

I Am - Jesus is the Light in the Darkness
19 September 2021
Charlotte Hunn

Have you ever been a little bit scared of the dark? and when was that -
Have a little think and perhaps tell the person next to you.

So, have you ever been in the dark? Have you ever been a little bit scared of the dark? Of course, you have! Right from being young I can remember my nightlight - I loved this little bed-side lamp I've got of a crooked house with a family of rabbits inside saying prayers before bed. My children used it on occasions but I have to say I depended on it more than they ever seemed to probably because it was replaced by some glow in dark stars that you stick on the ceiling or one of those things that projects the universe all around a room - I'm sure children and parents among us know what I'm talking about. Darkness

Another occasion I can remember being a little bit fearful of darkness is when we went to Disney. Put your hand up if you've been on the roller coaster ride epically known as Space Mountain?
Yesss a roller coaster in the dark! It's certainly quite a thrill for the senses, not one I'd want to buy a photo of myself on if I'm honest, why do we put ourselves through such things! Darkness

And then just last winter, I was cooking dinner when we had a power cut, put your hand up if that's something you've experienced. It didn't come with the clunk of a lightbulb blowing, just silence...and it was the whole of our road. Oppressive deep darkness because even the street lights had gone out too and we had no idea how long it was going to be for. The power company said it was an unforeseen fault, it was going to be a few hours! The candles came out and we conserved heat in the house as much as possible. Not knowing how long it was going to be, we were a little fearful, darkness.

A few weeks ago we went on a day out to the Bluebell Railway - love steam trains and part of the journey is the Sharpthorne Tunnel which at 668 metres is the longest on a UK heritage railway in the UK. Now I think the children here this morning are attempting to rival that, building their own longest tunnel over the train track we have out this morning. So anyway there we are on the Bluebell Railway - now to start with we

were all excited, the dim weak lights come on in the carriage so you know it's coming and then we were in, windows open, roaring noise, embers flying past the window - it was ok to start with! But then it went on, and on and you begin to wonder if it was ever going to end?
Darkness

These moments of slight panic, moments of fear in darkness come back to us intermittently in life don't they. And we can all probably say the pandemic has felt the same as a long darkness. But today's bible verse can help us there for in the book of John chapter 8 and verse 12 of that chapter it says:

Jesus Is the Light of the World - hope

At this point in time Jesus is travelling and teaching and the people are hungry to learn, the Pharisees however are hungry to burn and set him up famously with passing judgement on the woman who has been unfaithful to her husband - we should stone her to death they say! The woman is in dark place indeed. When will it end?

New starts can be an exciting prospect but they're often accompanied by some anxiety of the new! And September is full of new starts for us all and perhaps this September there are more than ever before because of the last 18 months of enforced changes but now we set off for new nursery's, new schools, new playgroups, new secondary schools, new courses, new sixth forms, new homes for those moving away to start university, new jobs - all bring a degree of anxiety. How long will you feel the inevitable anxiety that each of them come with?

we're back to church and you wondered what was it going to be like We've been fixed working at home, we're going back into offices and work places some days, change that can be a cause for some anxiety and with it comes the use of public transport again, will it be like it was before, will I get used to it, all causes for potential anxiety and darkness

But Jesus is the Light of the World and verse 12 says

When Jesus spoke again to the people He said, "I, am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."

Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

and all we have to do is say yes, accept the invitation to follow Jesus and receive the light of Jesus' love, that gives light in our lives.

and it's not maybe

It's not maybe Jesus will bring light to my darkness to my anxiety, its certainty!

In a similar way It's not a maybe that I fearfully fell asleep with my bedside lamp but that the sun rose in the morning - it's a certainty
It's not a maybe Space Mountain roller coaster in the dark will come out in the light at the end - it's a certainty
It's not a maybe that the power cut will ever end, the engineers replaced the broken part and the power comes back on - it's a certainty and there's usually a light at the end of the tunnel!

But what if you're stuck in that tunnel, it's going on and on, Inevitable in life there are situations that won't change, the loss of loved one's, a long-term illness, these can feel like a long term darkness, stuck in the tunnel with no light at the end. but the train has a light, a light in the carriage that gives us comfort and bright light at the front that guides us in the right direction forwards. I find it helpful to imagine Jesus my source of light and comfort on the journey. And we can trust He is the light on the engine showing the way forward

and in these times of deep darkness it's time to give it to Jesus, follow Jesus, Jesus is the light with us on the journey

And we need to remember it's not a maybe that he's there, it's a certainty, and with that we can live through any darkness that life will inevitably throw at us.

Examples of situations we may be in where those same fears rise their ugly heads, new experiences and the unknown trigger excitement but also a big of anxiety

Bedside lamp

Train tunnel - bluebell railway, noise, flicker of light from embers

Space Mountain

Power cut

Light of the world

Interaction from audience

Sum up

When we go to bed the sun will rise for certain

When we go on a train through a tunnel, the end will come

When we get on theme park rides in the dark, it's a wild ride but the end will come

When we get a power cut, the great unknown of how long doesn't go away but until the power comes back, we have our candle to get us through.

Candle is a great way to focus on God, a way to calm all the noise of life and focus on the the One truth, the great I am, who is the light of the world.