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Luke

Chapter 11 - A Polarizing Wish
Light or Darkness (vs. 33-36)

Luke 11:33-36: “No one, after lighting a lamp, puts it away in a cellar nor under a basket, but on the lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light. The eye is the lamp of your body; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is bad, your body also is full of darkness. Then watch out that the light in you is not darkness. If therefore your whole body is full of light, with no dark part in it, it will be wholly illumined, as when the lamp illumines you with its rays.”

Well, in this world of darkness, we really need light. And if you don't know there's a lot of darkness, just ask yourself, “Why are people taking so many antidepressants?” It is a dark world. There's a lot of hate. There's a lot of turmoil. And you can feel the darkness. I don't know if you've ever

been in places where you actually feel that taking place. But it is oppressive, isn't it? The reality of that. But there is One who is called Light. Scripture tells us that right from the very beginning, "In Him was life, and the Light was the life of men." It is that which shines in that darkness.

We come to this passage, and we come to the Book of Luke, and it really is an interesting book. It's one that I'm extremely drawn to because of the fact that it seems to draw the "unlikelies." My son was talking about the fact that he never thought he would talk in front of people. And of course, obviously, I remember thinking, "I want to do anything but preach." And here I am. So, the Lord has a good sense of humor, doesn't He? And it really demonstrates that you don't know what is best for you. I can tell you that the Lord certainly has given me so much more happiness and joy than I ever would have been able to receive by virtue of going my way. And Scripture is very clear, all we like sheep have gone astray, right? So, I was probably a strayer sheep.

But I think of that passage in 1 Corinthians 1 that reminds me, and I've oftentimes shared it with the body, that God

“chooses to weaken the foolish things to confound the wise, the things that are not, to nullify the things that are, that no one would boast.” And I remember the day that I came before the Lord and I said, “Weak and foolish, I can do that. That's really easy for me.” And God says, “Okay, those are the ones I call.”

You go through the Gospel of Luke and really it's the “unlikely” that you see. Luke will mention characters and individuals that no other gospel mentions. It starts at the very beginning, and you have Elizabeth, who was unable to have children, and she's married to a Jewish priest, and having children is a big deal in that particular time. And Scripture reminds us that she was in shame, but it was through her that God opened up her womb, and at a late age, she was able to have John the Baptist. Only the Gospel of Luke refers us to her, and only the Gospel of Luke will talk to us about Simeon, who is this obscure individual that's been looking for the wonderful things of Christ. You have Anna, who only the Gospel of Luke makes mention of her, who had lost her husband at a very early age and for the rest of her life had dedicated herself

to the service of the Lord, had been looking for the hope all of her life. Only Luke will make reference to the shepherds, keeping watch over their flock by night. And it was the shepherds that actually saw the glory of the angels first above all. So, as you go through the gospel, you have these individuals that just keep popping up and you go, "Where did they come from? Who are they?" Because you wouldn't read about them in any of the other gospels. You wouldn't read about the prodigal son in any of the other gospels. It's only in the gospel of Luke that you read about this guy that literally wastes all of his possessions and goes into a realm of poverty and eats with the pigs that God will demonstrate, "This is the kind of people I'm looking for." They come to the end of their rope. In Luke 8, it'll make mention of these women that were demon-possessed. Mary Magdalene had 7 demons, it says. And one actually worked for, or at least her husband worked for Herod. And these were supporters of Christ. Only Luke makes mention of that. Only Luke will make mention of the good Samaritan. As much as we know that wonderful story, of course, Jews would say, "Samaritans? God doesn't love Samaritans. These are

half-breeds. These are nobodies.” And we just never forget the good Samaritan, do we? And only Luke will make reference to the man on the cross next to Christ that says, “Remember me,” and he is remembered.

All of these, we see these individuals that we would have never thought God would have chosen, but these are the ones, and you have to ask yourself, “So, why did He choose these?” Of course, Luke will actually make reference to, “And this was the Caesar, and this was Pilate, and this was the governor,” and He fundamentally goes, “I know all these dignitaries existed.” He said, “But I didn't choose any of them. I chose this obscure individual with a strange robe, eats locusts and wild honey, and he's the one I'm going to use to announce.” And so, you realize, “Wow, He really does choose the weak and the foolish things. Strangely enough, Jesus will make a statement to His Father as He comes before Him in prayer, and He says, “I thank You that You gave Me babes.” We used to use the phrase, “wide-eyed and bushy tailed.” You realize that He brings those that are just clear in their vision and are just innocent in their

desires. And God says, "These are the ones I'm looking for."

