

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

March 2, 2008

[] = Instructions for worship planners and worship leaders: delete from the worship folder
() = Information for the congregation: include in the worship folder and/or PowerPoint.

[Note: **Worship Alive Plus!** is designed to be useable/adaptable in planning contemporary, blended and “fresh traditional” worship.]

[Lutheran Lectionary © 2007 WorshipOutlet.com by Julie Koenemann and Rev. Maxwell Quinn]

WORSHIP THEME: “Walkin’ In the Light”

Those who believe in Christ have been called from darkness (sin) into the light (living in Him). That means believers live differently than those who do not believe. Today Paul calls us to keep our walk in line with our position in Christ Jesus! If you were put on trial for following Christ would there be enough evidence by your walk to convict you?

+ WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS +

[Worship Planners: A Worship CD and/or the praise team can play in the background 10-15 minutes before the service.]

INVOCATION AND INTRODUCTION OF TODAY’S THEME

Pastor: We continue our Lenten journey, as we proclaim the name of the One we worship:

People: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Pastor: In this Lenten season, we are well aware of the darkness – the darkness of sin that sent Jesus to the cross in our place.

People: He wrapped Himself in our darkness, and transferred us to His Kingdom of Light.

OPENING PRAYER:

[This prayer is offered as an idea]— Lord Christ, You entered the darkness of our world, as the Light that brings life to all. Many continue to walk in darkness, either because they have not heard, or because they choose the darkness rather than Your light. But to those of us who receive You, You transfer us from the kingdom of darkness, into the Kingdom of Your light. In Your light, we bow before You. Amen.

TIME OF CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Pastor: In the darkness, we confess to our Father those things He already knows.

(A time of personal reflection and confession)

Pastor: Father, You know our hearts. We lay before You those things which reflect our darkness, rather than Your light.

People: We confess, Father, the darkness of our hearts.

We stumble and fall, tripping over our own self-righteousness.

We walk down the wrong path, thinking it is the right one.

We dwell in the shadows, and so live in fear.

We think we are doing the right thing, and it's the wrong thing.

And, there are times we choose the darkness, thinking Your light is too intense, too blinding.

Forgive us, we pray. We wait Your enlightening Word.

Pastor:

Here is the Good News. Into our darkness, shines the Light – the holy Light – the pure Light of love. Jesus came into the darkness of our existence, and became the Light of Life. And on a Friday, when the world turned dark, the light was dimmed, seemingly extinguished, only to blaze in the radiance on an empty tomb. In His light, we are redeemed. In His light, all the shadows of our sinfulness are put to flight. In His light, we rejoice, and in His light, we walk.

RESPONSE

Wonderful Maker

[HMS 20:1629; MSPW3:132; WT 5:74]

Chris Tomlin | Matt Redman

Pre-Chorus

**You made the world And saw that it was good
You sent Your only Son For You are good**

Chorus

**What a wonderful Maker What a wonderful Savior
How majestic Your whispers And how humble Your love
With a strength like no other And the heart of a Father
How majestic Your whispers What a wonderful God**

You spread out the skies over empty space Said let there be light
To a dark and formless world Your light was born

You spread out Your arms over empty hearts Said let there be light
To a dark and hopeless world Your Son was born

No eye has fully seen how beautiful the cross And we have only heard the faintest whispers
Of how great You are

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In Christ Alone

[ATBS 2:42; HMS 20:1594; MSPW 3:138; WT 5:29]

Keith Getty / Stuart Townend

In Christ alone my hope is found He is my light my strength my song
This Cornerstone this solid ground Firm through the fiercest drought and storm
What heights of love what depths of peace When fears are stilled when strivings cease
My comforter my all in all Here in the love of Christ I stand

In Christ alone who took on flesh Fullness of God in helpless Babe
This gift of love and righteousness Scorned by the ones He came to save
'Til on that cross as Jesus died The wrath of God was satisfied
For ev'ry sin on Him was laid Here in the death of Christ I live

There in the ground His body lay Light of the world by darkness slain
Then bursting forth in glorious day Up from the grave He rose again
And as He stands in victory Sin's curse has lost its grip on me
For I am His and He is mine Bought with the precious blood of Christ

