

Absence

of God's Light

*Lift up the **light** of your face upon us, O LORD!*

Psalm 4.6

Absence of God's Light

Genesis 1.1-5

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and **darkness was over the face of the deep**. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

And God said, "**Let there be light,**" and there was light. And God **separated the light from the darkness**. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

Absence of God's Light

Psalm 139.11-12

If I say, “Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light about me be night,”
even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is bright as the day,
for darkness is as light with you.

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Isaiah 9.2

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.

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1 John 1.5

God is light, and in him
is no darkness at all.

Absence of God's Light

1. The Reality of Darkness

(understanding *physical darkness* helps us to understand *spiritual darkness*)

2. Overcoming Darkness

(we must “walk in the light” by living in *transparency*)

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1. The Reality of Darkness

Absence of God's Light

What is Physical
Darkness?

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Darkness is simply the
absence of light...

Like cold being the absence of heat
We cannot add cold — we remove heat

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Darkness is never
unpaired from light!

Always remember darkness is not a
“substance” that can be added— it is only
what remains after light is subtracted.

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Darkness exists in
varying amounts...



Absence of God's Light

Twilight – light is naturally reduced

Gloom – light is depressingly reduced

Shadow – light is partially blocked

Blindness – light cannot be perceived

Black Hole – light is completely absorbed

Absence of God's Light

Twilight – light is naturally reduced

Gloom – light is depressingly reduced

What's the difference?

The difference is merely one of perception!

*What seems **gloomy** to one can be **romantic** to another...*

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Twilight – light is naturally reduced

Gloom – light is depressingly reduced

In other words,

The battle for us is not usually external – it's internal.

A mental battle of changing our perception.

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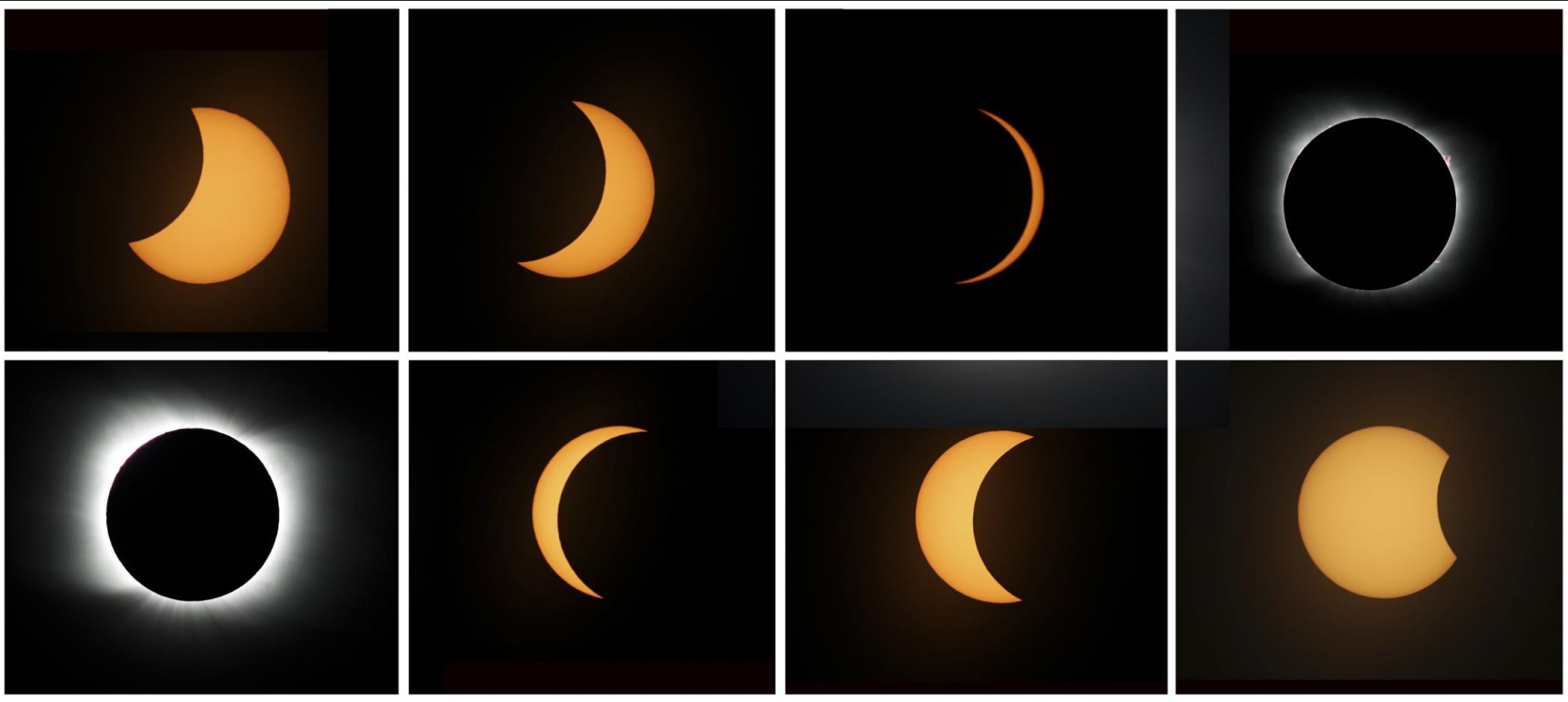
Twilight – light is naturally reduced

Gloom – light is depressingly reduced

Shadow – light is partially blocked

*Is an **eclipse** something to fear?*

Absence of God's Light



Absence of God's Light

Many traditional explanations of solar eclipses suggest that the events occur because a mythological beast of some description is devouring the sun.

