



## Walking In Darkness

**H**ave you ever tried to walk in the dark? I do it frequently because of having to get up during the night. I also usually walk in the dark for a few moments when I turn out the lights. When I walk in the dark, I don't run; I don't even walk confidently. I'm usually feeling around with my hands and arms trying to identify objects that are where I know they should be. I walk very gingerly making sure of my steps before I put my feet flat on the floor (you never know when there is going to be a small metal toy car there, and they sure hurt when you step on them barefoot). Then, after I am sure of my step, I'll put that foot down and pick the other one up. I'm also very careful to make sure that I know where furniture and other objects are so that I don't stub my toe or bang an arm. Even when you know what the basic layout of the house is, walking in the dark is at best, difficult. It is so much easier to just turn on the light and walk in confidence.

Picture yourself, however, in unfamiliar territory and with no light whatsoever. I once found myself in such a situation touring a cave. My family and I went to explore a different part of the cave than the guide. He said he would meet us. We were almost happily at the junction when he turned off the lights on us! It was completely and totally dark. I immediately got down on my knees so as not to bump my head on the roof. Then, I began groping

around in the dark to feel for my wife and kids who were near by. (The kids could hear me, but my wife couldn't, as she is deaf.) What did we do? We started yelling for the guide to turn the lights back on! He eventually did and we got out of the cave safely, but it was an experience to shake one's confidence that I will never forget.

Why would someone want to walk in darkness? Physically, it just doesn't make any sense unless one is forced into it. Spiritually, however, many desire it on a regular basis. In Ecclesiastes 2:14a we read, "The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness...." I suppose if someone wanted to be foolish, they would walk in darkness. In Isaiah 59:9, we read, "Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness." The person who does not desire to have justice and judgment in his life desires to walk in darkness. In Proverbs 2:12 we read, "Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness." Those who leave righteousness walk in darkness. Regarding the wicked in Psalm 82:5 we read, "They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course." Those who desire ignorance walk in darkness. John writes in 1 John 1:6 "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and

do not the truth." Hypocrites desire to walk in darkness. Desiring to walk in spiritual darkness doesn't exactly put one in good company. It just doesn't make any sense to do so.

In John 12:35 we read "Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." The metaphor is so appropriate. We know how difficult it is to walk in the dark. We know how pleasant it is to walk in the light. We know the difference between darkness and light! Is the same not true for truth? As far as truth goes, Jesus is the light of the world. If we follow Jesus' example and teaching, then we will walk in the light and what a pleasant and wonderful experience it will be! However, if we fail to follow Jesus' example and teaching, then we will grope in the darkness and what a miserable and awful experience that will be! In the light we have confidence, joy, direction, faith and progress. In the dark we have timidity, fear, confusion, doubt, and regression. Jesus said in John 8:12 "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." We've seen how dangerous it is to walk in darkness. We've seen how invigorating it is to walk in the light. Now, in what path will I walk today? Darkness? Or Light? As for me, I'm keeping the light on.

### Is It In Your Bible?

**K**nowledge of the Bible is indispensable in the lives of Christians ( John 12:48). We know God chiefly through the Word of God. Scripture teaches his greatness, power, majesty, and grace ( Deuteronomy 5:24; Psalm 89:8; Revelation 4:11; Ephesians 2:8,9). "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free" ( John 8:32, NKJV).

God's will is learned through Scripture. We learn how he wishes for us to live, love, and laud him through the pages of the Bible.

In Psalm 119:9-11, the Psalmist asks, "How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought you; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I may not sin against You."

We must, therefore, have a good knowledge of the Bible in order to live as God would have

us live. We have unprecedented opportunities to learn the Bible. Bibles are plentiful in physical, electronic, and audio formats. The internet offers an endless amount of Biblical resources. Yet, knowledge of the Bible is less now than it has been since the Middle Ages.

This fact is increasingly true as we witness the writings and comments of people in the religious world. Apparently there is some mythology that is growing alongside the Bible that is becoming as well-known as Scripture.<sup>1</sup> And as the Bible is read less and less, this mythology will only grow in prominence.

Before we examine some Biblical examples, let us mention one from the entertainment world in order to establish what we mean. If we polled a group of people as to the most famous line from the film, "Casablanca," they would say, "Play it again, Sam." Yet, this line is not even in the film.

Turning to the Bible, we find the following examples: First, if we polled people as to the fruit Adam and Eve ate in the Garden of Eden, most all would say an apple. Yet, Genesis 3:3,6 says simply "fruit." Nowhere do we read that this "fruit" was an apple despite most people being convinced of this "fact."

Second, Mary Magdalene is almost universally believed to have been a prostitute. There are even Magdalene houses to help save prostitutes from their dangerous lifestyles. However, Scripture never says Mary Magdalene was a prostitute. This myth was perpetuated by Pope Gregory in the 6th century.<sup>2</sup> The only mention of Mary, outside of the crucifixion and resurrection passages is in Luke 8:2 where it says seven demons were cast out of her. It is sad that she is slandered as a prostitute.

Third, every December we see nativity scenes, plays, and art depicting the three wise men visit-

ing Jesus at the manger. In fact, the wise men were never at the manger and no number of wise men is ever specified in Scripture. The scene at the manger is recounted in Matthew 1:18-25. Later, in 2:7-11, the "wise men" (no number given) visit the "Child" in the "house" of his parents. Obviously, Jesus was no longer a newborn at the manger.

This matters because Biblical knowledge is eroding, and if false information can grow alongside of the Bible, the true knowledge will diminish in stature. People will know "about" the Bible instead of possessing truth.

