

GREETINGS FROM GREENVINE



While I was cleaning up in the garage and getting all my tools in the right place so I could use them, I came across two old kerosene lamps that we had in case the electricity went out. During the big freeze we had here, I had cleaned them up and got them ready in case we lost power. They just have one flame, but when they are trimmed correctly, they can light up a

room at night. Seems like the night is so dark when the electricity goes out. Maybe the darkest night is when you can't even see your hand in front of your face. But first you have to find the lamps and then find the matches so you can light them. Hopefully, they will be where you think they ought to be. Where you think you set them so you could find them in the dark.

I remember being in Vietnam in the triple canopy jungle in the middle of the night. Triple canopy means that you actually have 3 layers of foliage over you. We could not even see the sky. No stars to find. Darkest dark. Sometimes we would wonder what time it was, so we would call it zero-dark thirty. As I reflect on my time there, I still can't remember seeing the moon the entire year I was there. Dark. We literally could not see the person in the foxhole next to us. We were told not to smoke a cigarette while on patrol. Lighting a match could be seen for miles. The cigarette smoldering could be seen for 2 miles if you were in the open. It was so dark that if you thought you saw something and called for a flare, it was literally blinding. We would dare not look at the flare. We even shaded our eyes so we wouldn't get night-blindness.

Light is so interesting. The way our eyes work is marvelous. Light reflected off of objects gives us a sense of color. Some things that we see attracts us to it. Other things we are repulsed from because we can see it.

By now, you probably know where I am going with these stories. Jesus said that He was the "light of the world." Without Him, people walk in darkness. In the book of Acts, people who do not know our Lord are said to "walk in darkness." It goes on to say that because they cannot see, they don't even know that they are stumbling around. Without the light that Jesus brings to us, we cannot see the way of salvation. Paul sometimes calls it the "light of the glorious gospel."

We are told to "let your light so shine that others will see what you have." The old Sunday school song says,

“This little light of mine, I’m gonna to let it shine”

“Hide it under a bushel “NO!” I’m gonna let it shine.”

“Let it shine till Jesus comes, I’m gonna let it shine.”

One of the newer praise songs goes like this:

“Light of the world You stepped down into darkness,

Opened my eyes let me see.”

We can only see when there is light. The light of the world has come into our darkness and allowed us to see...to see truth.

As He created the universe, He called for light. “Let there be light, and there was light.” That was prior to creating the sun, moon and stars. His light filled the darkness so that the world could see Him.

1st John chapter 1 has much to say about light to us as believers.

Verses 5 - 10 says, “This then is the message we have heard of Him, and declare unto you: God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with Him and yet walk in darkness, we lie, and do not live out the truth: But when we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son purifies us from all sin.”

The wonderful truth of living in the light of Who God is through His Son and His Holy Spirit.

James continues that thought in Chapter 1 verse 17 where he reminds us, “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, Who does not change like shifting shadows. He chose to give us birth through the Word of Truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of all He created.”

We walk in the light to obey His will for us. We walk in the light that others may see that light. We have been appointed “light-bearers” to the world around us.

John continues his look at the source and purpose of light in Chapter 2 of 1st John: “I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining. Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother or sister is still in the darkness. Anyone who loves their brother and sister lives in the light, and there is nothing in them to make them stumble. But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks

around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them.”

Interesting language of the relationship of darkness and light, and our relationship with others around us. The language is addressed to brothers and sisters which tells us that John is talking about those who have a relationship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. However, he refers to those who do not live like Christ lived, in loving others, as walking in darkness and stumbling around. We must work on all of our relationships, especially on those who are brothers and sisters in the Lord. Our relationship with them reflects our relationship with God.

In our study of Revelation and the letters to the 7 churches in Asia Minor, there is the warning of removing the lamp-stand if those believers in those churches do not follow what God wants. He doesn't say that He will remove the light; but the lamp stand which is the local church itself. The witness fails because of people not following the Word from God.

We have the Word. The Psalmist says it is “a lamp unto our feet, and a light to our pathways.” We need the Word to proceed in our walk with God.

Depend upon the light of the Word.

Trust the light of the Word.

Apply the light of the Word.

Blessings upon you all. Look to the Lord for everything. He is our Strong Tower and Help.

Jack & Karen

Announcements

- Wednesday Night Bible Study -Wednesday nights @ 6pm
- Women's Ministry - 2nd Tuesday of each month @6pm
- Woman's Bible Study -Saturday May 15 @10am
- Men's Prayer Breakfast - Wednesday May 26, @ 7am
- Volunteers needed for Camp Hope June 7-11 (at Greenvine) and June 14 - 18 (at Camp For All)
 - Adults needed to help with children's programs.
 - Cook a taco meal for 50 - 75 people
 - Please see Charlotte to sign up.
- _ Remember to fill your baby bottles and return on Father's day.
- Special offering for Bible Sticks ministry on Sunday May 30
- 4th of July Barbecue- Sunday July 4th - 5pm - dark - Stay tuned for more details

Prayer Requests

Please remember too pray for those in our congregation that live alone.

Please pray for direction and wisdom for Jack and Karen as they make decisions about his health.

Jack has developed a cyst on his wrist and is waiting on Dr's report to see what needs to be done.

Patty Merryman - Praise - Eyes are getting better and Dr has taken her off some of her medication

Patty Merryman's friend Wanda - Going through cancer treatments

Byron Rutland - Cataract surgery coming up

Colin Smith - 18 yr old with a Traumatic Brain Injury. (Patient of Karens)

Patty's Brother Scott - Recovering from surgery

Gerri Smart's daughter Terri has been diagnosed with cancer. See doctor this week for treatment options

Cliff Reed's dad is recovering from a UTI (He was hospitalized earlier this week)

Juliette - recovering from gun shot wound - she has been able to go home.

Joe Durrett - Stomach cancer and heart attack - home on hospice care

Ray and Bev Morris - Bev and been diagnosed with Alzheimers

Cliff's dad has dementia and is not doing well.

Bobbie Schulte - Doing better

Mandy Forester - Upcoming Brain surgery

John Forester - does not need eye surgery but the Doctor wants to install a special contact lens that is very expensive

Sandra Carson's daughter Candace is having some mental health issues

Bob & Sadie Easley - Health issues

Ed Ehring's sister Julie Robison is suffering from Alzheimer's.

Vicky Hoffman - legally blind but her eyes are getting worse

Chain of Love - Pray for the children, the house parents, the teachers and pastors that work with them

Sandra - housemother is in ICU with Covid

Valdir - COL Maintenance - ICU with Covid

Prayers for those working in health related jobs, for protection. Especially those from our own families:

Karen at St Joseph - Susan - State School - Zella Johnson

On going Covid-19 pandemic