The fundamental question that we have to ask ourselves, and in particular the passage that we're looking at, is what are you looking for? Where are your eyes focused? What are your desires? What's the desires of your heart? The passage that we're looking at, and in particular the chapter in Chapter 11, starts off with the disciples coming to Jesus and they go, "How do we pray?" And just to remind you, we understand that particular word is quite different than the way we sometimes think of it, but "*proseuchomai*," the Greek word that is used, makes reference to "wish". "*Eu*" meaning "good," so you want to wish a good wish before God. So, it's wishing good to God. Of course, bringing a wish before anybody else, I mean, you can wish upon a star, but it's not going to do you any good. But we wish towards God, and we say, "This is our wish." The question of the disciples at this stage is, "What do we wish for?" And Jesus goes, "Wish this way." And so, He starts off, "Our Father, which art in heaven." And it goes on and He begins to say, "And you

address Him this way.” And really, He starts off with a desire to have a relationship with God, doesn't He? Wish for a relationship. But the ultimate emphasis of this particular prayer is, “Thy kingdom come.” And the wish that you should wish above all wishes is for God's rule to exist. The word, once again, that is used for “kingdom,” “*basileia*” makes reference to standards of God. So, it's not necessarily a place; it's not like you're wishing for the buildings of heaven. Someday we're going to go there and it's a real place. But what He's talking about are the standards of God. You should be wishing for the standards of God, the way that He sees things, His way. Jesus will say, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. I am the way.” That's an interesting phrase. So, the way of God is what we should be wishing for, not the way of me. We all have our little kingdoms and our way of doing things. But by the time the day is over, we ought to say, “Thy will be done. I've messed this up enough.” And then start the new day, “I just want Your will to be done.” This is the wish that we should have.

Jesus begins to explain this in the chapter in which He starts talking to them about, “If you needed something, wouldn't you go to your neighbor and ask him and just keep asking him?” And it is interesting how we'll go to so many different resources for something, and even to the point of annoying people to get something. I mean, we'll oftentimes go to banks when we won't go to the Lord, and we'll just keep going to a bank. “Well, maybe that bank doesn't get me. I'll go to another bank,” and suffer maybe embarrassment sometimes by the fact that they're not going to help you out. But we just don't seem to give up, do we? And so, He gives this interesting example of one that goes to his neighbor and just doesn't give up. And He goes, “So, why haven't you come to Me? What? Do you think that I'm going to put you away? If your own neighbor will finally give in just because he's annoyed with you, don't you think that I'll give you what you want? I'll give you the desires of your heart.” Now, of course, we know that there are many things that we want that are bad for us, and of course, He's not going to give us bad things. “Every good and perfect gift comes from above.” And that's why we start off, “Our Father,” because like a

father, He's going to give us good things, but not harmful. So, this whole thought begins to roll within this passage. You've got to follow with me in Chapter 11, but He comes to the point in which He says, "Now, look, if a kid comes to his dad and he asks for a fish, will the dad give him a snake?" Of course, I think you know what the answer is. So, in those particular cases, you begin to see that He's saying, "Why aren't you asking Me? Don't you think I'm going to give you good things? You're going to come to Me, you're going to ask Me, and I'm going to give you the best because I'm your Father that loves you." What's bizarre about this is that this wish that we should be having, that is to say, "Your kingdom," is extremely polarizing and begins to bring out the worst in people. You would think that you would bring up Jesus in a conversation, and everybody would go, "Oh, great, let's talk about Jesus." Have you tried that? Yeah, not too receptive. And what's ironic is, and of course, as you go into this particular chapter, Jesus is healing people. I mean, He's setting prisoners free from these emotional demons that have been holding them. You can imagine,