Where will this false knowledge end? We already have people believing all kinds of things about the plan of salvation that are not in the Bible. It is sad that there are Bibles everywhere on desks, tables, and shelves and so few in the hearts of men.

Richard Mansel  
<http://www.forthright.net>



### Bible Studies for the week of December 4th, 2005

- AM Sermon..... Exercising Godliness
- Scripture Reading..... 1 Timothy 4:6-8
- PM Sermon..... Report on Brazil Mission
- Scripture Reading..... NA
- Sunday Class ..... The Book of Matthew
- Wednesday Class..... Minor Prophets: Haggai

## Kevin's Korner—The Culture Wars

From time to time I like to look at various news stories in my "Korner" in order to talk about some of the cultural battles that are occurring as a result of the confrontation between truth and error.

Just this past week, a judge in Indiana ruled that the Indiana legislature may not open their legislative session with a prayer that specifically mentions Jesus or his title, Christ. Judge David Hamilton issued a permanent injunction barring such action. Several members of the house have already requested to be the first to lead prayer in the next session in defiance of Judge Hamilton's order.

The constitution of the U.S. never states that there ought to be no religion in government. What it says is that there ought to be no government in religion! We've completely reversed the constitution and made it so that now government influencing

an individual's right to practice his or her religion. Something's got to change here eventually.

At the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, a student named Lance Steiger had been told by the University NOT to have Bible studies in his dorm room. Mr. Steiger works as a resident assistant in the dorm and is provided room and board for his efforts in that capacity. It was because of this work relationship that the University told him he couldn't have such studies, but Lance fought back and challenged the rule. The case has received some national media attention recently and the University backed off. However, they will be "reviewing" their policies. I don't see how any business, government entity, or any other institution of any sort has any right whatsoever to dictate whether an individual can use his own personal time to study the Bible with others or not.

How would we like the city government to tell city employees that they can't have Bible studies on their own personal time in their own personal dwelling just because the dwelling is in the city limits? That's exactly where this is heading.

What's new in television? Evidently, dead bodies. The Parents Television Counsel in the last week of September reported that a record number of dead bodies, 63, was seen during that week on prime time television. During the same week of the previous year there were only 27. Evidently gorier television is on the rise. Why should we be concerned? Children who view such tend to behave in increasingly anti-social behavior and children are generally awake during such times. Television simply isn't the wholesome entertainment media it once was. We must censor what our children watch!



"Television simply isn't the wholesome entertainment media it once was."

## Records for the week of November 27th, 2005

Sunday Bible Class .....	64
Sunday AM Worship.....	84
Sunday PM Worship.....	56
Wednesday Night Study.....	46
Contribution.....	\$1675.25
Budget.....	\$1662.00



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# Praises, Prayers, and Proclamations

## Announcements

- We are thankful to God for this new Lord's Day. It is the day we honor His Son and the Love that He has shown us through Him. Let us worship in spirit and in truth!
- We extend our sympathies to the family of Helen Swink who passed from this life to the next this past week.
- Please remember the following in prayers: Shane Blackston, Carson Deathridge, Vaughn Farmer, Justina Goucher, Brian Guess, Opal Hull, Evelyn Johnson, Julie Sooter, John Stuckey, Julie Thompson, James Tabor, Rocky Whitely Sr.
- Our monthly men's breakfast is this coming Saturday. Please come and enjoy great fellowship and good food.
- Our monthly elders and deacons meeting is tonight.
- Our weekly Bible study at the nursing home is at 2:00 on Thursday.
- The annual holiday party at the Smith's will be December 10th at 6:00 PM. Please bring a \$5 gift, a friend, and a food dish.
- Please check the bulletin board for new assignments.
- Our pantry item is: coffee.

### God's Salvation Plan

1. **Hear** the Gospel—Romans 10:17
2. **Believe** on the Lord & His Word—Mark 16:16; John 8:24
3. **Repent** of your sins—Luke 13:3,5; Acts 17:30
4. **Confess** Christ—Matthew 10:32,33; Luke 12:8; Romans 10:9
5. **Be Baptized** for the remission of sins—Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; Galatians 3:27
6. Live a **faithful**, dedicated life—Revelation 2:10; 2 Peter 1:5-10

## Welcome!

Visit our web site: <http://www.the-churchofchrist.com>

## Family Times for Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class: .....	9:30 AM
Sunday Morning Worship: .....	10:20 AM
Sunday Evening Worship: .....	6:00 PM
Ladies Bible Class: .....	10:30 AM
Wed. Evening Bible Class: .....	7:00 PM

## Serving Each Other

December 4th, 2005    December 11th, 2005

### Sunday Morning

Songs:	Ken Smith	Barrett Brown
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Leon Duncan	Rusty Windle
Scripture Reading:	Matthew Morrell	Perry Foster
Lord's Table	Bruce Foster	Bob Moore
(assist)	George Eddings	Michael Morrell
	Ray Duncan	Jack Gentry
	Jerry Roller	Matthew Morrell
Closing Prayer	Bill Fort	Dan Hand

### Sunday Evening

Songs:	Clay Bozarth	Rusty Windle
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Dale Pinkley	Dan Hand
Scripture Reading:	Brandon Foster	Ray Duncan
Lord's Table	Rusty Windle	Dale Pinkley
	Bob Moore	George Eddings
Closing Prayer	Ken Smith	Ray Duncan

### Wednesday

Songs:	Glenn Williams	Clay Bozarth
Opening Prayer:	Clay Bozarth	Glenn Quigley
Invitation:	Rusty Windle	Leon Duncan
Closing Prayer:	Matthew Morrell	Kevin Cauley

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