

# OUT OF DARKNESS

*“For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness’, made this light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.” —2 CORINTHIANS 4:6*

Many people reach a point in their lives where they don't see a light at the end of the tunnel. Physically, emotionally and mentally, they are worn out because of devastating circumstances which have left them bereft of any kind of joy in their lives.

Albert Ellis, a psychologist, writes about what he calls the ABC of our emotions. He says there is an 'A' – an activating event; 'B' – belief about that event; and 'C' – the consequent emotion. The event itself does not cause the emotion, but what you believe about the event. For example, two men are standing in a rainstorm and one is mad, the other is glad. Same event, but one man is a golfer and the other a farmer. They're totally different emotions derived from what you believe about the event. You cannot skip from A to C. There must be a belief to evoke an emotion.

There is also an ABC in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. 'A' – Admitting our sin; 'B' – Believing in Him, and 'C' – Committing to Him. However devastating our situations are, this is where there is light at the end of the tunnel. The activating event is in turning to Christ and admitting our sin. Then our journey with Him begins one step at a time. Part of the process is facing exactly what is in front of us, and then belief in Him, which trusts the Lord Jesus to direct our way. Nothing surprises Christ or defeats Him. Heart and soul, we commit to Him, taking one day at a

time, and leaving the “how to” to Him. The consequent emotion brings joy in His indwelling presence, which gives hope and strength in Him.

The message of Scripture is that God is near to the broken-hearted. James 4:8 says, “Come near to God and he will come near to you.” For many people, experiencing joy this Christmas may seem unattainable, but joy is not the goal and not a beginning in itself. It is a consequence of God meeting us at the most broken and raw part of our lives. God works in us first, and the end result is that from the deepest core of our being, there is a radiance about us that becomes inexplicable apart from the indwelling presence of God. This is joy that comes through the gift of our Lord Jesus, because intrinsic in joy is hope. We cannot separate joy from hope. Christ is our hope who meets the deepest needs of our hearts. He brings us out of darkness into His light, and it is there we experience the joy in knowing our Redeemer which transcends everything else.

***PRAYER: Thank You, Lord, for the wonderful hope I have in You. I know nothing defeats You, and I come humbly, asking You to take charge of my life.***

***TO REFLECT UPON: In troubled times, am I resting in Christ, allowing Him to guide my way?***