This idea stems from the sun's appearance during the first stages of an eclipse, which resembles an orb with a "bite" taken out of it.

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You also find people firing guns in historic times or shooting arrows into the sky to scare off or kill the beast.

A few send fiery arrows, and they're trying to rekindle the sun or moon by sending it light and heat again.

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*Are there times when **temporary blindness** is desirable?*

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Jesus' **Life** on Earth

Jesus' **Death** on the Cross

Jesus' **Resurrection** in Heaven

Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised - who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. [Rom 8.34]

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

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Blindness – light cannot be perceived

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Absence of God's Light

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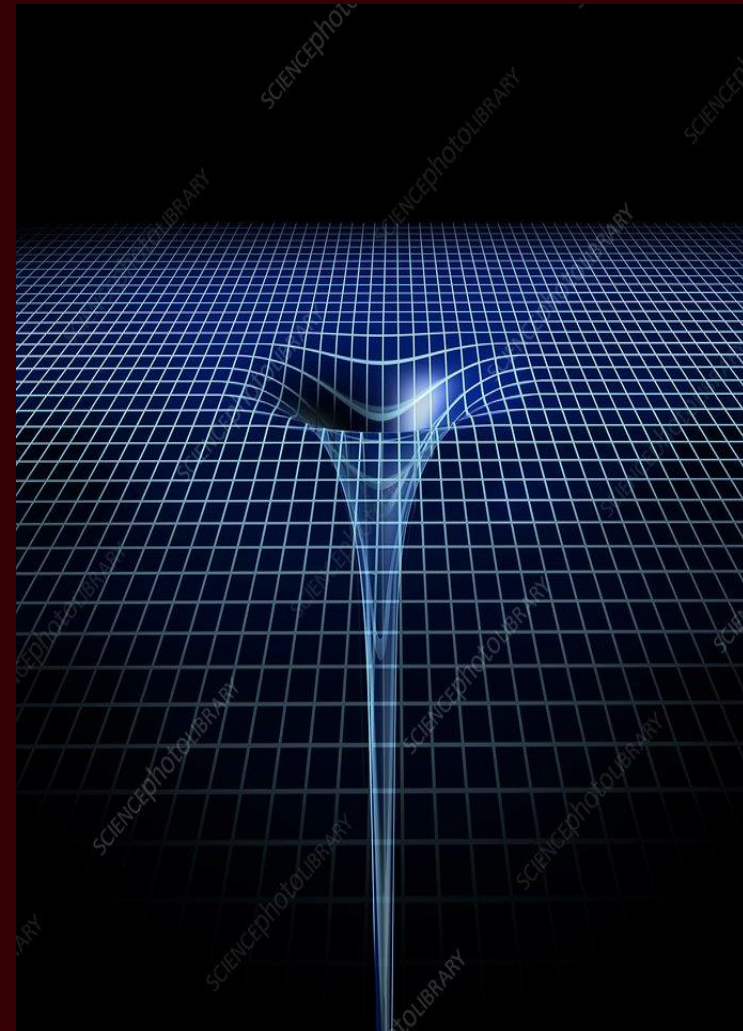
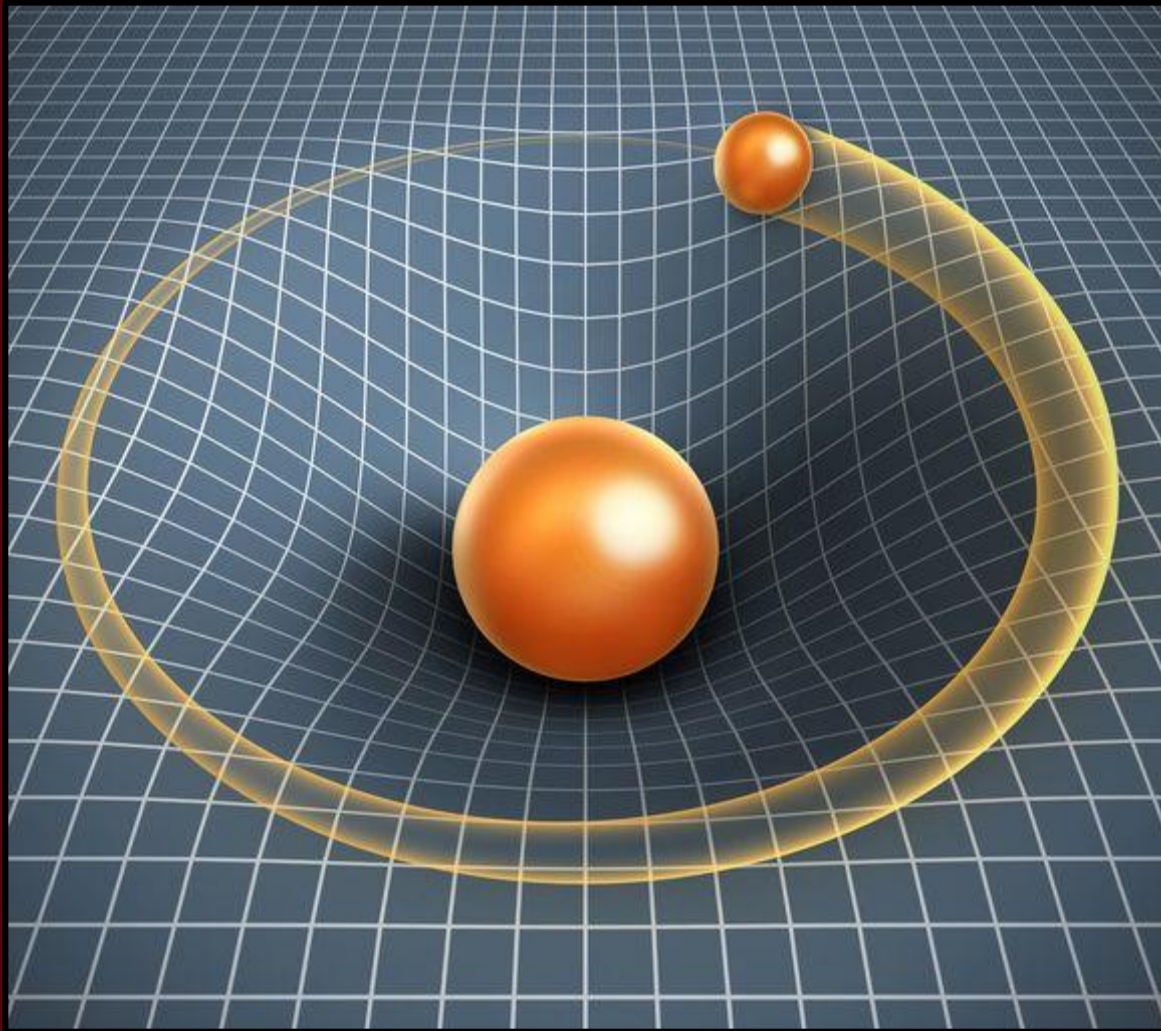
Blindness – light cannot be perceived

