

The Tri-Cities Edifier

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A Lamp Unto My Feet

Ben Torno

In the middle of a Sunday AM Bible class a few weeks ago, the power to the church building suddenly shut off, plunging the auditorium into total darkness. Thankfully, due to the prompt action of our fast-walking deacons, the lights were back on quickly enough, and services resumed as normal. It's a good thing too, or it might have turned into Southside's first-ever "candlelight service."

We need light. Without it, we're at the mercy of our surroundings, stumbling in the dark, fumbling and bumbling into whatever obstacles cross our path. To avoid disaster, we need illumination, some sort of "guiding light." But which light? In our age, people often tout different and conflicting sources of "light." Some claim to navigate the world by the light of their political opinions or their philosophical views. Others claim to have some "inner light" that constantly guides and directs their actions.

What is the Christian's light?

In Psalm 119:105, David answers this question, saying, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." A hymn we often sing, Give Me the Bible, extends David's idea, exclaiming, "Give me the Bible, holy message shining, thy light shall guide me in the narrow way." In a world with many competing and counterfeit lights, Christians trust in God's word as the true source of light.

God's word directs us. Without light, we're directionless. If we can't see two inches in front of our noses, there's no point in plunging full speed ahead. Thankfully, God's word brightens what lies ahead; it shines a spotlight on our final destination. Like a good GPS, the Bible tells us where we've been and where we're headed. It directs our daily patterns of living: our work, our interactions with others, even our relationship with money. Without the light of the Bible, we'd have to chart those courses all by ourselves – quite an intimidating prospect!

God's word secures us. Fear of the dark is rational. Think about the prehistoric hunter walking through a pitch-black forest, unable to see the predator stalking him. Or think about the times we wake up in the middle of the night and stub our toe on that irksome coffee table placed just so perfectly in our path. The Bible, however, lights up obstacles and dangers in the way. Without the Bible's warnings, perhaps we wouldn't see the dangers of pride and wealth. Without the Bible's warnings, perhaps we wouldn't notice the flaming darts the devil sends to destroy us.

Even the mere presence of light is often enough to scare off predators and enemies. There's a scene in Home Alone where eight-year-old Kevin McAllister frantically turns on all the lights of his house in an attempt to scare off the hopelessly inept burglars, Harry and Marv. Kevin's simple strategy works beautifully; no bad actor wants to perpetrate a crime in broad daylight! Likewise, keeping "God's light on" is a remarkably effective strategy for warding off our spiritual enemies and temptations. Indeed, we usually run into danger when we haven't been living in the powerful light of God's word.

God's word exposes us. God's word also forces us to see ourselves clearly. Hebrews 4:12-13 tells us "the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart." In other words, the Bible isn't just an early edition of Poor

Richard's Almanac, some benign pamphlet dispensing quaint life advice. Instead, God's word is "living and active." It exposes our true selves. Whenever we read the Bible, we see ourselves in God's light. We see ourselves in the shoes of the Prodigal Son, the Lost Sheep, and the Unforgiving Servant. The Bible shines a giant spotlight on us, saying, "This is who you really are! You can't hide anymore!"

It's perfectly fine to apply King David's words in Psalm 119 to the 66 books of the Bible. But I think we can add a little more meat to this bone. The New Testament teaches that both the "word of God" and the "light of the world" are combined in a single person – Jesus Christ. He is the true lamp to our feet and light to our path. Whoever follows Jesus will have the light of life and will never walk in darkness. His example directs us; His redemption secures us; His teachings expose us. Be thankful for the Scriptures – they point us to the True and Living Word of God!

9/6/26 Southside Pasadena, TX

The Power of an Invitation

Roger Bruner

Brother Glenn L. McCullough was in the dairy business near Tupelo, Mississippi. Mr. A. D. Prince was a salesman from Memphis who regularly called on him for needed supplies. One day, Mr. Prince arrived at Brother McCullough's farm rather late in the afternoon. Mr. McCullough told him that he would have to come back the next day because there was a gospel meeting at the Gloster Street Church of Christ that night and he was getting ready to attend. Mr. Prince said that was fine and agreed to come back the next day. As he was leaving, Brother McCullough thought, "I should ask him to attend our gospel meeting."

Mr. McCullough invited the salesman to attend the gospel meeting. Mr. Prince agreed and attended three nights of the gospel meeting conducted by Jack Meyer. Even though he did not obey the gospel at that time, he eventually did, and later became an elder in the church.

Years later, both men contracted terminal diseases. Brother Prince went to visit Brother McCullough. Brother Prince said, "I want to thank you for inviting me to the gospel meeting that night. If it had not been for your invitation, I probably would never have heard the gospel and become a Christian. It was your invitation that made it possible for my family, my grandchildren, and me to become Christians. I will be forever grateful."

What might have happened to the Prince Family if Brother McCullough had reasoned, "I ought to invite this salesman to the gospel meeting, but I know it won't do any good"? There is power in an invitation to hear the gospel.

"Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.'" (Matthew 22:9).

3/16/26 Southside Somerset, KY