you come to Jesus, you can be free of fear, you can be free of hate, you can have forgiveness, and all the guilt is gone. I mean, you can just feel yourself being pulled out of that darkness that so easily consumes us. Nevertheless, the world goes, "You know, I think you're Satan." "No, nobody called Jesus Satan." Well, that's exactly what happens in Chapter 11. There are those that come around that go, "You're Satan." Now, "Satan" actually means adversary. And why would you see Jesus as an adversary? I can tell you why. Because you didn't start off with the right prayer. You said, "My kingdom come." And if God doesn't give you what you want, then He's your adversary. And it's not long before the division starts taking place. I mean, God's not going to give you something that's harmful to you. He's not going to give you something that would cause hurt to somebody else. James will say, "You have not because you ask not. And the problem is when you ask, you ask with wrong motives to consume after your own lusts. I'm not going to give you that stuff. I'm not going to give you stuff that will hurt you. I'm not going to do things that would be bad for you." And though I was convinced at an early stage, that

the greatest thing in life was for me to live on an island and just surf the rest of my life, God goes, “No, that's just not going to be a wonderful life for you.” You realize that you surrender that life and how wonderful it is. He has these good gifts for you. And He takes you out of darkness. I can tell you there have been many times where I went my own way. And even when you think of something as simple as buyer's remorse, have you ever had one of those? In which you think, “I just know I'm going to be happy if I finally get this.” You finally get it and you go, “I feel terrible. I've never felt this terrible in all my life.” And that's because you made your decision and you got what you wanted. And how wonderful it is to know when we go, “Your will be done.” How wonderful we are literally taken out of the darkness.

Well, as we come into the passage, what's interesting about all of this is that Jesus begins to show us in this particular text just how easily we fall into that mindset of separating ourselves from Christ. And this is going to surprise you, but probably the biggest trap is perceiving yourself as good. It's bizarre, isn't it? I mean, it's not like

you're even trying to do bad. It's when you perceive yourself as the good person or as the source of good that that's when bad starts coming in. He gives this interesting analogy within the passage in which He talks about a man that sweeps his house and puts it in order. Now, at first, he has a demon that brought in malevolent, harmful things in his life. And let me just say this, there are going to be difficult times that come into your life. And you say, "Well, I haven't had any difficult times come." You haven't lived long enough. But it's going to happen. And there are going to be things that come into your life that are just going to be overwhelming. At that particular time, you might say, "I don't know if I'm really following Christ or I'm not." And He goes, "You'll decide after this is all over." Because when those trials and tribulations come into your life, it literally forces you to make a decision on what you're going to trust. You'll start running to all kinds of resources and all kinds of places and methods and programs, and all kinds of things. You'll find a place. And then, unfortunately, oftentimes in some of those places that you go to, you'll begin to feel your life getting in order. You'll say, "Hey, things are being swept up, they're

cleaned up, everything's getting okay.” Do you remember the parable? And then seven other demons come in worse than the first. Why? Because you did it without Christ. And now, the power that's in you is pride. It's the arrogance that comes in. And you know, I've seen many institutions begin with good motives and intents and come out very destructive because they're taking people away from the Light. Strange as it is, it could even be motherhood. How could that be? Well, it's in the text. I said I wouldn't do this on Mother's Day, but I got to.

(Luke 11:27) “While Jesus was saying these things, one of the women in the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, “Blessed is the womb that bore You and the breasts at which You nursed.”

(Luke 11:28) But He said...”

“You're off base, woman.”

“... “On the contrary...””

That would be the opposite.

“... blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it.”””

Isn't it interesting how something as innocuous as motherhood can easily come in and take precedence over God? And before long, people begin to put their hope in an individual that can't save them, can't redeem their soul, can't forgive their problems, instead of God who can. And how great the darkness is. What's amazing about that is that it can just become so horrible. And we wouldn't think, well, it couldn't be worse.

There's an interesting story. You look at the Book of Genesis in which you remember Cain kills his brother Abel. And you go, "That's the worst thing that could ever happen." You didn't keep reading, did you? Because the passage goes on and Cain goes, "Somebody sees me, they're going to kill me." And God goes, "I'm not going to let them kill you. Because vengeance is worse than murder." That's very interesting. In fact, He will say, "And I'm going to seven times as much if somebody strikes vengeance on Cain." What was He saying? Well, it seems like really a just thing. I mean, somebody kills somebody else, you just go get them, right? You go kill them. I mean, why would God say, "Vengeance is mine; I'll repay"?