Black Hole – light is completely absorbed

Absence of God's Light



Absence of God's Light



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What's wrong
with absorption?



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The black hole of self-absorption is dangerous and quite common.

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Tim Keller:

The Freedom of
Self-Forgetfulness

The path to true Christian Joy



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We should not merely absorb
God's light like a **black hole**...

But neither should we merely
reflect God's light like **the moon**.

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What's wrong
with reflection?

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What is Spiritual Darkness?

(and what causes it?)

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Darkness Past: Regret

Darkness Future: Fear

Darkness Present: Disappointment

Discouragement

Depression

Distance

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Isaiah 59.1-2

Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear;

but **your iniquities have made a separation**
between you and your God,
and **your sins have hidden his face** from you
so that he does not hear.

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Isaiah 59.9-10

Therefore justice is far from us, and righteousness does not overtake us; **we hope for light, and behold, darkness, and for brightness, but we walk in gloom.**

We grope for the wall like the blind; **we grope like those who have no eyes**; we stumble at noon as in the twilight, among those in full vigor we are like dead men.

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Proverbs 4.19

The way of the wicked is like
deep darkness;

they do not know over what they
stumble.

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1 John 2.8-11

At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and **the true light is already shining.**
Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness.

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1 John 2.8-11

Whoever **loves his brother abides in the light**,
and in him there is no cause for stumbling.

But whoever hates his brother is in the
darkness and walks in the darkness, and does
not know where he is going, because the
darkness has blinded his eyes.

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What is Spiritual Darkness?

(and what causes it?)

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1. Not having fellowship with God through a relationship with Jesus Christ.
2. The light of God's Face is **felt** to be withdrawn.
3. Caused by sin, temptation to sin or difficult circumstances.

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Psalm 23.1-4

The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul.

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Psalm 23.1-4

He leads me in paths of righteousness for his
name's sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death, [valley of deep darkness]

I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod
and your staff, they comfort me.

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It *could* happened
to you...

It probably *has* happened
to you...

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It could be a really
good thing...

