

The Light

Hit the Lights

“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.”

2 Corinthians 4:6

“Mom!” “MOM!” My son’s cries of panic echoed through the house. I was in the kitchen trying to figure out what to make for dinner, when I heard him. My husband was working in the dining room and our son, Nathan, had been happily strewing his Legos around the house. It was a typical evening in our home in Soroti, Uganda.

Suddenly, the lights flickered and went out. Nathan called out in the darkness. I knew he was scared. Power outages were a frequent occurrence in Soroti, and I had learned to be careful when moving around in the dark. I didn’t want to accidentally bump into him.

I took a deep breath and in my best *calm mom voice*, I directed my son slowly down the hall toward the kitchen where I was finally able to wrap him in a reassuring hug and start the search for all the solar lanterns we had stashed around the house.

While sitting in the glow of the lanterns that night, I thought about how much we rely on light. When we’re in the dark, we feel lost and afraid. But when we have light, we feel safe and secure. When we walk into a dark room or out into the dark of night, what is the first thing that we do? Hit a light switch. We want to illuminate darkness because well-lit spaces and places can be navigated with confidence and, frankly (as is the case with our dark house and a few basements I have been in), with less fear. It’s no wonder that Nathan was so scared when the lights went out.

There are so many references to light in Scripture. You have already encountered quite a few of them in this devotional series. It is significant that one of God’s very first acts was to create light. We are told that darkness was over the swirling, chaotic waters (Genesis 1:2) and God’s first act of ordering the chaos was to create light (Genesis 1:3). Suddenly, there was light, and the light was good. It is like God walked into a dark room and had the same instinct to hit the lights.

There is also an account in the book of Exodus in which Moses interacts directly with God to receive the Ten Commandments. After the encounter, he has an unusual physical response, in Exodus 34:29-35, we learn that his face shined. The Israelites were so scared of direct contact with the glory of God that they feared that even through Moses’ shining face, it would be too much for them. Moses covered his face with a veil to hide the brightness.

Interestingly, Paul revives both images in 2 Corinthians chapters 3 and 4 as he uses a literary hyperlink back to God creating light (2 Corinthians 4:6 and Genesis 1:2-3) and Moses’ veiled face (2 Corinthians 3:7-18 and Exodus 34:29-35). The connection of the two images highlights the importance of light in the telling and transforming work of the Gospel. The light of the “knowledge of God’s glory” shines out in the darkness, and through that knowledge, we are

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changed! (Amen!) Moses had an encounter with God that changed his appearance in a temporary way for a temporary period of time. Light shone from him. We can have an encounter with God that can permanently change us with “ever-increasing glory”. We can shine the light of Christ!

My life, transformed by the gospel and reflecting the glory of Christ, might not have been a lot of help in our dark house that day, but I know that there are many other dark places around me where God’s glory needs to shine. In school, in our practices, in our families, and in our communities, where do you see a deficit of light? That is where a heart that is transformed by the Gospel can truly shine.

- 1. 2 Corinthians 3:18 says that “...we all, who with unveiled faces, contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory...” Unlike the fleeting shine that Moses experienced, followers of Christ are now able to be transformed with ever-increasing glory! Do you see this in your own life?**
- 2. Do you have a favorite reference to light in Scripture? Maybe even one you have heard in another part of this series?**
- 3. Read 2 Corinthians 3:7-4:6. Look at all the ways that Paul uses biblical imagery of light to communicate the glory of God and the Gospel.**



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