

Sermon Notes
Good News Church
Light Into Darkness
“Worshipping in the Dark”
Drue Warner
12-14-25

Good News Church Friends & Family,

This past Tuesday evening, our application regarding the Hillside property went for a final vote before the Gwinnett Board of Commissioners. They approved our request, but included incredibly restrictive conditions, to the point that we are not going to move forward with Hillside. **It was disappointing, discouraging, and a bit disorienting, but only because we're looking through a lens of what we think is best. The truth is, we don't know. The good news is that God does. :)**

I received a text of from a friend this morning and thought I'd share with you, what I shared with him... *"We were pursuing Hillside because that is where we thought God wanted us to be. Ultimately, it's not about Hillside. It's about God. We just want to be wherever He is and wherever he wants us to be. If Hillside is not the plan, now or ever, we will just keep doing what we're doing in our little outpost of the kingdom of God (known as Elixir Brew Co.), bringing the love, hope, and grace of God, found in Jesus Christ, and providing gospel rest to weary travelers. God is forcing us to keep it simple, at least for now, and we're OK with that. The reality is that there are blessings and challenges to both sides of the Hillside coin. If God is with us, then we're good either way."*

How to respond when life leads us into darkness?

Life can be hard. There are a lot of life experiences that can wipe us out, devastate our faith, and leave us on the ground shattered and questioning everything we know to be true about God.

QUESTIONS:

- "If God cares about me, why am I going through this?"
- "If God is sovereign, why did He let this happen?"

Two things we must embrace in life... The love of God and also the sovereignty of God.

What you believe matters! It affects everything. When do you believe the right things about who God is, his love, and his sovereign purposes for us, even in our suffering, you're able to live life in a wheelchair as a quadriplegic with peace, joy, and purpose.

How many of you feel like there is some element of your life where there is darkness?

- **What typically comes with darkness?** Fear, sadness, anxiety.
- **How do we counter those things?**

Remember... Immanuel (God with us)

- “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.” - Isaiah 9:2
- If I say, “Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,” **even the darkness will not be dark to you;** the night will shine like the day for darkness is as light to you.” - Psalm 139:11-12
- “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.”
- John 8:12

1. In the darkness, the world was formed.

- In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light... And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so.
– Genesis 1:1-3, 9

2. In the darkness, you were formed.

- For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. **My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.** // Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand— when I awake, I am still with you.” – Psalm 139:13-17
- Did you know that scientists have discovered that, at the point of conception (in the darkness of a mother’s womb, there is a spark of light, like a small firework). Isn’t that amazing?!? **VIDEO**

3. In the darkness, faith is formed.

- “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” – James 1:2-4
- “Though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—**may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.**” - 1 Peter 1:6b-7 (**worshipping in the dark**)

- **“Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.” – Job 13:15**

4. In the darkness, Jesus was born.

Worshipping in the Dark

- **“To worship in the depth of sorrow —it is indeed an arduous thing. Yes, and therein lies the blessing; it is the test of perfect faith... *My goal is God Himself, not joy, nor peace, nor even blessing, but Himself, my God.*”**
– Mrs. Charles C. Cowman (“Streams in the Desert,” Dec. 11)
- **OBSERVATION:** Intimacy happens in the dark.

KEY THOUGHT: Light into darkness transforms darkness into light.

Worshipping in the Dark - Joni “Songs of Suffering” video (13 min.)

- Be thinking... What jumps out at you? Share during take aways.

Devotional / Journaling (7:30am) – *“God, why are you allowing us to go through this seemingly pointless exercise in futility (and expense in time, resource, and energy)?”*

Conversation with Chad Davis (8:30am) – *“There is space below us (and next to us) that could be a great option... Oh, I didn’t tell you? Jim died. We’re working with his son-in-law now.”*

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. - Isaiah 55:8-9

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Our disappointments in life are a result of God’s path being different from our expectations. The journey of faith is of God blowing up our expectations and making Him our ultimate expectation.

When God is our expectation, and when we know that God rules, reigns, creates, and embraces us intimately in the darkness, we experience His lovingkindness and can do what we never thought possible in the darkest times of life... worship (and even with joy). And as we worship, we experience like no other times in life...

Immanuel, God with us. (Matthew 1:23) // Another way of saying it... Jesus loves me.

And THAT’S Good News!