Because you can't handle vengeance. You start off with a holy cause, and before long, you're slaughtering everybody. There's a feud that goes on that never ends. That's why Scripture will call it "root of bitterness".

Because the demons that come in are far worse than the initial sin. Now, we started off pretty good. You look at the apocalyptic horses in Revelation. You know what the first apocalyptic horse is? The white horse. I personally believe that's the Crusades. And so, as you go through the history of mankind with the horses, you're traveling through time, you begin to see at the very beginning this white horse that comes and starts slaying everybody. That's what the Crusades were doing. But in the name of God. Romans would say, "It's far worse because now you're blaspheming the name of God." You're going in the name of God and you're killing people. It's the opposite of saving. Even like James and John said, "Do You want us to call lightning from heaven and consume these Samaritans?" He goes, "Did you forget why I was here?" Even His own disciples were falling into that trap. What Scripture is telling us is, is one of the greatest, I would say,

oppressive agents that come into our lives that really cover the light is religion or our thoughts of doing good.

So, we pick up in verse 33,

(Luke 11:33) “No one, after lighting a lamp, puts it away in a cellar...”

An interesting picture of “cellar” would be clearly a dark place, clearly a place that really kind of represents evil intent. Paul will talk about this with the Thessalonians. He goes, “You do your evil deeds at nighttime because you just want to do evil stuff. It's in the cloak of darkness.”

John will say in John 3, “You know, the problem is you love darkness rather than Light because your deeds are evil.” So, it's an interesting picture of having an evil intent. And by virtue of evil intent, you cover the Light.

And then he uses a second one, if you look at the passage, “... nor under a basket (peck measure) ...”

Now, what you're dealing with is a form of measuring things, or more specifically, we're talking about money.

It shouldn't surprise you that as you go a little bit further in the Gospel of Luke, He says, “Now, the Pharisees were

lovers of money.” It's strange how the love of money will cover the light, and how easily it covers the light. People go to church and they go, “I went to church and the only thing they do is they keep asking for money.” And I say to myself, “They just keep covering the light.” Because Jesus, when He sends out His disciples, He says, “Freely you've been given, freely give.” What's this asking for money stuff, you know? But you realize how all these other desires begin to cover. And quite frankly, they're a perfect picture of religion.

Let me show you an interesting passage found in Corinthians. If you turn with me to 2 Corinthians. Drop on down to 2 Corinthians 4:1.

Paul starts off this chapter by saying,

(2 Corinthians 4:1) “Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we received mercy, we do not lose heart,

(2 Corinthians 4:2) but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God...”

What is he talking about, adulterating the word of God?
What he's talking about is ministering for money. How do you know that?

Well, if you look at the end of 2 Corinthians in Chapter 2, he states this in verse 17,

(2 Corinthians 2:17) “For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity...”

Once you start peddling the word of God, sincerity goes out the window. The one thing that we have going for us as believers is truth and genuineness. You sell out on that, and people aren't going to believe anything you say.

They're not going to take anything seriously that you say.

What's interesting about this particular passage, if you look with me in Chapter 4,

(2 Corinthians 4:2) “But we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.

(2 Corinthians 4:3) And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,

(2 Corinthians 4:4) in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

(2 Corinthians 4:5) For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord..."

Somebody gets on a stage and they're talking about themselves all the time, they're pointing to darkness. There is no light in me. Now, receiving Christ, Christ in me, the hope of glory.

So, watch the connection to creation in verse 6,

(2 Corinthians 4:6) "For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ."

In other words, where does light come from? "Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face. The

things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.”

You look at passages like Matthew 6, Matthew 23, as it begins to talk about the Pharisees, and Jesus will say, “Woe to you Pharisees!” Would it surprise you that in Luke 11, Jesus will hit upon the Pharisees?

In fact, if you look with me back in Luke 11, it'll start off in verse 42,

“But woe to you Pharisees! ...”

This is a setup to reveal religion. And look, there's all kinds of religions out there. The greatest religion, of course, that permeates our society is humanism. I mean, it's fundamentally man is the answer to everything. And how great is that darkness? When man begins to become the source of your hope, how horrible the darkness is.

