



The Glorious Light

Light in the Darkness #2 • December 7, 2025

Opening

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.” (John 1:5, NLT)

Sometimes when I write a sermon, I have a song that gets stuck in my head. A word or phrase related to a verse or topic triggers the playlist in my mind. Over and over, the lyrics of a verse or chorus repeat in my mind.

So, I just want you to know that this week’s sermon is brought to you by the opening track of one rock band’s debut album, a 2001 song called “Crawling in the Dark” by Hoobastank. (*Fun fact: your minister likes the sound of hard rock and nu metal...even if he doesn’t approve all the lyrics*). “Crawling in the Dark” is interesting because it was a bit philosophical for a rock song, dealing with the search for meaning. Here’s the chorus:

*Show me what it's for, make me understand it
I've been crawling in the dark looking for the answer
Is there something more than what I've been handed?
I've been crawling in the dark looking for the answer¹*

(cue the guitar riff)

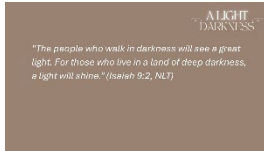
As we discussed last week, you and I live in a land of darkness (Isaiah 9:1-2), a place where the absence of God’s light produces spiritual blindness. All of us, to some extent, are “crawling in the dark,” searching for answers.

In the darkness, we try to find meaning; we try to feel our way through.

But what we need is light!

¹ [Hoobastank – Crawling in the Dark Lyrics | Genius Lyrics](#)

In Bethlehem, the Light would show up in a ZIP code – a real Person in a real Place to meet our real needs.



“The people who walk in darkness will see a great light. For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a light will shine.”
(Isaiah 9:2, NLT)

But as we continue our Christmas series, I want to talk today about **the nature of this Light that arrived**. I want to help you understand what we are looking at. And I want you to answer this question:



Do you see it?!

Because some of you (like Hoobastank) are *“looking and [you] just can't see what's in front of me.”*²

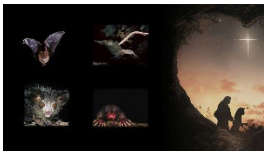


I Was Blind...

For some creatures, darkness doesn't seem so bad. Crawling in the dark is just fine with them. They can say, “I was blind...” and not feel like they are missing out, because they *only* know blindness.

Living in Darkness

The animal kingdom is full of animals that live in darkness, that have ways to navigate the blackness...and many of them thrive!



- **Bats** send out sound waves that bounce off objects and echo back locations, helping them to catch insects and evade predators in mid-flight.



² ...*(in front of meeee)*

- The **aye-aye**, a **lemur** native to Madagascar, is a nocturnal primate with an elongated middle finger, which it uses to tap on trees, listening for hollow sounds indicating insect presence. This unique hunting method, known as percussive foraging, allows it to extract insects from bark.
- The **olm**, an **amphibian** that resides in the caves of Southern Europe has small, regressed eyes, rendering it effectively blind. However, the olm relies on its heightened senses of smell and hearing to navigate. Its ability to detect electrical fields helps it find prey.
- The **star-nosed mole** has a bizarre nose with 22 appendages that allow it to sense subtle vibrations and textures. These senses let it detect prey underwater and in the dark.³



These creatures are amazing, and they show a remarkable ability to succeed without light. This is how God created them. They were designed to thrive in darkness.

A Dull, Colorless World



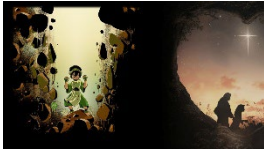
But you and I were not. Humans were created for sight, and living in darkness deprives us of the full experience should be our nature.

Now, don't get me wrong.... Those who are blind can live amazing lives! Stevie Wonder, Ray Charles, the Greek author Homer. Some have overcome their blindness with spectacular results. And many of you might know people with low or poor vision who do great things.

In fact, you might read about them or see them, because some authors and artists like to elevate blind characters in their work,

³ [20 Animals That Thrive in Total Darkness \(And How They Do It\) - Exploring Animals](#)

making them greater or equal to others, using them to call out deficiencies in others.



The popular American anime series, Avatar: The Last Airbender, has a major character named Toph Beifong. Blind from birth, this small teenage girl becomes a powerful “earthbender” (someone who can control rock and dirt). Toph excels in this ability because she listens and feels vibrations.

In the show, Toph’s ability to listen becomes a lesson for the main character of the series, as he tries to learn how to master control of the four elements of earth, water, fire, and air. She is portrayed as one of the strongest benders in the world, despite her blindness.

