships. Whether correcting a child, student, coworker, or church member, reaffirm your commitment to them and to the relationship. Love is better than Tylenol for relieving emotional pain.

—Lawrence W. Wilson

I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him.
(2 Cor. 2:8)

Write an affirming note to someone who has been rejected.

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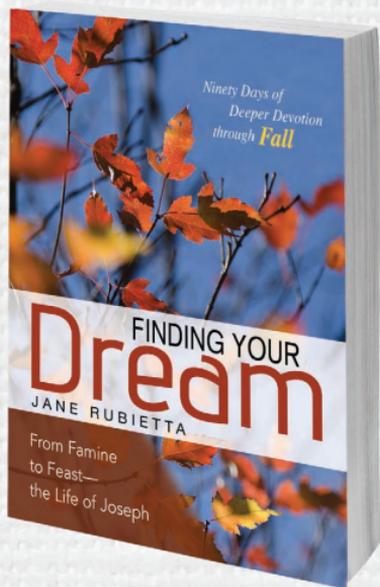
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