So, the passage reads this way,

(Luke 11:33) “No one, after lighting a lamp, puts it away in a cellar nor under a basket, but on the lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light.”

Well, that just makes sense, doesn't it? What He's talking about within the passage is, there's a strange unheard practice that really goes against all reasoning. And that is, man is suppressing light, the very light that he says he wants. He takes and suppresses it. And Jesus is going, "Have you ever heard of such a thing?" Nobody does that. Let's put it another way. Nobody in their right mind does that. But the bizarre thing about religion is one of the reasons why they do it is to gain advantage of people. And the very thing that we should be doing by the ministry of Christ is proclaiming the saving message of Christ. We want to see more people come to saving knowledge. We want to see them come to a deeper relationship. We should desire the light to shine upon them, but that's not the way that humanism or religion works. It oppresses people. And it says, "You can't be good enough. You can't be great enough. You can't be as wonderful as me." And this is why Luke, throughout the pages, goes, "Yeah, so what about Elizabeth? What about Simeon? What about Anna? What about the shepherds? What about the man on the cross? What about the Samaritan?" And you go, "So, the light is shining to all of

these people.” That's where we lit it. See? I mean, so many people feel so disenfranchised from our faith because of the fact that they go, “I could never be like that person.” So, I would just say to you, “Can you become weak and foolish?” Because God has chosen the weak and the foolish to confound the wise. That's the grace of God. This passage starts off and Jesus literally is saying, “Have you ever heard of such a thing?”

Then He picks up in verse 34,

(Luke 11:34) “The eye is the lamp of your body; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is bad, your body also is full of darkness.”

It's an interesting description.

One of our favorite verses in Psalm 119 is, “Thy word is a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path.” You realize the necessity of God's word to keep me from stumbling. I need to find out where those feet are going. And then for Him to show me the way, the path. I don't know where to go, but He shows me the way. The word of God shows me what's worth investing in, what's not; what should be a priority in my life and what shouldn't be. Because before

long, I mean, you listen to the world, you're going the wrong way. You're bringing destruction in your life. How wonderful the light of God is. And He uses that interesting word that is, I think translated, where we get the word "Luke"; "*lychnos*" is a word for "candle" or "lamp" within the text.

But it starts off in verse 34,

"The eye is the lamp of your body..."

I don't know if you guys know this or not, but Jesus is somewhat a scientist. I know it's a shock, but He kind of created these things. So, He knows quite a bit about them. But what's interesting is that the eye acts like a camera with the lens and everything. And it's just interesting, I mean, even how our scientists would give names such as this. It has these things called receptors, as Scripture would say, "But as many as received Him." But the receptors are that which begin to, in some way, assimilate the light that comes in. Just to let you know, if you're in a room of complete darkness, your eye doesn't work. That's pretty interesting, isn't it? Because it works off of the light. So, in order for you to be able to see it

all... I know a lot of times people go, "What you're talking about, Pastor, I just can't see it." And I go, "I know, I get it." Because the darkness has been suppressing. And we've had people come to our church, and I said, "Well, did you go to church?" "Yeah, I went to church, but they did this and they did this and this." And I began to hear all these things of how the light was covered in front of them, because the one message that they couldn't hear was, "God loves you. He'll forgive you. He'll give you a brand new start." He's coming around healing, and everybody's calling Him a demon. And the church is misrepresenting Him, because they're saying, "If you do this, if you do that, this is where you're going to find acceptance." Well, that's not true at all. "Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, and He will exalt you." Repent and just say, "I changed my way of thinking. I don't want to do things my way. I want to do things Your way." And instantly, your sins are forgiven. If you confess your sins, He is faithful and just to forgive you your sins. And He'll cleanse you from every single bit of your unrighteousness. How amazing that is. But the world likes to suppress people, and they like to oppress people.

If you drop on down, and I know it's cheating, but if you look in Luke 11:52, it reads this way,

(Luke 11:52) “Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge; you yourselves did not enter, and you hindered those who were entering.”

Does that sound like we're covering light? That's exactly what He's bringing all of this to. This light has been covered. People are adulterating the word of God. They're messing it up. They're saying things that weren't of Christ. I've had individuals come up to me, and they go, “Well, I heard this about the church.” I go, “Well, what verse is that?” And they can't show me because they've just been hearing things. Sometimes it comes from the pulpit and sometimes it comes from other resources and sources, but oftentimes from people that have been embittered.

