

## To Ponder

### Learning to Walk in the Dark

By Barbara Brown Taylor

I still do not know what darkness means to someone who is blind, but I am beginning to understand that “light” has as many meanings as “dark.” There is an old prayer in The Book of Common Prayer that goes like this: *Look down, O Lord, from your heavenly throne, and illumine this night with your celestial brightness; that by night as by day, your people may glorify your holy Name.*

Among other things, this prayer recognizes a kind of light that transcends both wave and particle. It can illumine the night without turning on the lights, becoming apparent to those who have learned to rely on senses other than sight to show them what is real. This is the light the mystics see when they meditate in the night hours, picking up their pens in the morning to write down their revelations. It is the light Moses saw in the darkness on Mount Sinai, where the glory of God came wrapped in dazzling darkness. Dionysius called it “the unapproachable light in which God dwells.”

No one has described it better for me than Jacques Lusseyran, a blind French resistance fighter who wrote about his experience in a memoir called “And There Was Light.”

*I had completely lost the sight of my eyes; I could not see the light of the world anymore. Yet the light was still there. Its source was not obliterated. I felt it gushing forth every moment and brimming over; I felt how it wanted to spread out over the world. I had only to receive it. It was unavoidably there. It was all there, and I found again its movements and shades, that is, its colors, which I had loved so passionately a few weeks before. There was something entirely new, you understand, all the more so since it contradicted everything that those who have eyes believe. The source of light is not in the outer world. We believe that it is only because of a common delusion. The light dwells where life also dwells; within ourselves.*

At first, I thought he was speaking metaphorically or theologically, but as I continued to read, it became clear that he was also speaking literally of an experience of light that had nothing to do with his eyes.

## Reading

### John 1: 1-9

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

In Him was life, and the life was the **Light** of men. The **Light** shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to testify about the **Light**, so that all might believe through him. He was not the **Light**, but he came to testify about the **Light**.

The true **Light** that gives **Light** to every man was coming into the world.

## Sharing...

**a word...**

**a phrase...**

**a reflection...**



## **Song: In the Quiet**

*By Liam Lawton*

When leaves are falling,  
and the branch is bare,  
winter is calling and chills the  
silent air.  
when the moon is covered,  
the shadows of the night,  
Know that I am waiting to call  
you to the quiet.

### *CHORUS:*

*Be still oh be still,  
for I am your God,  
Be still now and listen and  
you will here my word.  
Be still oh be still,  
deep within your life,  
For you will find me,  
in the quiet.*

When storms are hurting,  
and they don't know why,  
when hearts are broken,  
children have to cry.  
when prayers are spoken,  
late into the night,  
you will find your answer,  
if you come into the quiet.

### *CHORUS*

When days grow longer  
and the sun so shines,  
when hearts are stronger  
and hope becomes or sign,  
leave the past behind you,  
walk into the light.  
You will know my healing  
when you come into the quiet.



*The Light  
dwells  
where life  
also  
dwells*



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Prayer Leader

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Our prayer is characterized by silence  
**Be still and know that I am God!**

In that silence we listen for a new word.  
God is present in all our lives.  
God cares for us, and  
our life experiences are a source  
of deepening knowledge of God and self.

Inspired by God's Word in the silence  
we share from our hearts.