



# True Light

Darkness is intimidating. Darkness is disorienting. A few years ago, in our first church, I was out for a run one evening just after the last remaining vestige of light was gone. It was dark. Really dark. Can't see your hand in front of your face dark. There were no streetlights, headlights, or even moonlight to orient me. All that surrounded was the vastness of empty corn and soybean fields and the echo of a distant coyote's call. It was terrifying.

In a book entitled *Blind Descent*, author James Tabor talks about the journey into the darkness of *supercaves*. He says: the first thing that hits you is the darkness. You know that if you lose your light, it is probably the darkness that is going to kill you. The second thing you notice is the vastness of dark open spaces.

We cannot survive without light. That much was certainly true for the Israelites, and Isaiah knew it. Darkness, Isaiah told, was the result of Israel's journey further and further away from Yahweh. The more they tried to replace God with other things, the darker things became for them. The same can be said for us. When we try to find fulfillment and meaning in lesser things, instead of God, we become disoriented. Life gets confusing, off kilter. In our attempts to find something other than God to light our way, all we end up doing is stumbling over the one who is true light.

The good news is that darkness has no properties of its own, only an absence of light, and light searches us out. John's Gospel begins by saying that "true light, which enlightens everything, was coming into the world." If you feel as though you're wandering in darkness, looking for something to light the way, Jesus comes to you. The Incarnation of Jesus bears brilliant incandescent light upon our lives. And when we have light, life just works.

## Monday

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light... (Isaiah 9:2)*

God's first act of creation was to create light (Genesis 1:3). Light brings order out of chaos. What is one area of your life that feels out of order right now? Maybe even a little chaotic? How did it get that way? Today, pray that God might shine divine light into the darkness of our lives.

## Tuesday

*You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. (Isaiah 9:3)*

There is a different sort of joy that comes when we join in God's work. Like the farmer who looks out over a completed harvest, contentment floods in. Take time today to stand at the vista of your life and look over God's good work in your life. What do you see?

## Wednesday

*For the yoke of his burden and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. (Isaiah 9:4)*

What is one area of your life where you have felt captive, burdened, even enslaved? Have you experienced release from that thing? If so, what was it like to have the burden lifted? If not, where is God inviting you to give up the yoke?

## Thursday

*For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. (Isaiah 9:5)*

The journey to peace in God's economy involves a repurposing of the tools of war. Their usefulness in battle is gone; it's time for something new to be done with them (Isaiah 2:4). Where is God inviting you to let go of your weapons (physical, emotional, spiritual) and let Him repurpose them?

## Friday

*...his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)*

When we put other things at the center of our lives, the result is that things just don't seem to work. Read Genesis 3:14-19. Ask God to re-center himself in your life as: Wonderful Counselor (the one who gives true wisdom), Mighty God (the one who cares for the needs of his people), and Prince of Peace (the one who not only can bring about peace, but is peace).

## Reflection Notes:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---