The passage reads this way,

(Luke 11:34) “The eye is the lamp of your body...”

So, you have this instrument by which light is received and it captures and it focuses and it sends signals to the

brain. These receptors begin to transduce things to the point of you begin to not only define it in your brain, but then it begins to move body parts just by virtue of something coming into your eye. James will put it this way, “Faith without works is dead.” So, by virtue of you receiving what is there, you begin to move in accordance with what you see.

“The eye is the lamp of your body; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light...”

The King James actually used a different word, which I think is probably more appropriate. It uses the word for clear, “single”. And the Greek word “*haplous*” within the text is making reference to single-mindedness.

So, the point fundamentally is this, and let me just say this, James will deal with this in James 1 and James 4; he'll use the word “double-minded”. Have you ever heard the phrase “double-minded”? So, what we're talking about is fidelity. What we're talking about is fidelity of focus.

In 1 Timothy 3, it talks about elders and overseers must be the husband of one wife. One translator put it this way, “having eyes for one woman only.” That's an

interesting description, isn't it? So, what we're talking about is this sense of devotion for one. Wanting to please only one. Loving only one. Now, this passage says, "If your eye is single; if you're not double-minded." James will say, "If you're double-minded, you're unstable in all your ways." That'd be God's way of saying, "We can't trust you for anything." Because He's asking you to make a commitment, and you go, "Let me think about it. I have this other commitment over here." Or, "Love Me with all your heart." "Well, let me think about it. I have this other love over here." So, the passage says, "Look, if you're single-minded, then you're going to be focused solely on God, and then the light will be great."

But if you go on to the passage,

"... but when it is bad..."

He uses the word "*ponēros*" within the passage, which is basically hurtful and malignant. And what He's talking about within the text is hurtful in effect. More specifically, what He's talking about is that when, in fact, you're looking another way.

Gentlemen, when you take your wife out to a restaurant, you ought to be looking at your wife. Another woman passes by and you turn your head and look at the other woman, that's hurtful. That's "*ponēros*". That's malignant." God says, "Do you understand how much it hurts Me every time you look another way?" And once you do that, darkness fills you. Because your motivation is no longer pure, and your devotion is no longer clear. Your whole body is full of light if you do that which is single-mindedness.

"... but when it is bad, your body also is full of darkness."

Literally implying purposeful covering.

(Luke 11:35) "Then watch out that the light in you is not darkness."

(Luke 11:36) If therefore your whole body is full of light, with no dark part in it..."

I like the way that's put because it literally makes reference to every single intricate part of your life is light. Strangely enough, we have a way of somehow dissecting the different parts of our life to the point of, "Well, I can

be good here, but I won't be good here," or "God is in control here, but not here." And He's actually making reference to every single detail and intricate part of your life will be fully illumined as when a lamp illumines you in its rays. What a great picture that is within the passage. Look for the right things. Long for the right things. Focus on the right One. Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Set your affections on the things above. As you begin to focus solely on Christ, what begins to happen? Well, I would say the greatest cure for depression will be that focus. And how strange it is that the different things of your life begin to somehow take meaning that God begins to cause all things to work together for good.

One of the frustrating things about listening to the world and about trying to figure out your own definition of good is you turn back and you look back, and you go, "That wasn't working. People's lives weren't changing. It wasn't transforming lives." And you get frustrated. I mean, life after life, you begin to see all the collateral damage, and you continue to do the same thing? Who does that? Who

covers the Light? Uncover the Light. Let it shine. Focus on the person of Christ.

There's a wonderful passage in 2 Peter, if you turn to me in Chapter 1. I could certainly give you a lot of these that make references to this.

But it reads this way,

(2 Peter 1:19) “So we have the prophetic word made more sure...”

