



His Light in Our Darkest Times

Psalm 139:11-12 • John 8:12 • Hebrews 4:13-16

During these times of quiet reflection, we're asking two basic questions: What do I want to ask of the Lord, and what does He want to say to me at this time. We then wait, listening for His response. Let these questions guide your reflections and help you identify the things you want to process with the Lord. Take time to quiet your mind. Ask the Lord to help you hear what He is saying, and to give you freedom to pour out whatever is on your heart.

From Paul's Teaching

1. Is the Spirit "disturbing" you, offering calling cards inviting you to open up the places you are hiding from your loving Lord? Often these are places you fear telling to those who love you. What is the loving Father saying to you, using the Spirit to lead you transparently into the fullness of light?
2. How do you offer your fears, anxieties, frustrations and griefs to your loving Father? With hope and expectation of his loving direction and provision, or with despair and resignation? What does the Lord's light offer you today to dispel darkness?
3. What do you believe about chronic struggles in your life, in your mind and heart? What emotions do you feel when you think about these? Tell these to the Lord; ask the Spirit to give you discernment about the truth or falseness of these beliefs and emotions, and the courage and strength to intentionally step into the light of the truth.

Psalm 139:7-12

⁷Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? ⁸If I go up to the heavens heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths you are there. ⁹If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, ¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

¹¹ If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,"

¹² even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

John 8:12

¹²When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Hebrews 4:13-16

¹³Nothing 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. ¹⁴Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

See also Psalm 23 ...

From Chris's Teaching & Marnie's Story

1. Take a few minutes to be quiet before the Lord. What has spoken to you most in this part of the message?
2. Ask the Lord if there is a difficult part of your story that He would bring to light? If so, tell Him how you feel about it. Ask Him if or how He wants to meet you in that place today, and in the days ahead.
3. Chris talked about living with a "false ceiling," with just enough light to manage our lives. Ask Him if this applies to you in any way. If so, pray for His help in going beyond that ceiling.
~ Is there a need for motivation or awakening—a fresh hunger to help you open your heart and life to Him?

~ Are there areas in your life that you're hesitant to lay before? Why?
4. Abbreviated definitions / gifts to Marnie: a) Lament: Fully expressed grief ... encourages honesty with God (Ps. 88) ... a sign of faith, not doubt—a cry to God for help, as He is the only one who can act in a situation. b) Thankfulness (I Thess. 5:18) — not for the hard circumstances, but for His light in the darkness, His presence, and hope. ✱ Are these responses helpful to you in any way? If you are in a dark time, or grieving a loss, let the Lord speak to you about what gifts He has for you.
5. The Holy Spirit, in His power and presence, rescues us many times as we call on Him in times of need. What more would He, the Holy Spirit, want to teach you about Himself? Where does He want more access to your faith and life? ✱ Is there more **you** want to experience of the Holy Spirit in your life?

The Creativity of the Holy Spirit

Quiet reflection—also called journaling, is meant to extend beyond processing of feelings and thoughts. One of its main values is in giving God time to speak to us! For example:

☛ Listen

Is He asking questions of you?
Is He providing much needed counsel—His interpretation of your inner thoughts?

☛ Dialogue

Conversation with the Lord brings much understanding and draws us closer to Him.

~ Invite Him to speak to you. Wait in the quiet. Respond. Wait again, etc.

~ Write a letter, poem or psalm to express your heart.

☛ Images that Speak

~ Draw a picture or symbol of what is on your heart.

~ Ask Him for an image that depicts how He sees you or something you're concerned about at this time.

☛ Editing Your Story

Ask Him to bring to light any assumptions or perceptions embedded in your heart and story that are not true. What is true that He would write in place of what is written there?

☛ Quiet

Invite the Lord to minister to you in the quiet. Whether with words or in the simple awareness that He is present with you, let Him "restore your soul" in whatever way you need. • You may want to journal and reflect on this time later.