

*Gregory the Illuminator.* And get this, Gregory, a Persian convert, had been tortured and kept in a dungeon by the king for 14 years. When he was let out, rather than run for his life, he shared the light of Jesus with King Tiridates who believed it. After the king's conversion, the whole kingdom of Armenia followed. *That's profound.* Despised, abhorred and tortured, Gregory became a light to the king, and then the king became a light to his whole country. This was decades before the Emperor Constantine became a Christian.

Jesus, the Light to the nations, still shines, bringing God's salvation to the ends of the earth. Isaiah didn't live to see it, but Isaiah's words that we read today, still proclaim this Light.

All that Israel never was, Jesus is. All that faithful Isaiah never could be, Jesus is. Jesus is the Savior. Jesus is the Light of the world. Today, you and I are joined to Jesus in our baptism by faith. Through Jesus' saving work as the suffering Servant of LORD, you and I are saved. The darkness of sin goes away, and we finally have light to our path. We are among those scattered sons and daughters are brought back to God.

Now, through our union with Jesus, we too are called from the womb to be *servants of the LORD*. We too are his *sharp swords* and *polished arrows* as we demonstrate God's word in love to our neighbors. We too are called to be those sons and daughters in whom the LORD is glorified. We too are the ones who by grace through faith in Christ are "*honored in the eyes of the LORD.*" (V 5)

Jesus is the Light of the World, just as the gospel tells us. And joined to Jesus, his Light shines through us.

*You are the light of the world [he tells us]. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:14-16)*

I'll give you an example of letting your light shine. It was Christmas Eve in Buffalo, New York, 2023. A deadly blizzard was raging. Driving was impossible. Jay Withey was trying to stay warm in his truck. He'd already