No guilt in life no fear in death This is the pow'r of Christ in me
From life's first cry to final breath Jesus commands my destiny
No pow'r of hell no scheme of man Can ever pluck me from His hand
'Til He returns or calls me home Here in the pow'r of Christ I'll stand
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[Traditional Option:]

God Loved The World So That He Gave [ELW 323; LSB 571; LW 352; LBW 292]

TIME OF GREETING

[Optional: Children's Message and/or Dismissal to Children's Church]

TIME OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP

Here I Am to Worship

[ATBS 2:10; HMS 18:1437; MSPW3:116; SD 29:8; WT 4:18; WT 5:23; WT 6:29]
*(*consider altering text from "gladly choose You now" to "gladly serve You now")*

Tim Hughes

Light of the world You stepped down into darkness
Opened my eyes let me see
Beauty that made This heart adore You
Hope of a life spent with You

Chorus

**So here I am to worship Here I am to bow down
Here I am to say that You're my God
And You're altogether lovely Altogether worthy
Altogether wonderful to me**

King of all days Oh so highly exalted

Glorious in heaven above
Humbly You came To the earth You created
All for love's sake became poor

Ending

And I'll never know how much it cost
To see my sin upon that cross (repeat)

CCLI Song No. 3266032

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Open the Eyes of My Heart

[BOB 180; ATBS 1:111; HMS 12:1027; HMS 13:1093; SD 5:31 SD 15:11; WT 4:59; MSPW 2:57]

Paul Baloche

Open the eyes of my heart Lord Open the eyes of my heart
I want to see You, I want to see You

To see You high and lifted up Shining in the light of Your glory
Pour out Your power and love As we sing holy, holy, holy

Holy, holy, holy; Holy, holy, holy
Holy, holy, holy; I want to see You

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How Great Is Our God

[ATBS 2:23; MSPW 3:117; SD 46:2; WT 7:29]

Chris Tomlin / Ed Cash / Jesse Reeves

The splendor of the King Clothed in majesty
Let all the earth rejoice - all the earth rejoice
He wraps himself in light And darkness tries to hide
And trembles at His voice And trembles at His voice

Chorus

**How great is our God Sing with me How great is our God
And all will see how great How great is our God**

And age to age He stands And time is in His hands
Beginning and the end Beginning and the end
The Godhead three in one Father, Spirit, Son
The Lion and the Lamb The Lion and the Lamb

Ending

Name above all names Worthy of all praise
My heart will sing: How great is our God (repeat)

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[Traditional Options:]

In The Cross Of Christ I Glory [LSB 427; ELW 324; CH 328; CW 345; H82 441; (Tomter) H82
442; HFG 251; LBW 104; LW 101; NCH 193; (Tomter) NCH 194; PH 84; WC 209; BH 554]

+ WE HEAR GOD’S WORD +

[It is suggested that the introductions be read out loud as well as the Scripture itself]

FIRST READING Isaiah 42:14-21 (NIV)

Nothing will keep God from fulfilling His promise. He will redeem Israel, and the blind will see, and the lame walk.

¹⁴“For a long time I have kept silent, I have been quiet and held myself back. But now, like a woman in childbirth, I cry out, I gasp and pant. ¹⁵I will lay waste the mountains and hills and dry up all their vegetation; I will turn rivers into islands and dry up the pools. ¹⁶I 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.¹⁷ But those who trust in idols, who say to images, ‘You are our gods,’ will be turned back in utter shame. ¹⁸“Hear, you deaf; look, you blind, and see! ¹⁹Who is blind but my servant, and deaf like the messenger I send? Who is blind like the one committed to me, blind like the servant of the LORD? ²⁰You have seen many things, but have paid no attention; your ears are open, but you hear nothing.” ²¹It pleased the LORD for the sake of his righteousness to make his law great and glorious.

SECOND LESSON Ephesians 5:8-14 (NIV)

We, who once walked in darkness, now walk in the light.

⁸For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) ¹⁰and find out what pleases the Lord. ¹¹Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. ¹³But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: “Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

GOSPEL John 9:1-41 (NIV)

Jesus heals a blind man, causing great consternation among the Pharisees, and even for the man’s parents. The Pharisees want theological answers to their questions, but all the formerly blind man knows is one thing – he was blind, now he sees. And with his eyes opened, he is even able to see the Christ.