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1. The Reality of Darkness

(understanding "physical" darkness helps us to understand "spiritual" darkness)

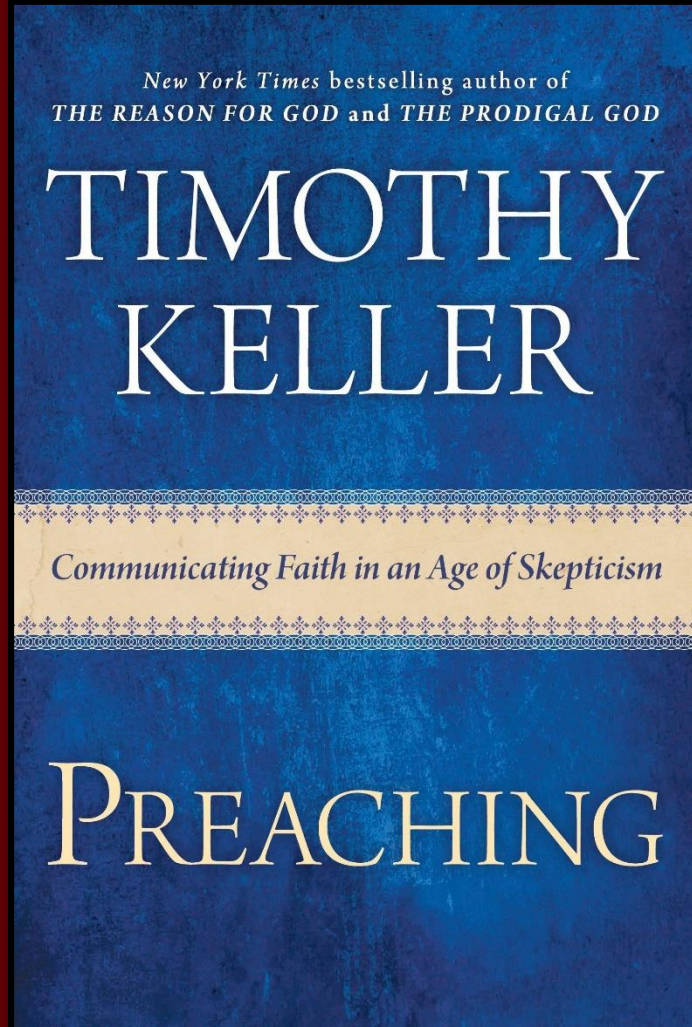
2. Overcoming Darkness

(we must walk in the light by living in transparency)

Absence of God's Light

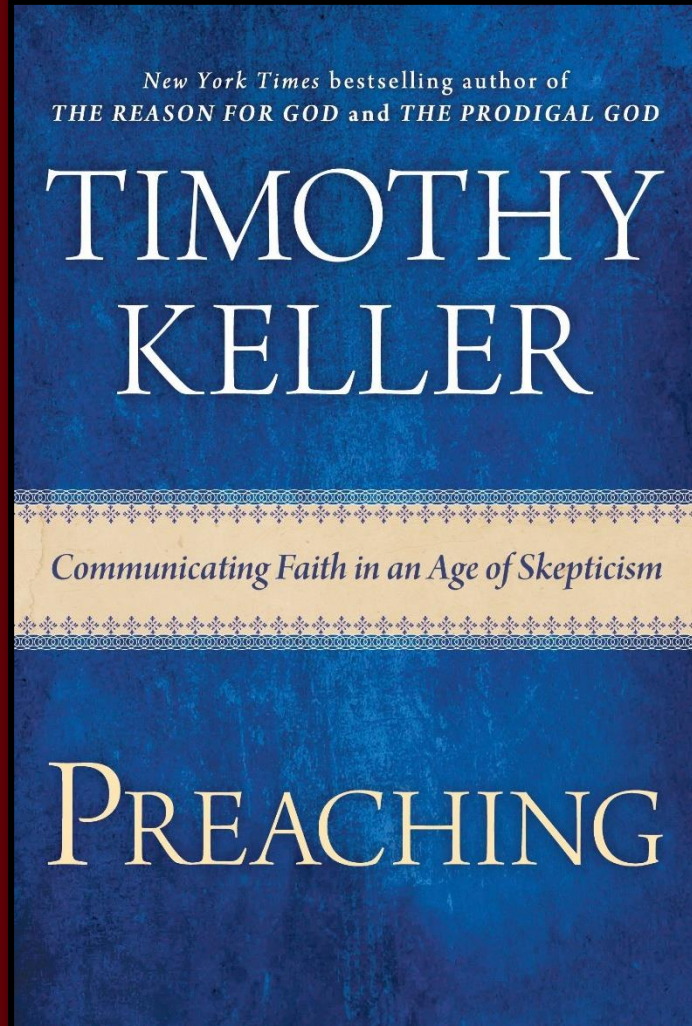
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Absence of God's Light



