

The Light

Dawn

I've been thinking a lot about light since we chose to focus on this theme, I've been seeing its effects in all new ways. I imagine you will too if you study The Light with us this year.

Yesterday, we explored Mammoth Cave, the world's longest known cave system. My favorite part of spelunking is always when they turn off the electricity and you can't see your hand in front of your face. Then when the tour guide lit one little candle it illuminated the room for over 100 of us to look around.

How much could just one of us do to bring light into a dark world?

Darkness is literally the absence of light. Where light exists, there is no longer darkness. And unlike anything else in the physical world, light is eternal. Sound like anyone we know?

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." –John 8:12

Do you notice the difference between the atmosphere of evening and morning? At dusk when the sun is going down, and the darkness is creeping in, there can be a chill in the air both literally and mentally. It's not the pitch black of a cave yet, but twilight can be eerie. The shadows are getting longer because the sun is being blocked.

At dawn the world begins to return from darkness to light, and with it the sun's rays bring warmth and hope. Hope of His mercies which are new every morning. (Lamentations 3:22-23)
Hope of renewal and opportunity.

For many, the joys of our profession have been overshadowed by the challenges.

It is impossible to know if the sun is figuratively setting on the veterinary world and it is getting darker, or if the sun is rising and the break of a new day is around the corner. But instead of hypothesizing, what if we decide? What if we choose to reflect His glorious Light so brilliantly that the darkness has no chance?

*"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned." -Isaiah 9:2 NIV*

In king David's last words he said that he who rules in righteousness and in fear of God, *"is like the light of morning at sunrise on a cloudless morning, like the brightness after rain that brings grass from the earth."* -2 Samuel 23:4

What if our righteousness through Christ reflects His Light like a cloudless morning after the rain?

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We will feel the presence of darkness in us sometimes as well. I have felt overwhelmed with darkness, and I have walked alongside some of you through both short and prolonged nights that seemed like they'd never end.

But we know Who wins. The darkness has not overcome the Light, and it will not. If you are in the Light there is hope of morning even when it is dark.

"In Him was life, and that life was the Light of all mankind. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." -John 1:4-5

*"You are all children of the light and children of the day.
We do not belong to the night or to the darkness." -1 Thessalonians 5:5*

Allow me one more enlightening analogy. Remember your last middle of the night farm call or trip far outside of town. In the countryside there are no city lights, when you look up into the vast open sky it could be as dark as Mammoth Cave, but instead the stars shine so brilliantly.

While we wait for the darkness to lift from our profession, we Christians can shine like the stars (Philippians 2:17) with His Light and illuminate the darkness in the veterinary sky. What a beautiful sky that could be!

- 1) What are some practical ways that you could brighten a classmate or colleague's world?**
- 2) Dream even bigger, are there ways you can envision brightening your campus, clinic, or the whole veterinary profession? God is able...**
- 3) If you're comfortable sharing, which level of darkness would you most identify with today? Like dawn, like dusk, like you're in a cave, or maybe it's a cloudless sunny day...**
- 4) In the evening, the shadows grow longer as the sun is being blocked. Is anything blocking the light of the Son in your life that might be causing shadows that you could avoid?**



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