Yet the show understands Toph’s limitations. In one scene she helps hang up posters...and she glues them on the printed front side. In another, she defends the drawing skills of a friend when others are mocking him...a friend who then realizes her “compliment” doesn’t carry much weight. She also can’t “see” much when they are riding their flying bison (yes, it’s a thing in the show) because she can’t feel the vibrations of the ground.

Despite the accommodation and strengths given to her or others in the dark without sight, there is still a *richness* that is missing. There is beauty that goes unseen.

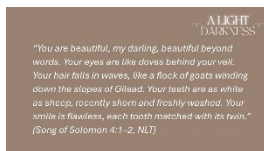
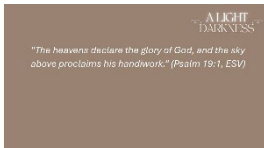
“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.” (Psalm 19:1, ESV)

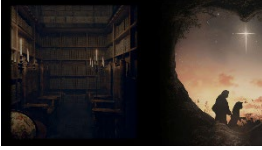
But only if you can see it.

“You are beautiful, my darling, beautiful beyond words. Your eyes are like doves behind your veil. Your hair falls in waves, like a flock of goats winding down the slopes of Gilead. Your teeth are as white as sheep, recently shorn and freshly washed. Your smile is flawless, each tooth matched with its twin.” (Song of Solomon 4:1–2, NLT)

But only if you can see her.

You and I could go to a library at night and navigate the corridors by touch or by a dim glow from an exit light. But if it stayed dark, we





would never be able to see and read the wealth of knowledge and stories contained in those thousands of books.

You and I could go to an art museum and find our way around the gallery. But we would not be able to see the artists' compelling use of color or form; we would never see and appreciate the beauty of brushstrokes and texture.

Without light, the world is missing much of what we as humans were designed to see and appreciate and love.

Spiritual Blindness

And what is true in the physical world is even more true in the spiritual world. Spiritual blindness causes us to miss the richness of God.

Do you have any idea what you miss when you walk in spiritual darkness? Do you see it?!

Speaking about those who don't know God, Paul writes in Ephesians:

*"They are **darkened** in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts." (Ephesians 4:18, NIV)*

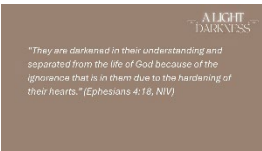
Asaph writes of them in Psalms:

*"They have neither knowledge nor understanding, they walk about **in darkness**; all the foundations of the earth are shaken." (Psalm 82:5, ESV)*

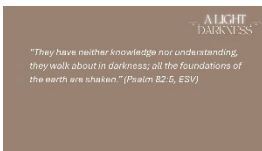
And even more explicitly, Scripture says:

*"Satan, who is the 'god' of this world, has **blinded the minds** of those who don't believe. They are **unable to see** the glorious light of the Good News. They don't understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God." (2 Corinthians 4:4, NLT)*

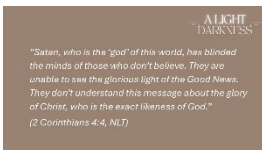
What is missing? What "light" of God's presence is absent in this spiritual blindness? What glories could He show?



"ALIGHT DARKNESS"
"They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts." (Ephesians 4:18, NIV)



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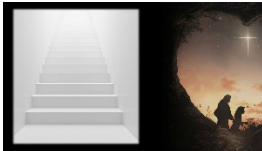
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...The Light Shines...

*“Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the **light of the world**. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the **light of life**.”” (John 8:12, ESV)*

Jesus claims to be the **light** that shines and drives away the darkness...but what does He mean by this? What does it mean to be “the light,” exactly?



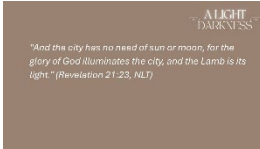
“Light is one of the Bible’s most complex symbols,” says Bible scholar Dr. Randall Tan.⁴ The metaphor is linked to:

- **Instruction.** *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a **light** to my path.” (Psalm 119:105, ESV)*
- **Truth.** *“Send out your **light** and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling!” (Psalm 43:3, ESV)*
- **Salvation.** *“The Lord is my **light** and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” (Psalm 27:1, ESV)*
- **Life.** *“He rescues them from the grave so they may enjoy the **light of life**.” (Job 33:30, NLT)*
- **Rejoicing.** *“**Light** shines on the godly, and joy on those whose hearts are right.” (Psalm 97:11, NLT)*
- **God’s Presence.** *“Happy are those who hear the joyful call to worship, for they will walk in the **light** of your presence, Lord.” (Psalm 89:15, NLT)*
- **God’s Glory.** *“Arise, Jerusalem! Let your **light** shine for all to see. For the glory of the Lord rises to shine on you. Darkness as black as night covers all the nations of the earth, but the glory*

⁴ Tan, R. K. J. (2003). [Light, Light of the World](#). In C. Brand, C. Draper, A. England, S. Bond, E. R. Clendenen, & T. C. Butler (Eds.), *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (p. 1039). Holman Bible Publishers.