¹As Jesus went along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³“Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life. ⁴As long as it is day, we must do the work of Him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶Having said this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man’s eyes. ⁷“Go,” he told him, “wash in the Pool of Siloam” (this word means Sent). So the man went and washed, and came home

seeing. ⁸His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him." But he himself insisted, "I am the man." ¹⁰"How then were your eyes opened?" they demanded. ¹¹He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see." ¹²"Where is this man?" they asked him. "I don't know," he said. ¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. ¹⁴Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. ¹⁵Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see." ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others asked, "How can a sinner do such miraculous signs?" So they were divided. ¹⁷Finally they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened." The man replied, "He is a prophet." ¹⁸The Jews still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents. ¹⁹"Is this your son?" they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?" ²⁰"We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind." ²¹But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself." ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for already the Jews had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Christ would be put out of the synagogue. ²³That was why his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." ²⁴A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God," they said. "We know this man is a sinner." ²⁵He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" ²⁶Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples, too?" ²⁸Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! ²⁹We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from." ³⁰The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will. ³²Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." ³⁴To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out. ³⁵Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶"Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him." ³⁷Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." ³⁸Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him. ³⁹Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind." ⁴⁰Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?" ⁴¹Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains."

MESSAGE "Walkin' In the Light"

[NOTE: See "Sermon Starters & Seasonings" provided at the end of this service]

+ WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD+

[NOTE: Optional location for Confession/Absolution, using materials found earlier in this service]

RESPONSE

Light Of The World

www.iwillworship.com; www.musicnotes.com; www.praisecharts.com

Matt Redman

Chorus

**Light of the world Light of the world Light of the world You shine upon us
Light of the world Light of the world Light of the world You shine upon us**

O Jesus Son of God So full of grace and truth
The Father's saving Word So wonderful are You
The angels longed to see And prophets searched to find
The glory we have seen revealed

You shone upon the earth But who will understand
You came unto Your own But who will recognise
Your birth was prophesied For You were the Messiah
Who came and walked upon the earth Your glory we have seen
The one and only King And now You're living in our hearts

In You all things were made And nothing without You
In heaven and on earth All things are held in You
And yet You became flesh Living as one of us
Under the shadow of the cross Where through the blood You shed
You have made peace again Peace for the world that God so loves

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You Never Let Go

[www.musicnotes.com; www.praisecharts.com; www.wordmusicnow.com;
(Recorded on Passion – Everything Glorious) www.worshiptogether.com]

Beth Redman/Matt Redman

(PRE-CHORUS)

**And I will fear no evil For my God is with me
And if my God is with me Whom then shall I fear
Whom then shall I fear**

Chorus 1

**Oh no You never let go Through the calm and through the storm
Oh no You never let go In ev'ry high and ev'ry low
Oh no You never let go Lord You never let go of me**

Even though I walk Through the valley of the shadow of death
Your perfect love is casting out fear And even when I'm caught
In the middle of the storms of this life I won't turn back I know You are near

And I can see a light that is coming For the heart that holds on
A glorious light beyond all compare And there will be an end to these troubles
But until that day comes We'll live to know You here on the earth

Chorus 2

**Oh no You never let go Through the calm and through the storm
Oh no You never let go In ev'ry high and ev'ry low
Oh no You never let go Lord You never let go of me
You keep on runnin' and You never let go Singin'**

Ending

Yes I can see a light That is coming for the heart that holds on

And there will be an end to these troubles But until that day comes
Still I will praise You Still I will praise You

(REPEAT)

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[Traditional Option:]

Come To Calvary's Holy Mountain [LSB 435; LW 96; CW 106; HFG 276; LBW 301]

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

God so loved the world, He did not abandon it, even when it fell into darkness.

God sent His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, Love's pure Light, to wrap Himself in our darkness. Jesus was born of the virgin Mary; lived a sinless life; called people to follow the Light through His words and deeds; but people chose darkness over the Light. He was crucified by the religious, who attempted to extinguish His Light. He died, and was buried. But a tomb could not hold the Light. It exploded in radiance and wonder, brimming with Life.

