

Family TableTalk

Conversation 92

Flicking The Switch!

read

Isaiah 9:1-7

think

Have you ever met a little child who couldn't wait for his mom or dad to turn out the light at bedtime? Maybe there's a child like that out there somewhere, but I can tell you that when I was little, I was not that kid. I slept upstairs in a bedroom all by myself. My parents were not only downstairs, but around a couple of corners. . . which made it seem like their bedroom was as far away as another country. . . a country on another continent! After prayers, a "sleep tight", and an "I love you", the light went off and my parents vanished. Everything changed. "Sleep tight!" became "Sleep fright!" With the lights out, my imagination and fears came to life. I saw things, heard things, and sometimes believed I was feeling things. Some nights, I would resort to letting out urgent pleas for help, which would result in my parents showing up and turning on the light for a few seconds before my entire routine would kick into gear again.

The prophet Isaiah was sent by God to deliver a message to people who found themselves surrounded by thick darkness. This particular darkness was caused by their rebellion against God. They were his chosen people, yet their choice to despise and disobey God created a situation where they were existing in a constant state of spiritual gloom because of their guilt. Consequently, living with the "lights out" left them fearful and full of agony. Isaiah's message to them was a message of hope. He tells them that there is a day coming when "there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish" (v. 1).

How was their guilt, fear, gloom, and anguish going to be removed? God announced that He was going to be providing them with the remedy to their darkness. . . a Rescuer who would turn on the light: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them a light shined" (v. 2). This magnificent prophecy and promise looked forward to the day when "The Light of the World", Jesus Christ, would come to take away the darkness.

In his first letter, John tells us that "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (I John 1:5). Yet, we so often choose to remain in the dark. John goes on to tell us that "if we walk in the light, as he (God) is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin" (I John 1:7). Why in the world would anyone ever want to stay in the dark!?

- Share a story about a time when you were in the dark and afraid? What is it about darkness that causes fear? What is it about light that offers relief and perspective? Are there any stories in the Bible that contrast the differences between living in the darkness and living in the light?
- I once went deep into a remote cave with a friend who knew his way around in there. He told me to turn off my light once we were deep inside. It was so dark I couldn't see my hand. . . or anything else for that matter. He then asked, "Could you find your way out of here on your own without a light?" Nope. Describe a time when you found yourself in that kind of impenetrable darkness in a spiritual sense. Could you find your own way out? How did the light of God's Word illuminate your path?
- In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells us "You are the light of the world" (Mathew 5:14). What do you think that means? Discuss ways that your family can function as light in the world, both alone and together.

apply

pray

Light of the World, we live in a time that is so dark that we often find ourselves filled with fear. As we read your Word, instill in us a healthy and steady knowledge of the fact that since you have come into the world to dispel darkness, we are never fully in the dark and without hope. Give us a deep hunger and thirst for your Word, and as we learn at your feet, increase our "lumens" so that we might reflect your glory more and more. Amen.

by **Walt Mueller**

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