

Pastoral REFLECTIONS

May 4, 2025

A Book of Promises

A particular prisoner, most cunning and brutal, was singularly repulsive even compared to others. He had been known for this daring and for the utter absence of all feeling when committing acts of violence. The chaplain had spoken to him several times but had not succeeded even in getting an answer. The man was sullenly set against all instruction. At last, he expressed a desire for a certain book, but as it was not in the library, the chaplain pointed to the Bible, which was placed in his cell, saying, "Did you ever read that Book?" He gave no answer but looked at the good man as if he would kill him. The question was kindly repeated, and he was assured that he would find it well worth reading. "Mister," said the convict, "you would not ask me such a question if you knew who I am. What have I to do with a book of that sort?" The chaplain answered, "I know all about you, and that's why I think the Bible is the book for you." "It would do me no good," he cried. "I am past all feeling." Doubling his fist, he struck the cell's iron door and said, "My heart is as hard as that iron; nothing in any book will ever touch me."

"Well," said the chaplain, "you want a new heart? Did you ever read the covenant of grace?" The man answered sullenly by inquiring what he meant by such talk. His friend replied, "Listen to these words: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you" (Ezekiel 36:26). The words struck the man with amazement. He asked to have the passage found for him in the Bible. He read the words repeatedly; when the chaplain returned to him the next day, the wild beast was tamed. "Oh, sir," he said, "I never dreamed of such a promise! I never believed it possible that God would speak in such a way to men. If He gives me a new heart, it will be a miracle of mercy, and yet I think He will work that miracle upon me, for the very hope of a new nature is beginning to touch me as I never was touched before." (From Illustrations of Bible Truths Copyright © 1995, 1998 by AMG International, Inc. All rights reserved. Used by permission.)

The Psalmist said, "Teach me, O Lord, to follow your decrees; then I will keep them to the end. Give me understanding, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart. Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight. Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain. Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word. Fulfill your promise to your servant, so that you may be feared. Take away the disgrace I dread, for your laws are good. How I long for your precepts! In your righteousness preserve my life." (Psalm 119:33-40; NIV)



UPCOMING Events



PASSIONATE ABOUT THE PERFORMING ARTS? — Join us on Saturday May 17th at 11AM for 'Behind The Curtain: Insights From An Independent Creative,' feat. Marcus Freeman from Silverlake Church. Whether you're an aspiring actor or seasoned creator, come gain insight that can elevate your craft. **Contact Melia Washington at melita290@gmail.com for more details.**



COVENANT KEEPERS MARRIAGE MINISTRY RETREAT — MAY 16TH-18TH, 2025 Join the Marriage Ministry May 16th-18th for a "Weekend to Remember" presented by Family Life at the Houston Marriot in Sugar Land. **Register at https://events.familylife.com/eventHouston2025.** For more information on the LWFC Marriage Ministry email lwfcmarrigemin@gmail.com.



SPRING TECH SERIES — ROBOTICS FUN Parents with children ages 5-13 years old, our next technology class is for you! Join us Saturday May 10th at 10AM for a robotics class. **Register at https://bit.ly/LWFCKidsRobotics** and for more details contact Sharon Daniels at sdaniels@pvamu.edu



CLASS OF 2025 — Please submit your full name and graduation picture (or picture of yourself) to be recognized throughout the month of May! College graduates, please include the name of your college or university. Congratulations graduates, your LWFC Family is so prod of you! **Submit all requested material via email to marketinglwfc@gmail.com. For more details contact Keron Brown or Brandon Crenshaw.**



SUMMER ADVENTURE 2025—MAY SPECIAL! Calling all young explorers, artists, and scientists! ABC Word Academy and LWCA are bringing learning and unforgettable experiences to life with our action-packed Summer Adventure Program including NASA & STEM Explorations, art classes, performing arts, and outdoor fun. Register your children, ages 5-12 today! **Call (281) 445-9673 or register online at http://tinyurl.com/LWFCSummerCamp.**



ORDER OF WORSHIP

Announcements

Communion

Worship In Giving

Offering boxes are located at all perimeters under crosses

Visitor's Welcome

Special Music

"Light Work"
Luke 11:33-36

Click "Sermon Notes" on the Website

Call to Discipleship
Please remain seated at this time

Benediction

Children are now required to check-in upon arrival. Please report to the registration desk located in the children's wing.