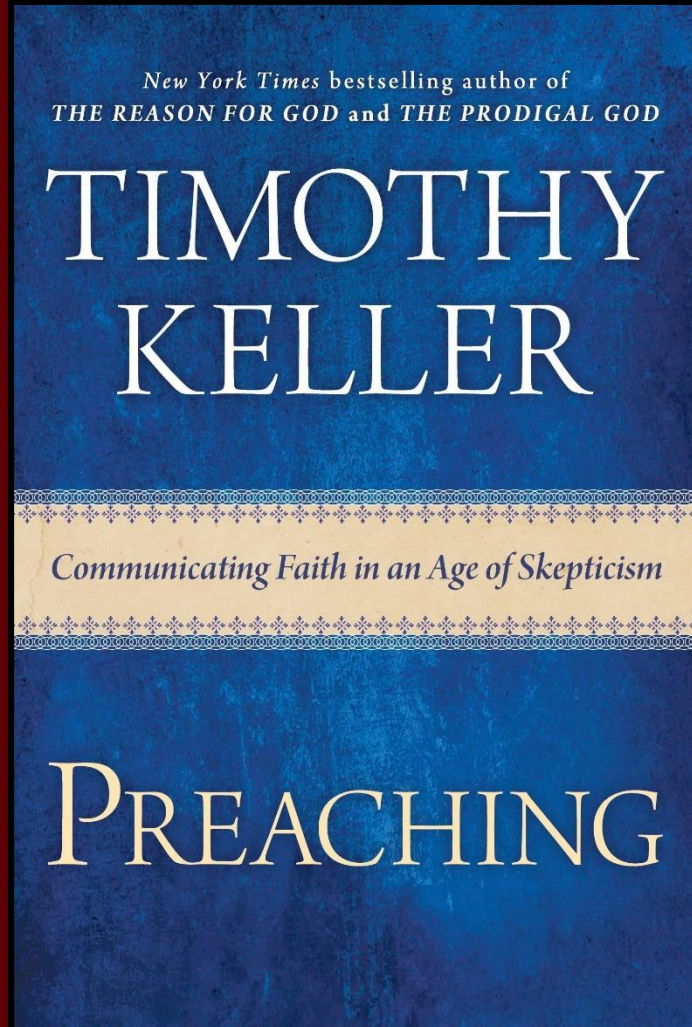
*God brings the Word home
to our hearers through the
“demonstration of the
Spirit and of power”
(1 Cor. 2.4).*

Absence of God's Light



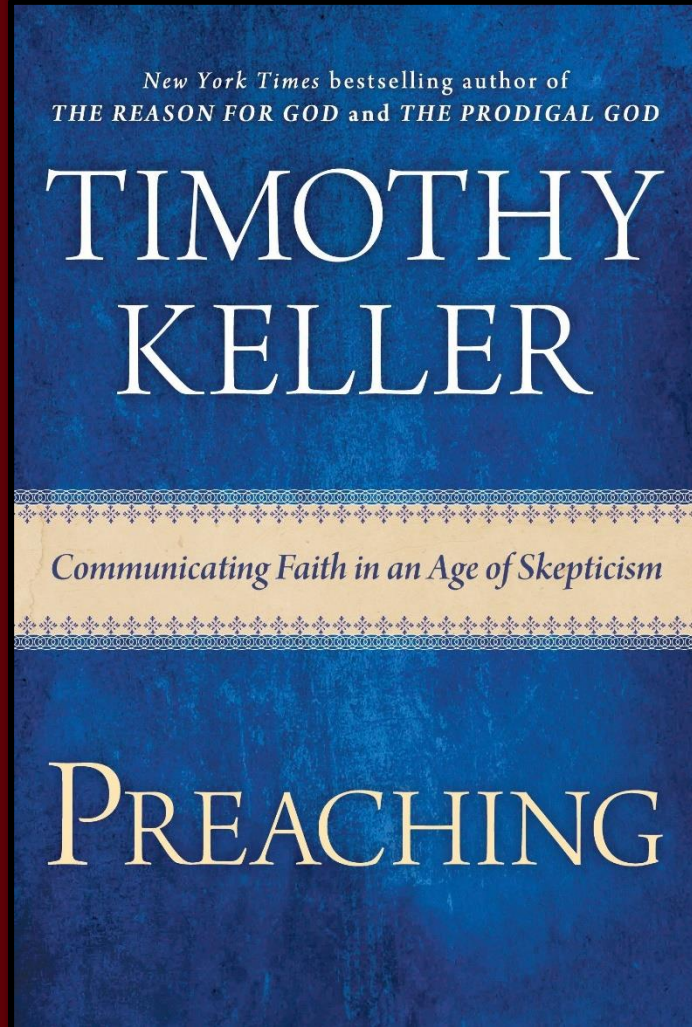
According to Paul, you can preach [or teach, or parent] with genuine spiritual power only if you offer Christ as a living reality to be encountered and embraced by those who listen.