*of the Lord rises and appears over you. All nations will come to your **light**; mighty kings will come to see your radiance.” (Isaiah 60:1–3, NLT)*

And in Revelation, as the city of God is described, John makes this pronouncement:



*“And the city has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its **light**.”*
(Revelation 21:23, NLT)

In short, when it is good, true, life-giving, salvation-bringing, excellent, noble, praiseworthy, joyful, right, just, peaceful, and glorious... Scripture says that is God’s light!

And it radiates from Him so much that we can’t even comprehend it!

You and I can’t even look at a medium-sized star 92 million miles away (the Sun) without being blinded by its radiance; how much more can we be overwhelmed by the glory of the God who created it!



That’s how John describes Jesus in the book of Revelation.

*“He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword came from his mouth. And his **face was like the sun** in all its brilliance.” (Revelation 1:16, NLT)*

That’s how Peter, James, and John experienced Him in the Gospels.

*“Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up a high mountain to be alone. As the men watched, Jesus’ appearance was transformed, and his **clothes became dazzling white, far whiter than any earthly bleach could ever make them.**” (Mark 9:2–3, NLT)*

God’s great light, so present in Jesus that it shines out in brilliance, beams into our spiritual darkness.

Do you see it?!



...And Now I See

The old hymn “Amazing Grace” includes the famous line, “...was blind but now I see.” That is God’s intent for those of us who have been in spiritual darkness! He states in Isaiah:

“I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do; I will not forsake them.”

(Isaiah 42:16, NIV)

God’s plan is to bring us out of darkness, to let us see Him for who He is. And that can happen in different ways.

God’s Light – Reflected in Nature

In one way, we can allow physical light itself to bear witness about the God who pierces the darkness.

Other pagan cultures saw the light of the sun or moon, and they used it as a point of worship. When Christians see the light of the sun or moon, we can use it to redirect our worship to Jesus. Because some of the scientific characteristics of physical light reflect and mirror the nature of the True Light, Jesus Christ.



Can I be a nerd for a second (as if I wasn’t already)?

- The **speed of light** (the c in $e=mc^2$) is a fundamental constant of nature and is **unchanging**, speeding at 186,282 miles per second. It never changes, just like our God who has no variation or change (James 1:17).
- The makeup of light is both **particle and wave**. It exhibits all the properties of one while also exhibiting the properties of the other...a combination that doesn’t occur elsewhere. This parallels Jesus, who is also **two seemingly incompatible things fully** at once: He is both fully God and fully man (Colossians 2:9).
- The **transmission** of light requires no other medium. Other types of energy like soundwaves have to pass energy through materials – air, liquid, ground. But light can travel through a

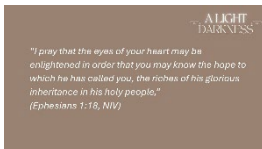
vacuum; it **requires nothing else**, just like Jesus requires nothing from anyone else (Acts 17:24-25).

- The **spectrum** of light shows all the colors we can see – a rainbow of light from red to violet that reminds us of God’s **promises** and **covenants** (Genesis 9: 8-17). It there is also more light that is beyond the visible spectrum, more than we can perceive. That variety speaks of a God who is “beyond,” who can do **more than we can ask or imagine** (Eph 3:20)

When we look around, our eyes cannot perceive anything without relying on this phenomenon of physical light – light that points to His nature. The intellectual reminder is there in the science!...

...But the light He brings is more personal than scientific knowledge.

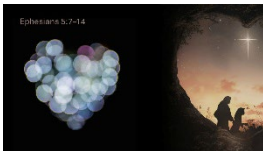
God’s Light – Shining in Us



*“I pray that the **eyes of your heart may be enlightened** in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people,”*
(Ephesians 1:18, NIV)

In other words, the True Light isn’t for your eyes...it’s for your heart!

Do you see it?!



Even the hard rock song of the week recognizes this is where to look!

Help me carry on, assure me it's OK to

Use my heart and not my eyes to navigate the darkness⁵

The heart is what we need to see clearly, beyond anything the eyes can glimpse. It is the heart that guides us and steers us and sets a path for us!

The “Light” shows a path, but it also empowers us to walk that path. When, we walk in step with the Light, we get good results.