God sends His Holy Spirit into our hearts, bringing us to faith, and empowering us walk in the Light of Christ. We are people of the Light, putting aside all those things that were part of our darkness, and inviting others to walk in the light as well.

In the light, we live in power and freedom. In the light, we live in the joy of forgiveness. In the light, we live forever.

[NOTE: The following are contemporary song options for speaking the Apostle's Creed: *Because We Believe* ATBS 119; SPW 6; INTEGRITY 12 **OR** *This Is What I Believe* GB 249 **OR** The Apostles Creed Integrity 8 **OR** you may choose to do the thematic contemporary creed written specially for this service **OR** use the historic Apostles' Creed]

[OR...]

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen

OFFERINGS

[Anthem by Praise team, choir or soloist:]

Everything

[www.musicnotes.com; www.worshiptogether.com]

Tim Hughes

Chorus

**Be my ev'rything Be my ev'rything
Be my ev'rything Be my ev'rything**

God in my living There in my breathing
God in my waking God in my sleeping
God in my resting There in my working
God in my thinking God in my speaking

God in my hoping There in my dreaming
God in my watching God in my waiting
God in my laughing There in my weeping
God in my hurting God in my healing

Ending 1

Christ in me Christ in me
Christ in me the Hope of Glory You are ev'rything
Christ in me Christ in me
Christ in me the Hope of Glory Be my ev'rything

Ending 2

You are ev'rything You are ev'rything
You are ev'rything You are ev'rything
You are ev'rything Jesus ev'rything
Jesus ev'rything Jesus ev'rything
Jesus ev'rything

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Jesus All For Jesus

[HMS 14:1151]

Jennifer Atkinson | Robin Mark

Chorus

For it's only in Your will that I am free For it's only in Your will that I am free

Jesus all for Jesus All I am and have and ever hope to be
Jesus all for Jesus All I am and have and ever hope to be

All of my ambitions hopes and plans I surrender these into Your hands
All of my ambitions hopes and plans I surrender these into Your hands

Be The Centre

[ATBS 2:14; MSPW 3:156; SD 46:9; SSA; WT 3:7]

Michael Frye

Jesus be the centre Be my source be my light, Jesus
Jesus be the centre Be my hope be my song, Jesus

Be the fire in my heart Be the wind in these sails
Be the reason that I live Jesus, Jesus

Jesus be the centre Be my hope be my song, Jesus
Jesus be my vision Be my path be my guide, Jesus

Be the fire in my heart Be the wind in these sails
Be the reason that I live Jesus, Jesus

Jesus be the centre Be my source be my light, Jesus
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[Traditional Options:]

Jesus In Your Dying Woes [LSB 447; LW 112]

Amazing Grace [ELW 779; LW 509; LBW 448; LSB 744; CH 343; H82 671; HFG 107;
HPW 33; NCH 547; PH 280; UMC 378; WC 502]

PRAYERS¹

[Prayer Topic Starters]

- Thanks for:
 - Your grace, which is new to us every day.
 - The mystery of salvation – we have been transferred from darkness into light, that all men may receive salvation in Jesus Christ.
 - Your love, which sent Jesus as the Light of life.
 - Your abiding presence, continually guiding and directing us.
- Please give us:
 - Courage and resolve to walk in the light, even as others around us choose the darkness.
 - Health and strength and comfort in times of need.
- Cause us by Your Holy Spirit and Your Word to:
 - Walk joyfully in the light.
 - Share Your light with those around us.
 - Pray without ceasing.

¹ Formal language and “perfectly read” prayers are not recommended for contemporary worship. People appreciate the touching sincerity of informal prayer. “Heartfelt” prayer also teaches/models simple prayer language that anyone can use at home, in the car, the office, etc. These “**Prayer Topics Starters**” are offered to help facilitate spontaneity.

- Local congregational and individual concerns

The Lord's Prayer

[Consider having the congregation sing the Lord's Prayer using the Malotte version using one of the lower keys such as B flat.]

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

[A communion option to insert for churches celebrating the Lord's Supper on this day]

+ The Lord's Supper +

Here our Lord gives to us His own Body and Blood for the forgiveness of all our sins.

