

This week's devotions are written by Katie Van Koevering. Katie lives in West Michigan with her husband and two boys. They are all excited to welcome a third child to the family in April. Katie works in the Athletics Department at Unity Christian High School and serves as a leader of the worship team at Covenant Life Church in Grand Haven, MI.

Monday, February 2

Read Ephesians 2:1-3

We've reached the point of the year in Michigan that I tend to dread. The joy that surrounds the holidays is long over and signs of spring are weeks, if not months away. White, brown and grey are the colors of the landscape and it takes much longer to get out the door, as we make sure everyone has the correct coat, boots and gloves.

At this point, I've lived in Michigan long enough to be fairly used to the snow and the cold, but the part that still (and I would guess always will) bothers me is the lack of sunlight. Going days, even weeks, without seeing the sun gets discouraging. Without even realizing it, people are less friendly and talkative. It's easy to turn inward - to interact less with others and stay inside. Your brain feels foggy and tired. Supplementing extra Vitamin D and using a "happy light" to mimic the sun can only do so much. (Give that a Google if you are unsure of what I'm talking about.)

But then, there's a sunny day. Everything changes when you see the sun after not seeing it for a while. The long days without it seem a distant memory. You feel more awake, more energetic, more friendly. Eager to take on the day and hopeful in its beauty.

In the text for today, Paul tells the church of Ephesus that they were once dead in their sins. They were numb as they followed "the course of the world" and were "children of wrath, like the rest of mankind". Like people who had never seen the sun, they lived in a haze of despair and sin.

As we walk through the rest of this passage this week, we will see the sun. The light of the world will enter in and remove the despair and hopelessness. The gift of God and his grace will bring color back into the story.

But before we can focus on the eternal gift, we must first address our sin. Rather than become numb to it, we need to name it. To face it. To address the darkness and pass it over to our heavenly Father. He knows the darkness in our hearts. It's no surprise to him. We will soon enter the season of Lent where we spend 40 days dwelling in the grief and despair of our sin. Spend a moment and confess your sin to God. Remind yourself of your need for God's grace. And don't give up hope - the Light is coming.