Infants—6th grade

LEGACY
EFFECTING TODAY FOR TOMMORROW
youth ministry of LIVING WORD FELLOWSHIP

MIDDLE SCHOOL - HIGH SCHOOL

2:30 4:15 & TUESDAY NIGHTS
SUNDAY e 7:30 PM

Light Work
Luke 11:33-36

I. Lighting (Placement) (v. 33)

- a. Lighting a Lamp
 - i. Lighting - to cause illumination or burning to take place, light, kindle
 - 1. Light imagery has been used in connection with Jesus already by Luke in 2:32 and cf. 1:78–79.
 - ii. Lamp —oil burning
 - 1. In 8:16 the lamp that has been lit is the one who has heard the word of God from Jesus and responded to it. The verse contains a mission challenge
- b. Puts it Away
 - i. In a Cellar
 - 1. Into a vault, crypt, cellar
 - 2. since a cellar is the very place where a light would be required—unless the point is that a light in the cellar offers no illumination in the main part of the house. The point is simply that the light is placed in a hidden location
 - ii. Under a Basket
 - 1. Wicker
 - 2. Alternatively, the lamp may be placed under a measuring vessel
 - 3. This may have been used to extinguish the light, so that its fumes would not spread through the room
- c. Lampstand
 - i. Lampstand—upon which lamps were placed or hung
 - 1. Since lamps were the normal source of light other than daylight in the biblical world, one would expect stands to hold them to have been items of everyday usage
 - 2. The widespread acquaintance with lamps and stands is the basis of Jesus allusion to the obvious rule that if a lamp is to give its full illumination it must be set on a stand and not irrationally placed under a bed or covered with a bushel
 - ii. May see the Light
 - 1. The presence of the kingdom of God in the ministry of Jesus is like a lamp shining out for all to see. But only sound eyesight allows the light to come from the lamp and illuminate every part of life.

II. Light Source (v. 34)

- a. Eye is the Lamp
 - i. Eye- organ of sense perception
 - 1. Your eye. This refers to one’s spiritual vision or openness to God’s word, i.e., Jesus’ teaching.
 - 2. That light is given to the body by the eye which acts as a lamp to the interior in the sense that light enters the body by it; the eye is thought of as receiving light from outside the body
 - 3. The eye is spoken of as a lamp, but is in its turn a relatively transparent metaphor for moral and spiritual readiness to see
 - ii. Your body - meaning passes from the eye of the body to the eye of the soul
- b. Eye is Clear
 - i. Body full of Light
 - 1. Shining, bright, radiant
 - ii. Clear- Healthy
 - 1. ἀπλοῦς means ‘simple, single, sincere’ can mean ‘healthy’. The meaning ‘generous’ fits the context in
 - 2. If the eye is healthy and lets in light, i.e. if the person is single-mindedly receptive to the light of the gospel, then his whole being will be filled with light
 - 3. On its health depends whether the blessings of light come to man. We must be fully open to the light of Jesus, or of the Gospel
 - 4. Luke taught that they must respond with “good eyes,” i.e., with true faith and obedience. It was their responsibility to rid themselves of any possible obstruction and to receive the word with a noble and good heart. Only thus could they persevere and produce fruit (8:15). Then their light, a reflection of the light of their Lord, would shine out to others.
 - 5. 34–36 make it clear that the light shines out from Jesus’ own ministry, which is no hidden phenomenon, but is available to cast its light upon those who wish to find their way inside (the imagery is explored more fully at 8:16).