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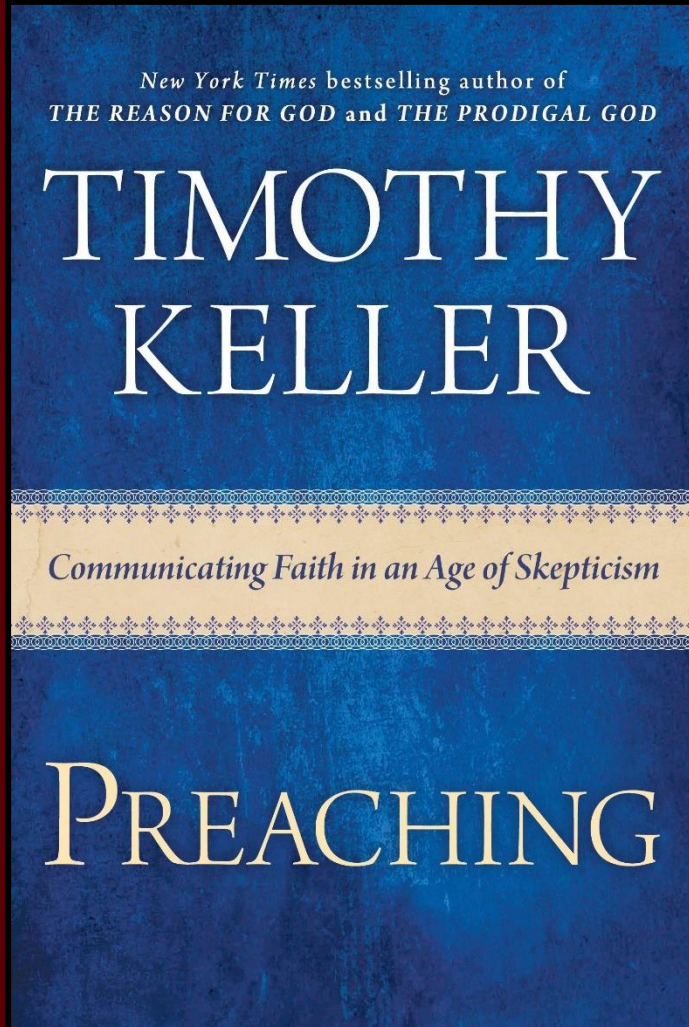
*This means to preach
[or teach, or parent] with
awe and wonder at the
greatness of what we have
in Christ.*

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It means to exhibit an uncontrived transparency, showing evidence of a heart that is being mended by the very truth you are presenting.

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You should be something like a clear glass through which people can see a gospel-changed soul in such a way that they want it too, and so that they get a sense of God's presence as well.

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Transparency

(having the property of transmitting light without appreciable scattering so that bodies lying beyond are seen clearly)



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Transparency

Absorption and Reflection



“me too”

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Isaiah 50.10

Who among you fears the LORD
and obeys the voice of his servant?

Let him who **walks in darkness**
and **has no light**

trust in the name of the LORD
and rely on his God.

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Micah 7.8

Rejoice not over me, O my enemy;
when I fall, I shall rise;
when I sit in **darkness**,
the LORD will be a light to me.

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Daniel 2.22

he reveals deep and hidden things;

he knows what is in the **darkness**,

and **the light** dwells with him.

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John 1.5

The **light shines in the darkness,**
and the darkness has not
[and cannot] overcome it.

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Lord of the Rings

Galadriel: *And for you, Frodo Baggins,
I give you the light of Earendil
- our most beloved star.*

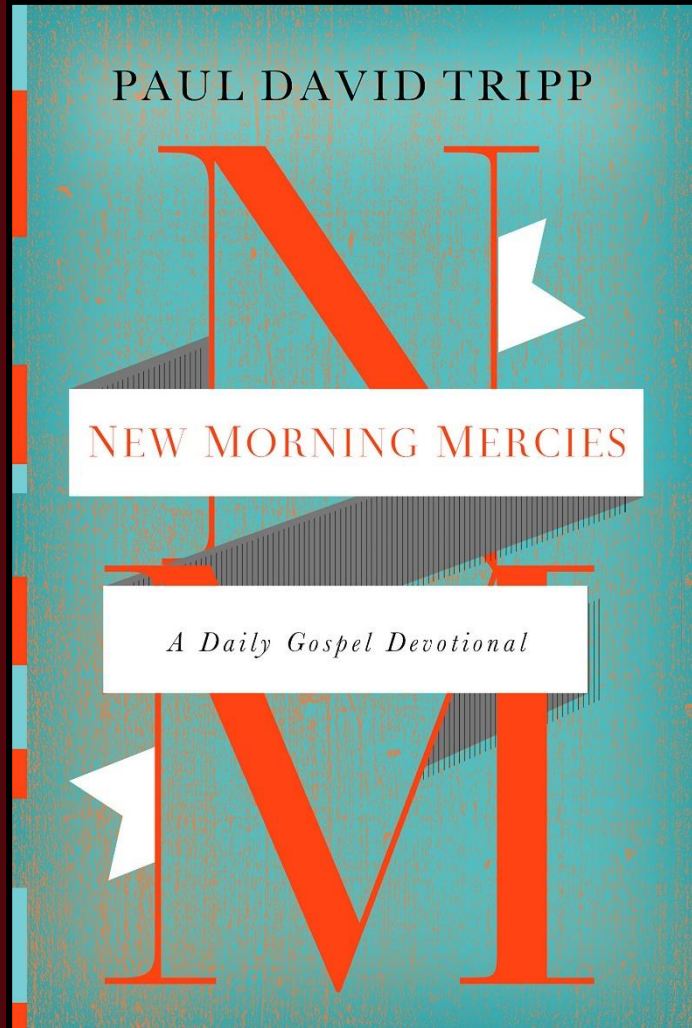
*May it be a light to you in dark places
when [not if] *all other lights go out.**

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So what should we do when
all light seems to go out?