WE PREPARE

Pastor:

We approach Your table Lord, to share in this banquet, because we are members of the body of Christ. Even as Jesus Christ is the head of our Body, so we join together today to celebrate the coming of the Light into the world.

People:

We come just as we are, in grateful thanksgiving.
Jesus, You are our salvation and the Light of the world.
Your blood has cleansed us.
Your Spirit has renewed us.
Your coming again gives us hope.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING OF THE PEACE

Pastor: We profess the mystery of the faith:

People: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ is present. Christ will come again.

Pastor: Christ wrapped Himself in our darkness,

People: That we might walk in His light.

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: And also with you.

(Worshippers may turn to one another and share the peace which comes from the Lord with words such as, "God's peace to you.")

COMMON DISMISSAL

Pastor: We have tasted the grace of God in the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

People: In the strength of this meal, we go forth to walk in the light.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The Father has blessed us with His love.
The Son has entered our darkness and become the Light.
The Spirit leads us to the Light, and empowers us

People: To walk in the Light. Amen.

CLOSING SONGS

Everyday

[ATBS 2:141; HMS 19:1499; SD 25:1; SSA]

Joel Houston

What to say Lord? It's You who gave me life
And I can't explain Just how much You mean to me
Now that You have saved me, Lord
I give all that I am to You That everyday I can
Be a light that shines Your name

Everyday Lord, I'll learn to stand upon Your Word
And I pray that I, That I may come to know You more
That You would guide me In every single step I take
That everyday I can
Be Your Light unto the world

Chorus

**Everyday it's You I'll live for
Everyday I'll follow after You
Everyday I'll walk with You, my Lord (repeat)**

Bridge

It's You I live for every day
It's You I live for every day
It's You I live for every day (repeat)

Chorus

**Everyday it's You I'll live for
Everyday I'll follow after You
Everyday I'll walk with You, my Lord**

Everyday it's You I'll live for
Everyday I'll follow after You
Everyday I'll walk with You,
It's You I live for ev'ryday.

Our God Saves

www.musicnotes.com; www.praisecharts.com

Brenton Brown | Paul Baloche

Chorus

**Our God saves Our God saves
There is hope In Your Name
Mourning turns To songs of praise
Our God saves Our God saves**

In the Name of the Father In the Name of the Son
In the Name of the Spirit Lord we come
We're gather'd together To lift up Your Name
To call on our Savior To fall on Your Grace
Hear the joyful sound Of our offering
As Your saints bow down As Your people sing
We will rise with You Lifted on Your Wings
And the world will see that

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[Traditional Option:]

Lift Every Voice and Sing [LSB 964; ELW 841; LBW 562; PH 583; BH 627]

March 2008 Worship Alive Plus **Songs & Hymns**

Music charts downloadable through:

www.Praisecharts.com

www.songselect.com

www.worshipkitchen.com

www.worshiptogether.com

www.Wordmusicnow.com

www.musicnotes.com

Chord charts free downloads available at:

www.Iwillworship.com

www.pwarchive.com

Mp3 downloads available through:

www.Songtouch.com

www.Worshiptogether.com

www.Walmart.com

www.Itunes.com

New Songs to consider:

Everything Glorious

(Recorded on David Crowder's *Remedy* & Passion's *Everything Glorious*)

Lisa Gungor & Michael Gungor, © 2006 worshiptogether.com songs (Admin. by EMI Christian Music Publishing) sixsteps Music (Admin. by EMI Christian Music Publishing) [Lead lines and chord charts on www.songselect.com, www.praisecharts.com, www.pwarchive.com, and www.iwillworship.com]

Keep watch on SongSelect & Praisecharts for the music for this amazing new song:

With One Voice (Recorded on New Life Church)

Chris Ochterbeck, © 2007 New Life Church (Admin. by New Life Church of Arkansas, Inc.)

SSS – SERMON STARTERS & SEASONINGS

The following ideas are merely intended to help get your own creative juices flowing and prepare your heart for God's Spirit to inspire and speak through you.