- 6. “Clear” is lit. “single.” The word is used in moral contexts in connection with sincerity, wholeheartedness, guilelessness, and generosity, but is found in connection with eyes meaning “clear,” “sound,” or “healthy”
- c. Eye is Bad
 - i. Body Full of Darkness
 - 1. πονηρός will then mean ‘in poor condition, sick’; the sense ‘grudging’ (Mt. 6:23; probably too specific here the thought is of refusal to receive the gospel.)
 - 2. Bad – evil , This happens when the eye of the soul is so diseased that it cannot receive any rays
 - 3. Faith, when diseased, becomes the darkness of superstition; just as the eye, when diseased, distorts and obscures. Comp. Mt 6:22, 23.
 - 4. Metaphor of moral depravity and spiritual ignorance
 - 5. This happens when the eye of the soul is so diseased that it cannot receive any ray of Divine truth
 - 6. Faith, when diseased, becomes the darkness of superstition; just as the eye, when diseased, distorts and obscures. Comp. Mt 6:22, 23.
 - 7. On the negative side, πονηρός (tr. above “diseased”) is the normal word for “evil” or “wicked,” but in connection with eyes the noun form is documented to mean “disease” and more generally the adverb is used in the idiom πονηρῶς ἔχειν where the sense is “to be ill.

III. Light it Up (vs. 35-36)

- a. Consider
 - i. Introduced by σκοπέω ‘to look out, to consider’ (Rom. 6:17; 2 Cor. 4:18; Gal. 6:1; Phil. 2:4; 3:17
 - ii. Whether Light or Darkness inside
 - iii. Hearers are bidden to examine whether what they think to be light is really darkness (cf. Jn. 9:40f.). For the thought of light within a person see Pr. 20:27.
- b. Full of Light
 - i. No Dark Part
 - 1. Even as the whole person becomes filled with light upon acceptance of Jesus and his teaching, so does darkness fall upon those who reject him.
 - 2. ‘If, however, your whole body is lighted up, with no part dark, then all about you will be light; just as the lamp lights you with its brightness’. Taken in this way, the verse refers to the light-giving quality of those who have been illuminated by Jesus and gives an equivalent to Mt. 5:14
 - ii. Wholly Illumined
 - 1. Complete illumination is illumination indeed, and those who possess it have no need of a sign from heaven in order to recognize the truth
 - 2. “If you are truly receptive to Christ (v. 36a) and there is no hardness of heart in you toward him and his message (v. 36b), then you will truly shine with the light of Christ and his gospel (v. 36c); just like when a shining light illuminates you with its rays, so will Christ illumine you”
 - iii. Lamp Illumines With Rays

PRAYER REQUESTS

Grieving: Joyce Newsome & family, Alton Smith & family, Evelyn Harvey & family, Latricia White & family, Beverly Shaw & family, Leon Brooks & family, Jeffrey Allen & family, Cloteil Bolden, Mary Ngwazini, Orelee Fields, and Vivian Jackson & family.

Health and Healing: Lurlean Lane, Florence Wiggins, Retha Amos, Margaret Baptiste, Cici Sharpe, Eunice Johnson, Jeffrey McQueen, Eric White, Pat Crawford, Tanisha Collins, Jon Heard, Rutha Patrick, Kevin Carey, Sherri Love, Elizabeth Clarke, Clara Williams, Elsie Starks, Elaine Merchant, Beverly Woods, Doris Blocker, Pat Deckard, Kathryn Ford-Cheatham, Anthony Thomas, Beverly Austin, Joshua Williams, Ruby Hunter, Elizabeth Bean, Patsy Gatterson, Joyce Newsome, Arleatha Housley, Patrina Johnson, Cheryl Walker, Walter Banks, Sheryle Crowe, Arnie Glover, Clarence Coleman, Diana Doyle, Shannon Rice, Freddie Reid, Janie Buchanan, Yolanda Barnes, Rochelle Carter Brown, Terrance Ford, Robert Edwards, Jessie Austin, Evelyn Harvey, Shinell Clark, Elsie Starks, Sandra Phillips, Ruth Cranford, Eugene Reese, and Sylvia Edwards.

Light
Work

Luke 11:33–36