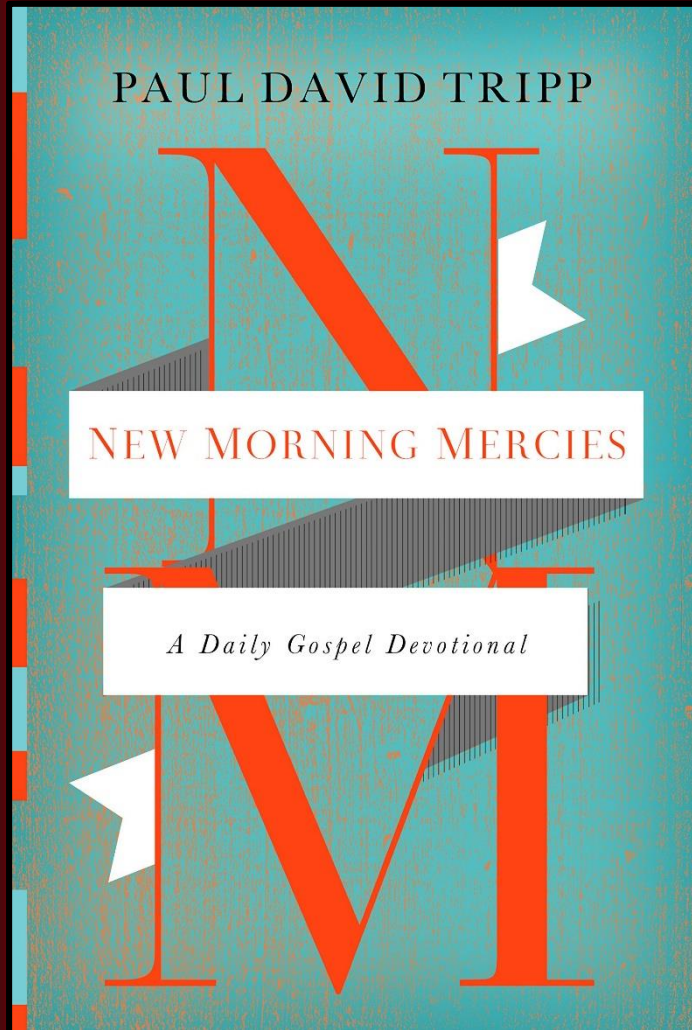
Pray and Preach

Absence of God's Light



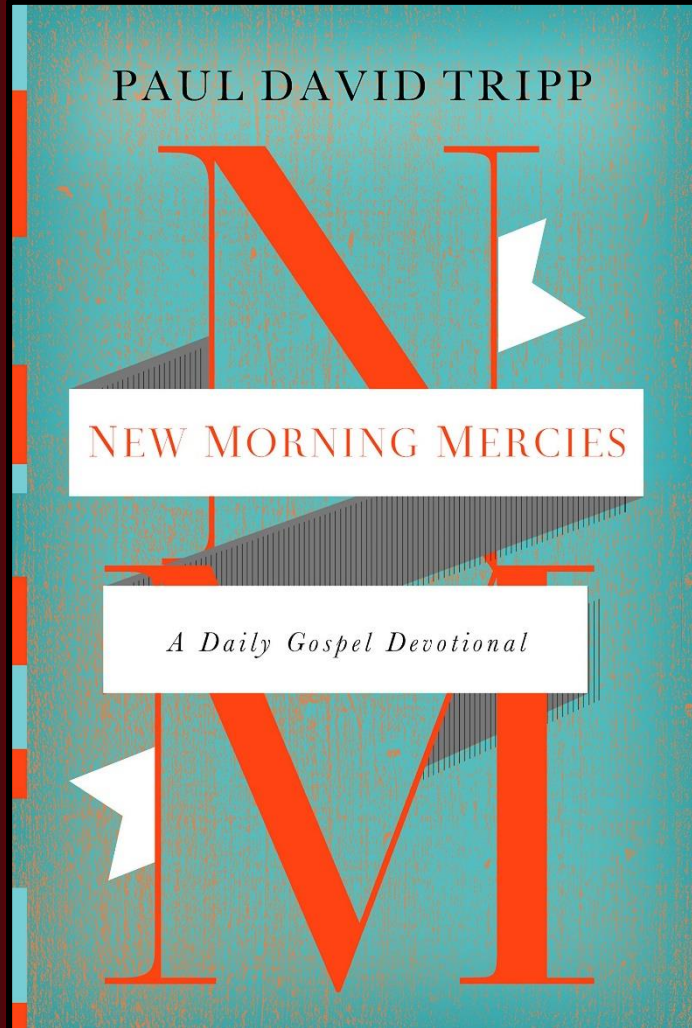
Pray.
...with
transparency.