“Walkin’ in the Light” Ephesians 5:8-14

Those who believe in Christ have been called from the darkness (sin) to the light (living in Him). That means believers live differently than those who do not believe. As believers our position has changed. This morning Paul calls us to keep our walk in correspondence with our position in Christ Jesus! If you were put on trial for following Christ would there be enough evidence by your walk to convict you?

Theological Reflections and Practical Applications

5:7–10 The believer's position has changed from **darkness** (sin) to **light** (righteousness). Believers are to change their **walk** to correspond to their position in Christ (Rom 12:2).

5:11, 12 **Have no fellowship** with evil persons in their evil deeds, nor participate in their wickedness. We **expose** (reprove) evil deeds when we avoid them and let others know how God feels about them.

5:12, 13 **in secret:** This verse effectively bans Christians from indulging in the modern preoccupation with examining the lurid details of evils such as the occult and other perverted practices.

5:14 **Awake, you who sleep:** This may be a fragment of a first-century Christian hymn, or an original thought by Paul alluding to Is. 26:19, a promise of God's coming salvation.²

“The word “light” is used in connection with joy, blessing and life in contrast to sorrow, adversity and death. At an early time it came to signify God's presence and favor (Ps. 27:1, Is. 9:2, 2 Cor. 4:6) in contrast to God's judgment (Am. 5:18). From this and other sources arises an ethical dualism between light and darkness, i.e, good and evil, which is quite marked in the NT.

God's holiness is expressed in terms of light, e.g in 1 Timothy 6:16, where God is said to dwell in “unapproachable light”. 1 John 1:5, where it is said that ‘God is light’, and other passages in that epistle where the implications for this in the life of the believer are worked out. The same thought is seen in the typically Hebrew expression ‘children of light’ which is twice used by Paul (Eph. 5:8 and 1 Thess. 5:5)

In John's Gospel the term light refers not so much to God's holiness as to the revelation of his love in Christ and the penetration of that love into lives darkened by sin. So Christ refers to Himself as the “light of the world” and in the Sermon on the Mount applies this term to His disciples. Similarly Paul can refer to the ‘light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ; and to God Himself Who has ‘shone in our hearts.’ (2 Corinthians 4:4-6)”

New Bible Dictionary

Proverbs 4:19 – “The way of the wicked is like deep darkness, they do not know what makes them stumble.”

Quotations

Exposed by the Darkness

²Radmacher, Earl D. ; Allen, Ronald Barclay ; House, H. Wayne: *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary*. Nashville : T. Nelson Publishers, 1999, S. Eph 5:7-14

Night brings our troubles to the light, rather than banishes them.

Seneca, Letters to Lucius

Darkness and Light

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him.

Max Lucado, The Applause of Heaven

Walking in the Light

A sedentary life is the real sin against the Holy Spirit. Only those thoughts that come by walking have any value.

Nietzsche, Maxims and Missiles

Illustrations

Peace in the Dark

I heard a story about a train traveling through the night in a very violent rainstorm. The lightning flashes were almost blinding, the rain hitting the windows was deafening and the strong gust winds rocked the train from side to side. When the lightening flashed and lighted up the darkness, the passengers could see the rising water along the tracks. This created terror in the minds of the passengers. Several passengers noted that through all the noise, lightening and wind, one of the passengers, a little girl, seemed to be at perfect peace. The adult passengers couldn't figure out why the little girl was so calm during all this excitement. Finally, one passenger asked her, "How is that you can be so calm when all the rest of us are so worried about what might or could happen?" The little passenger smiled and said, "My father is the engineer."

Bill Butsko, Sermoncentral.com

Turn out the Light

An Arab sat in his tent, and held up a fig to a candle. In the fig he saw a worm. He reached for another fig, and held it up to the candle. In it was a worm. He reached for a third fig, and held it up to the candle. Another worm. He blew out the candle, and reached for a fig. We sometimes prefer the darkness.

Persian Proverb

Floodlight

The two fishermen were lost on the lake. A pea-soup thick fog had rolled in. They had no reference points, and no cell phone. They bobbed for hours. Night fell. It was cold, and quiet. Finally, after hours, one of them spotted a light, way off in the distance. They fired up the motor and headed toward it. Turns out, the light was a flood lamp perched on top of a boathouse, 20 feet away. They had drifted so close to the shore they could have walked to safety. But they didn't know it – without the light. How many people are lost in the darkness, waiting for a light?

