

Life Shines in Darkness – March for Life Devotion by Pastor Scott Licht

“In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” (John 1:4-5).

My dad was fascinated by caves—not enough to take up spelunking, but enough that several of our summer vacations meant renting a pop-up Coleman camper to pull behind our station wagon and setting off for a campground near a public cave of some sort. One memorable trip was to Niagara Cave, near Harmony, Minnesota.

About ten of us followed the guide down hundreds of feet under a field in southeast Minnesota. When we reached a large underground chamber, the guide turned off the lights. It was a sensation that I’ll never forget. In Exodus 10, Moses described the ninth plague as “a darkness to be felt.” That is very descriptive of the absence of light in that huge room: a darkness to be felt. I literally could not see my hand in front of my face. Without the usual visual cues, I can remember feeling disoriented—and a little nauseous. It was shocking. A darkness to be felt. There was no way to get our bearings. Each person was left to figure out for themselves the meaning of forward or backward and how far they could safely move in those directions, autonomously defined and arbitrarily measured.

What was probably a minute felt like an hour. But I remember acclimating ever so slightly. The “darkness to be felt” was no longer debilitating—or nauseating. I was almost comfortable with the darkness. I started to move a little more freely. People around me started to talk once again. And then, just as suddenly as the darkness had stolen my sense of sight and equilibrium, it was chased away by the lights being turned back on. That light was shocking—and revealing. Even though I had felt paralyzed by the darkness, I had moved a substantial distance—fiftyish feet as I recall. Clearly, I was more comfortable in the darkness than I realized. It took the light returning to see just how comfortable I had been in that “darkness to be felt.”

Life Shines in Darkness – March for Life Devotion by Pastor Scott Licht

I'm sure you've jumped WAY ahead of me in applying this illustration. But hang in there with me anyway. We live in a VERY dark world. It has been dark ever since God cast Adam and Eve away from the Tree of Life and out of the Garden of Eden. How did that darkness come into the world? Satan, the deceiver, the father of lies, asked the very simple question: "Did God really say?" With the answer, the light was turned off. And we have gotten used to the ensuing darkness—and we have become blind to the ways in which Satan continues to ask that very same question. Why does he continue to ask it? Because it still works.

We are no smarter now than Adam and Eve were 6,000 years ago.

We are gathered together today because of a specific type of darkness in our world—the darkness of believing that death is a solution to our perceived problems. That is just as dark—and just as untrue—as it was when Cain killed Abel.

We are no smarter now than Adam and Eve—or Cain—were 6,000 years ago.

In thousands of years of exposure to the darkness of abortion, we have become acclimated to it. We, as a people walking in darkness, have decided for ourselves which way is forward and which way is backward—defined autonomously and measured arbitrarily.

God tells us through Paul's hand in his first letter to the Corinthians that "the last enemy to be destroyed is death." But we have become so acclimated to the darkness that murder is now called a "right" and "healthcare" in our culture—both at the beginning AND end of life.

What's the solution? Think back to my experience in the cave. When the guide turned on the lights once again, the darkness was immediately and completely gone. The sudden brilliance was shocking because I had grown accustomed to the darkness. It was also shocking to see just how far I had moved when I thought that I was being so careful in that darkness. I had decided for myself (autonomously—as a "self-law") which way was "forward" and how I might measure

Life Shines in Darkness – March for Life Devotion by Pastor Scott Licht

my movement. First one small step, then another slightly larger step, then another slightly larger—until, when the light returned, I was quite far from my starting point.

The light banished the darkness.

God tells us through Isaiah's hand: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone."

The people who work in the abortion industry and those who support abortion are not darkness. They are walking in darkness. They have decided for themselves which way is forward and which way is backward—defined autonomously and measured arbitrarily. Pray for the light to be turned on in their lives that they may walk in the light.

Laws related to abortion in Pennsylvania or at the federal level are not the light. The life-affirming lawmakers down the street are not the light. Those are agents of the light. The light has been turned on in their hearts and the darkness could not overcome it. Pray that your elected officials would continue to be guided by the light of Christ as they make their decisions on legislation.

Similarly, walking around the capitol today is not the light. Writing to your elected officials is not the light. Praying at an abortion clinic is not the light. Even preaching a life-affirming sermon is not the light. Those are all wonderful ways in which you may be agents to shine the light of Christ into the darkness of the world. We MUST continue to do these things.

The ultimate battle for life is a battle between God and Satan. Human beings are created by God as spiritual creatures. So, we MUST address life as a spiritual matter—through prayer, through preaching, through sharing the Law and Gospel truths in Bible studies. Not just on one Sunday a year, but throughout a culture of LIFE in our churches.

Light banishes darkness. Life shines in the darkness.

Life Shines in Darkness – March for Life Devotion by Pastor Scott Licht

John, the Evangelist, wrote: “In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” (John 1:4-5).

Jesus is the light no darkness can overcome. He is also the life no darkness can overcome because through His perfect life and His death on the cross FOR US, He has conquered sin, death, and the power of the devil. As we march today and as we go about our lives in our local contexts and living out our vocations, may the light and life of our Savior, Jesus Christ, shine in and through us. The eternal victory has been won and it can never be overcome.