

SUN DEVOTIONAL

PSALM 84:11

“For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor. No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly.”

EXPERIENCE

The sun is awesome! It is hard to overstate the importance of the sun since its energy is keeping us and all of earth’s creatures alive. My naturalist friend, Scott Bastian, writes:

The Sun emits more energy in one second than civilization has ever used. It would take about 200 million electric power stations just to match solar energy reaching Earth. From 93 million miles away, it lights up the planet and warms the atmosphere as energy is reflected, scattered, and absorbed . . . That’s pretty far away, and yet the Sun’s energy keeps us alive. However, the Earth receives less than one-half of one billionth of the energy of the Sun.¹

¹ Scott F. Bastian, *Virginia Beach Naturally: A Guide to Enjoying the Wildlife of Virginia Beach, VA.* (Dexter, MI: Thomson Shore, Inc. 2011), 288.

The point is this, we get just enough of the sun to stay alive and healthy, the slightest bit of overexposure is harmful. Any significant change in the amount of energy the sun outputs to earth would be catastrophic. Each of us has experienced the pleasantness and dangers of the sun. The gentle warmth of the sun on our face on a cool fall day is wonderful, but the inability to find shade and thereby avoid the blistering summer sun hitting our face is brutal. Sun-scorched noses and cheeks are painful. These experiences of the effects of the sun are spiritually relevant to our lives.

CONTEMPLATION

The pleasantness of the sun on our faces is a lively reminder of the warm affection of God for his children. Yet, just as we bow our heads before a holy God, we cannot help but close our eyes when we turn our faces to the sun. I think of the famous hymn lyric that says, “No angels in the sky, can fully bear that sight, but downward bend their burning eyes at mysteries so bright.”² The delight of God for those saved by the gospel of Jesus Christ is communicated in the sun’s shining on our faces and yet we must close our eyes as a reminder that we are not yet holy enough to behold the face of God. John Owen, a 17th Century pastor, put it this way, “We who cannot behold the sun in its glory are too weak to bear the beams of infinite brightness.”³

Application: As I stand with a sunward gaze, I am conscious of God’s glorious brightness, his holiness. The sun’s brightness prompts my heart to praise God for the perfections his character. I am also conscious of my lack of holiness, my desperate need for Jesus Christ.

² Matthew Bridges and Godfrey Thring, “Crown Him with Many Crowns”, *The Worshipping Church: A Hymnal*. (Carol Stream, IL: Hope Publishing, 1990), 92.

³ John Owen, *The Mortification of Sin*. abridged by Richard Rushing, Puritan Paperbacks. (Peoria, IL: Versa Press, 2005), 93.

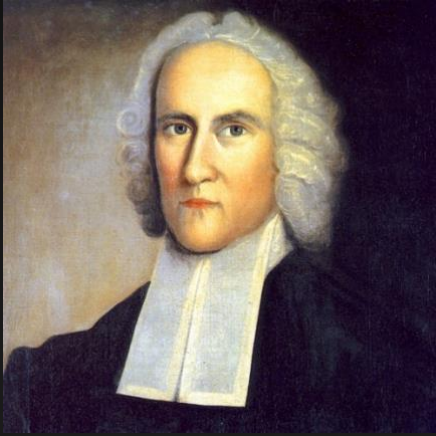
The sun's brilliant intensity leads me to confess my sin. Lastly, the sun's warmth fills my heart with a sweet sense of my heavenly Father's delight in me. How might the sun also lead you to praise, to confess, and to enjoy God's favor.

PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father, as you blessed the people of Israel long ago, we ask that you bless us and guard us; that you O Lord make your face to shine upon us and be gracious to us, that you lift up your countenance upon us and give us peace (Numbers 6:24-26). In your steadfast love, may your face shine upon your servants (Psalm 31:16). In Christ's name. Amen.

CONFIRMATION

In Psalm 84:11, the Scriptures say the LORD God is a sun. Note that the Psalmist avoids saying that God is *the* sun. The sun is not God, but the sun is an emblem of God, helping his people to better understand Him. There are many aspects of who God communicated by the sun. One confirmation for today is that the sun helps believers understand his favor, meaning his delight in them. Verse 11 links the sun to God's bestowing of favor. In the New Testament, what becomes clear is that Jesus Christ is a sun. 2 Corinthians 4:6 states, "For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." In Revelation 1:16 we read that Jesus's "face was like the sun shining in full strength." One day we will have "no need of sun or moon to shine" for Jesus will be our lamp, according to Revelation 21:23 (See also Malachi 4:1-2). What a glorious day that will be, but until that time, we have a foretaste in the bright and shining sun in the sky.



Jonathan Edwards

FROM *IMAGES OF DIVINE THINGS* #4, 14, 128. [[WJE 11:52, 54, & 97](#)]

“4. The heaven's being filled with glorious, luminous bodies, is to signify the glory and happiness of the heavenly inhabitants; and amongst these, the sun signifies Christ and the moon, the church.⁴

14. The sun's so perpetually, for so many ages, sending forth his rays in such vast profusion, without any [lessening] of his light and heat, is a bright image of the all-sufficiency and everlastingness of God's bounty and goodness.⁵

128. As the SUN is an image of Christ upon account of its pleasant light and benign, refreshing, life-giving influences, so it is on account of its extraordinary fierce heat, it being a fire of vastly greater fierceness than any other in the visible world. . . . As God's brightness and glory is so much beyond the brightness of the sun, his image, thus the sun is but a shade and darkness in comparison of it, so his fierceness and wrath is vastly beyond the sun's heat.”⁶

⁴ [Jonathan Edwards, *Typological Writings*, WJE 11:52.](#)

⁵ [Jonathan Edwards, *Typological Writings*, WJE 11:54.](#)

⁶ [Jonathan Edwards, *Typological Writings*, WJE 11:97.](#)