

Out of the darkness

BETSY CAHILL | DECEMBER 14, 2017

I used to love this time of year. To celebrate the wonder of Christmas as a child and then as an adult, through the eyes of my children, was a joyous delight. I'd have to say that it really changed 17 years ago when my mom died in December. I knew that without her around, things would never be the same again. I also suffer from seasonal depressive disorder so these short days do not help. If I'm not careful, the darkness can set in to my spirit. I really don't want that to happen, so I look to the Word.

Isaiah 9:2 says, "***The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.***"

That's me! I am walking in darkness this time of year. I need to find a light source—something (or someone) that will shine light into my dark soul and release me from this prison. So, I look again.

Isaiah 42:6-7 says: "***I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.***"

Jesus is a light for the Gentiles—that's me again—and will free the captives who sit in darkness, from the dungeon. All I have to do is keep my eyes focused on him.

One last time I go to the Word and find John 8:12: "***When 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.'***"

>>> Continued >>>

Thank You, Lord, for your Word, that comforts, strengthens and teaches me. Help me daily to seek you and to share you with others. Lift me from my darkness into the light of your love. In Jesus' name, amen.

December 24, 2017

FOCUS Wesleyan Church

The Greatest Story Ever Told

Sermon Notes:

1. _____ did Jesus come?

Galatians 4:4-5

John 1:45-49

Luke 1:26-35

Luke 2:1-7

2. _____ did He come?

Matthew 11:28-30

3. _____ did Jesus come on the first Christmas?

Galatians 3:13

Reflection: What is one new thing you believe God spoke to you today as a result of worshipping at FOCUS?

The Word of God directs us as we consider what the **next step** is for our lives. What is your next step? Have you spent time to consider the real and raw story of the very first Christmas? Our temptation is to romanticize it... yet the Word of God gives us the true account of what happened. What could you do this week to better grasp the depth and magnitude of this, the greatest story ever told?

Challenge: This week I will pray for following need(s) in our community:

Communion at FOCUS

Every Sunday at FOCUS we celebrate the Lord's Table, also known as Communion. We have open communion which means all are invited to receive. We receive communion elements by intinction. Tearing off a small piece of the loaf of bread, dipping it in the communion glass of juice, and then consuming it immediately. Please note, upon your request, we also have gluten free elements for those with gluten and other major food allergies.

FOCUS Youth Group - will begin meeting again

January 7th

Have an amazing Christmas break! Happy New Years!!!

Special offering during the month of December for Noah's Ark Orphanage

Consider visiting Promise Kids a Future website to learn how you can be involved:

promisekidsafuture.org

***FOCUS Local Church
Conference Sunday, Jan. 7,
2018, following 11 AM
worship service***



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