*“... For once you were full of darkness, but now you have light from the Lord. So live as people of light! For this light within you **produces** only what is good and right and true. Carefully*

⁵ [Hoobastank – Crawling in the Dark Lyrics | Genius Lyrics](#)

determine what pleases the Lord. Take no part in the worthless deeds of evil and darkness; instead, expose them. It is shameful even to talk about the things that ungodly people do in secret. But their evil intentions will be exposed when the light shines on them, for the light makes everything visible. This is why it is said, “Awake, O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will give you light.”” (Ephesians 5:7–14, NLT)

A heart filled with Jesus’ light recognizes good choices and spots evil from a mile away. A heart filled with Jesus’ light pursues purity and wants to please Him. A heart filled with Jesus’ light sees evil for the shame-filled, worthless mockery it is. A heart filled with Jesus’ light has victory over death.

Sometimes that light shines as a warm and comforting glow while it leads us to love others; sometimes it beams intensely like harsh surgical light while it helps us see and excise the dark inclinations we have stubbornly clung to.

But the Light of Jesus will always help you see with more clarity than you could imagine!

Do you see it?!

Closing



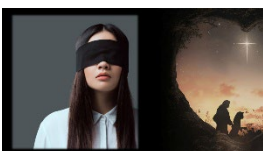
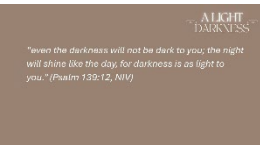
If not, do a quick bit of troubleshooting. At the back of most appliance manuals, there are questions and answers that help you determine what the problem might be if the appliance isn’t working well.

If the Light inside us had a similar manual, it might be helpful for those times when we struggle to see. The Light of Jesus itself is never the problem, though. After all, He will shine brightly forever:

“even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.” (Psalm 139:12, NIV)

So, if you aren’t seeing the Light, the problem lies with *you*.

- **Are you intentionally blocking it?** Ignoring it, closing your eyes to it, shielding and squinting so you never see it. Are you



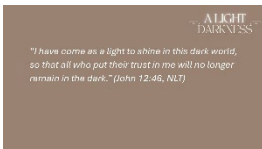
shading the Light?

- **Are you plugged into the source?** Never submitting to it, never claiming the Light as Lord, refusing to call Jesus your Savior. If you never yield to Him, you will never really see the Light.
- **Are you filtering it with something?** Putting on the spiritual equivalent of sunglasses, seeing the light but not allowing all of it in. You limit His reach, you listen to only part of Him, you keep it out of certain areas. Are you filtering the light?

A rock band might search for meaning. They might struggle and search for answers:

*I will dedicate and sacrifice my everything
For just a second's worth of how my story is ending
And I wish I could know if the directions that I take
And all the choices that I make won't end up all for nothing*

But they are crawling in the dark when they could have flipped the switch to see the Light of Jesus!



"I have come as a light to shine in this dark world, so that all who put their trust in me will no longer remain in the dark."
(John 12:46, NLT)

Do you see it?!

This Christmas, celebrate the arrival of the Light. Let Him heal your blindness! Step out of the dark, let the eyes of your heart be enlightened, and be filled with the one who is the Light of the World!



Prayer

Invitation

Please stand as we continue our worship...

Sermon Notes

I Was Blind...

(John 1:5; Psalm 19:1; Song of Songs 4:1-2; Ephesians 4:18;
Psalm 82:5; 2 Corinthians 4:4)

...The Light Shines...

(John 8:12; Psalm 119:105; Psalm 43:3; Psalm 27:1; Job 33:30;
Psalm 97:11; Psalm 89:15; Isaiah 60:1-3; Revelation 21:23;
Revelation 1:16; Mark 9:2-3)

...And Now I See

(Isaiah 42:16; Ephesians 1:18; Ephesians 5:7-14; Psalm
139:12; John 12:46)

Sermon Discussion Questions

- How would you define “spiritual blindness”? How much of our blindness is self-imposed versus being the work of the enemy (2 Corinthians 4:4)
- What are some of the results of spiritual blindness? Read Ephesians 4:18 and Psalm 82:5
- What does Jesus mean when He claims, “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12)?
- If God’s desire is to turn our darkness into light (Isiah 42:16), how does that knowledge provide encouragement when you are going through dark times?
- Why do you think “light” is such a comprehensive symbol in Scripture (describing truth, salvation, life, joy, presence, etc)?
- What part of God’s “light” (truth, life, joy, presence, glory) do you need most right now?
- What practical step can you take to let God open your eyes—through Scripture, prayer, confession, or community?
- How can you make Jesus’ light more visible in your home, workplace, or friendships this week?