The Guiding Light

Guiding Light, which used to be The Guiding Light until the name change took place in the 70's, was originally a radio program, and began broadcasting in the 1930's. The show was set in the fictional town of 5 Points, and the central character was Rev. Dr. John Rutledge, a kindly widower, who placed a lamp in the window of his study as a sign to parishioners and townspeople alike that if they had trouble, there was a way out. That lamp was The Guiding Light.

www.soaps.com

On the Lighter Side ☺

Under the Cover of Darkness

A young soldier and his commanding officer got on a train together. The only available seats were across from an attractive young lady who was traveling with her grandmother. As the four engaged in conversation, the soldier and the young lady kept eyeing one another, as there was an obvious mutual attraction.

Suddenly the train went into a tunnel, sending the train car into darkness. Immediately two sounds were heard: the smack of a kiss, followed by the whack of a slap across someone's face. As the four came back into the light:

The grandmother thought, "I can't believe he kissed my granddaughter, but I'm glad she gave him the slap he deserved."

The commanding officer thought, "I don't blame the boy for kissing the girl, but I wish her aim was better and that she'd slapped him instead of me."

The young girl thought, "I'm glad he kissed me, but I wish my grandmother hadn't slapped him for doing it."

And as the young soldier sat in his seat smiling, he thought, "Wow, I can't believe I got to lay one on such a hot girl, slap my commanding officer, and get away with both!"

The Point:

It's easier to get away with certain things in the dark. That's why the Bible (John 3:19) tells us that many people love the dark because of how it hides their evil ways.

Timothy Smith, Sermoncentral.com

Didn't see it

I once heard about a confrontation between a young boy and his mother.

The mother asked her son, "Young man, there were two cookies in the pantry this morning! May I ask how it happened that there's only one now?"

The boy didn't flinch but said, "It must've been so dark I didn't see the other one."

Living in sin is often portrayed as "living in darkness." Just like the boy who missed the other cookie, we too miss out on many of God's blessings when we refuse to walk in His light.

Terry Barnhill, Sermoncentral.com

Light in the Darkness

This is the transcript of an actual radio conversation of a US naval ship with Canadian authorities off the coast of Newfoundland in October, 1995.

Radio conversation released by the Chief of Naval Operations on November 10, 1995.

Americans: Please divert your course 15 degrees to the North to avoid a collision.

Canadians: Recommend you divert YOUR course 15 degrees to the South to avoid a collision.

Americans: This is the Captain of a US Navy ship. I say again, divert YOUR course.

Canadians: No. I say again, you divert YOUR course.

Americans: THIS IS THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER USS LINCOLN, THE SECOND LARGEST SHIP IN THE UNITED STATES' ATLANTIC FLEET. WE ARE ACCOMPANIED BY THREE DESTROYERS, THREE CRUISERS, AND NUMEROUS SUPPORT VESSELS. I DEMAND THAT YOU CHANGE YOUR COURSE 15 DEGREES NORTH, THAT'S ONE FIVE DEGREES

NORTH, OR COUNTER-MEASURES WILL BE UNDERTAKEN TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THIS SHIP.

Canadians: This is a lighthouse. Your call.

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Video Resources

Kingdom, The [Placement options: Introduction to message; Response to the Second Lesson; Following Benediction]

A powerful video that demonstrates graphically the difference between the kingdom of darkness and the Kingdom of Light. This video is available as a download from www.sermonspice.com. Simply type in the name of the video in the search bar. The video costs \$15 and runs 2:50. This video can serve as an introduction to the message, or used following the reading of the second lesson, or as a post-service benediction.

What is Evil? [Placement: Introduction to the message]

This “man-on-the-street” video demonstrates that people are “in the dark” about darkness. It is a chilling demonstration of the relativism that is prevalent in culture. This video is available as a download from www.sermonspice.com. Simply type in the name of the video in the search bar. The video costs \$20 and runs 3:40. This video best serves as an introduction to a message about being transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of Light.