Absence of God's Light



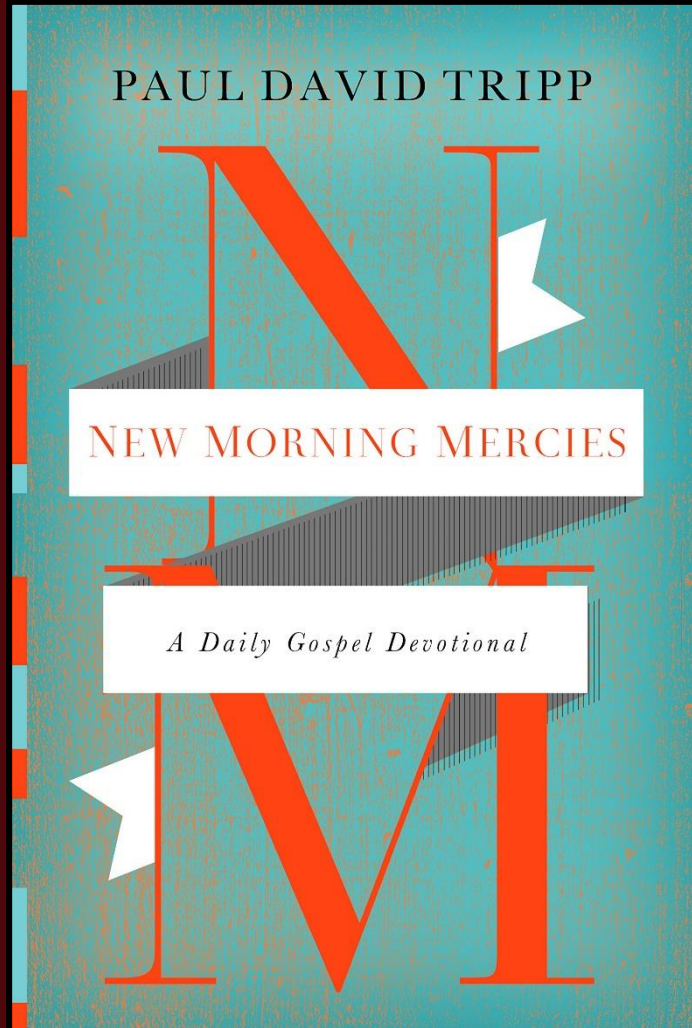
Prayer is recognition that on this side of eternity there is a war between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of _____ .

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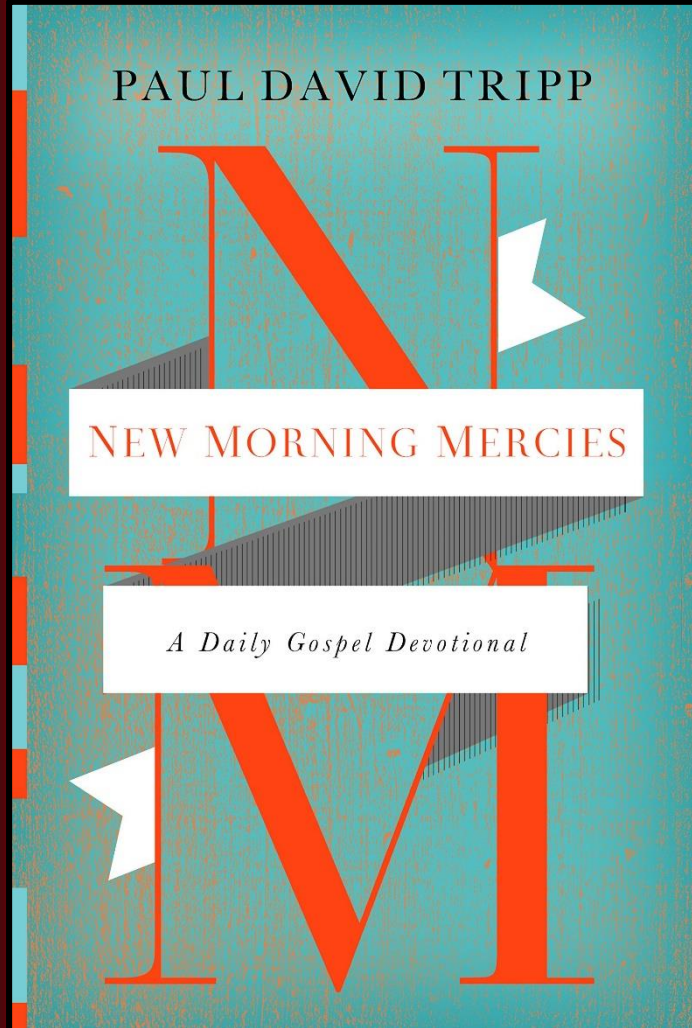
Prayer is recognition that on this side of eternity there is a war between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of self .

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In prayer, you don't ask
God to endorse the
self-focused little dreams
of your claustrophobic
kingdom of one;

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rather, you commit your heart to the plans and purposes of God's kingdom and seek the grace to be part of what God is doing and not in the way of it [*creating shadow*].

Absence of God's Light

So what should we do when
all light seems to go out?

Pray and Preach

Absence of God's Light

I must preach the gospel
to myself every...

morning

circumstance

evening

compliment

temptation

gloom

conflict

shadow

blessing

darkness

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The Essence of Biblical Trust

A two-story house caught on fire.

The family – father, mother, several children – were on their way out when the smallest boy became terrified, tore away from his mother, and ran back upstairs...

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Suddenly he appeared at a smoke-filled window, crying like crazy.

His father, outside, shouted,

“Jump, son, jump! I’ll catch you.”

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The Essence of Biblical Trust

The boy cried, "But, daddy, I can't see you."

"I know," his father called,

"I know.

But I can see you."

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Isaiah 9.2

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.

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*Lift up the **light** of your face upon us, O LORD!*

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