How wonderful it is that we have the word of God, isn't it? And why do you read the word of God? It's like a lamp shining in the darkness. John 5 talks about John the Baptist, and he goes, “He was a lamp shining for a while, and you had glory in his light.” Well, what is that talking about? What it's talking about is the word of God begins to open up things to you that you hadn't thought about and begins to reveal to you this sense of right and wrong and things that are good. In fact, there are so many promises of the law that if you do these things, you'll be happier, like honoring your mother and father. Your life will be better. If you don't steal, you'll be happier. You won't be walking around feeling guilty all the time. So, all

these things that you do, well, there's a light that's shining. The purpose of the light is to get you to desire the Light. Like Galatians says, the Law is a tutor to lead us to Christ. So, you fall in love with what is right; Jesus comes on the scene, and you go, "So, that's what it looks like." That's why He's called the Living Word. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. So, the word of God is flesh. And so, Jesus walks this life and you go, "So, good looks like that." And you, at this point, receive or reject, but as many have received Him, the light starts shining. If you're looking for truth, according to John 3, you'll come to the light, that your deeds may be evident as have been wrought in God. In other words, as God begins to move in your life.

So, this interesting passage here in 2 Peter 1 reads this way,

"So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts."

Do you remember that day? Yeah. I used to have a song growing up, "I can see clearly now; the rain is gone. I can see all obstacles in my way." It's a secular song, but that's what happens. Everything gets clear. And the darkness goes away. You know that oppressive guilt that you were feeling? All your burdens are released. There is such a thing. The world is telling you there's no such thing as forgiveness of sins. And some religion is saying that. Come to Jesus. Let the light shine. The simplicity of the gospel of Christ.

One more warning, if you turn with me to 2 Corinthians 11. Let's just see if we can solidify the point.

(2 Corinthians 11:3) "But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ."

That's pretty simple, isn't it?

(2 Corinthians 11:13) "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ."

“Well, this man uses the name ‘Jesus’.” Good for him. Listen. Test the spirits. Is he acting like Christ? Anybody can use the name ‘Christ’. Does he look like Christ? Does he act like Christ? Is he selfless? Is he sacrificial? Is he proclaiming salvation through God alone?

“For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

(2 Corinthians 11:14) No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

(2 Corinthians 11:15) Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.”

Paul will say, “Are they asking for money? Don't follow them. Don't listen to them. They're adulterating the word of God.” We've said this a thousand and one times. I'll say it again. You give money; give it to God. Don't give money; it's between you and God. But when people start manipulating the gospel, 2 Peter 2 says that the false prophets come in, and they exploit you in greed. Do you know how they do that? They say to you, “If you'll give

this amount of money, God will bless you with houses and cars.” They're exploiting your greed. You're going, “Oh, it's all about money.” And God goes, “No, it's not about money.” The love of money is the root of all sorts of evil. Money's not bad. I was just texting my older son, who lives in Chicago the other day, and I said, “You know, son, money's only good for two things. And it says it in 1 Timothy 6. It's good to help, and it's good to enjoy.” That's all it's good for, just those two things. And you realize that when you put God first, then you can enjoy things. I mean, Scripture says that God has created all things for you to enjoy fully. But you've got to put Him first.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You today and we ask You to work in our hearts. Lord, we realize that this message of this wonderful light of Your love for us; I mean, You go around healing people and people call You the devil? How can they do that? It seems as if it's because their own wishes and desires are squelched. Because You call upon

us to give our lives for others. You call upon us to care for others, to love others even more than ourself, as You would. You tell us to take up our cross and follow You. And that doesn't look like religion, and it certainly doesn't look like humanism. It certainly is a different way of living. But Lord, we're attracted to You. We're drawn to You. We've never seen anything, we've never seen anyone so sincere, so genuine, so real as Jesus. And how wonderful it is that You loved us so much that You would die in our place. You didn't just talk about loving us. You died in our place. You held Your hands there and let them get nailed so that our sins would be forgiven. Greater love has no one than this. And for the first time, we understood what it meant. Lord, help us not to be dissuaded from this truth by virtue of the lies that are out there and the suppression of the light.

Your heads bowed and your eyes closed. I don't know what your background is. I don't know the difficulties that have arisen in your life. I don't know the influences that have come into your life that have caused you to be turned off by Jesus. But if it suppressed the light of

genuineness, and if real was what you were looking for,
open up the Scriptures. Look into Christ. He is a Savior. He
is the Savior. Your heads bowed and your eyes closed.
What we're asking you to do is get real with your faith.
What we're asking you to do is get real with God.