



# Trust the Light

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Year B

2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23

Psalm 137:1-2, 3, 4-5, 6

Ephesians 2:4-10

John 3:14-21

### Gathering

*(A purple candle, a bible open to this week's gospel, a googled picture of the sun rising, and a flashlight rest on a table covered with purple cloth.)*

“God so loved the world...” This week we reflect on the amazing gift that God has given us in his Son in whom we can trust, that our life is meaningful and not absurd, that God is with us constantly throughout the day even though we are often unaware of this. We are challenged to trust in God and not let the darkness and the misdeeds of the world undermine our awareness of the gifts we have received. As we enter into the last half of Lent, let us put our faith in a living God who stands by us despite our faults and failings. Last week Jesus cleansed the temple and returned it to being a house of prayer. What was your experience of prayer this past week?

### Prayer

*(The candle is lit. Members pause to be conscious of the presence of God. After a suitable time, the prayer continues as follows.)*

Leader: Jesus you are truly the light in the darkness.

Help us to see our way through the murkiness of daily life. Give us the gift of trusting in you  
So that we commit ourselves to union with you.  
We wish to live our lives  
As you challenged us when you said, “Follow me”.

All: Amen.

*(Members join in singing, “In the Light“ found on the Internet.)*

## HEARING THE LORD’S GOSPEL

*(The scriptures are proclaimed aloud with a pause after each reading. Following a pause after the proclamation of the gospel, the leader invites members to name a word or phrase from the gospel that stays with them, but without any additional comment. Some may repeat what another has already said.)*

*When this naming is complete, the leader passes out copies of the scriptures of the week as needed. Pausing between them, the leader then poses these two questions: “What draws you to this gospel?” “Where do you resist this gospel?” The community pauses for a time of silent reflection. After about a minute, the leader invites members to consider the Reflection and Questions for the week. After a time for silent reflection, the leader invites members to re-arrange themselves in groups of three or four for sharing. The small groups move off so as not to intrude on one another.)*

## Reflection

When we say that we believe in someone, we are ultimately saying that we trust the person. We have faith that he/she has our best interests at heart and will stand by us through thick or thin. Believing in someone is significantly different than believing in a concept or formula like  $2 + 2 = 4$ , wherein we affirm the concept, but have no real personal attachment to it. When we *believe* in our spouse, our children, our friends, or especially, Jesus, we have our whole person involved— heart, head, memories, emotions, etc., not just the mind.

In today’s gospel we hear John saying that everyone who *believes* in Jesus will not perish, but have eternal life. Jesus is the “light” that God reveals. And if we *believe* in Jesus, then we know that God does not condemn

the world, but saves it. Throughout the scriptures God has revealed over and over again that we can trust him – from the story of creation, when God declared the world to be good; to Noah, when God revealed that the flood would not destroy life on the earth; to Moses, when God freed his people from slavery; to the prophets like Isaiah, who spoke to God’s love for humankind; and finally to Jesus, when God revealed that Jesus is truly the light we can follow and *believe* in. Having faith in Jesus, we can trust that our life is meaningful, that God is being revealed to us constantly through creation, through our life, through other people, through scripture and ultimately through Jesus.

As we approach Day Light Savings Time and light becomes more manifest than darkness, let us reflect on how God gives us the gift of transforming the physical light around us and even more, the spiritual light within us, the light of Christ, who shines in us and out of us to the whole world.

### Questions for Reflection and Conversation

- ◆ Recall an extended electrical outage and how isolating it was to be in the dark, not only at night time but also during the day. What was your response when the power came back on?
- ◆ How do you feel on an overcast day? How do you feel on a sunny day?
- ◆ What darkness in you needs Christ’s healing light?
- ◆ How deep is your trust in God? How aware are you day by day that God is with you?

### HEARING THE GOSPEL’S LORD

*(After about fifteen minutes of sharing in threes/fours, the leader re-gathers the community. Once back together, members pause for a moment. The leader then poses these questions: “What do you want to hold on to for yourself from this session?” “How are you/we being called to live in response to God’s word?” After a pause, the leader invites the community to a time of conversation. When this sharing is complete, the community moves to a time of prayer.)*

### Response in Action Suggestions

- ◆ Become a light to other people by volunteering to assist those who are

blind. Contact the Fidelco Guide Foundation, Inc. ([www.fidelco.org](http://www.fidelco.org)) to see how you can help.

- ◆ Learn about the work of the National Federation of the Blind (<https://www.nfb.org/>). Click on Resources for information.
- ◆ Make a donation to your local utility company fund for those who are unable to pay their utility bill and are at risk of having their lights turned off.

## Prayer

*(After a brief pause, the gospel or a portion of it, either of the other readings as appropriate or the responsorial psalm are proclaimed. The idea is to select a text that lends itself to inviting members to the time of silent prayer that follows. Following the proclamation, the leader poses these questions to the members: “What does Christ in his Spirit say to you now?” “What do you say to him in response?” The community pauses for a full five minutes of prayerful attention to God. A brief instrumental selection may be played during part of this time. After this time of silence, the leader invites members simply to mention a word or two, or a brief expression that captures what they hear Christ saying to them personally. The community receives this without additional comment. Following this sharing, the leader prays as follows on behalf of all.)*

Leader: Do not let love and fidelity forsake you;  
bind them around your neck;  
write them on the tablet of your heart.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Leader: Then will you win favor and esteem  
before God and human beings.  
Trust in the LORD with all your heart,  
on your own intelligence do not rely;

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Leader: In all your ways be mindful of him,  
and he will make straight your paths.  
Do not be wise in your own eyes,  
fear the LORD and turn away from evil;

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Proverbs 3:3-7

*(Members join hands and pray the "Glory Be." The session concludes with the exchange of a sign of peace.)*

## IN THE LIGHT

### Verse 1

I keep trying to find a life  
On my own, apart from You  
I am the king of excuses  
I've got one for every selfish thing I do

What's going on inside of me?  
I despise my own behavior  
This only serves to confirm my suspicions  
That I'm still a man in need of a Savior

### Chorus

I wanna be in the Light  
As You are in the Light  
I wanna shine like the stars in the heavens  
Oh, Lord be my Light and be my salvation  
Cause all I want is to be in the Light  
All I want is to be in the Light

### Verse 2

The disease of self runs through my blood  
It's a cancer fatal to my soul  
Every attempt on my behalf has failed  
To bring this sickness under control

Tell me, what's going on inside of me?  
I despise my own behavior  
This only serves to confirm my suspicions  
That I'm still a man in need of a Savior

### Repeat Chorus

### Verse 3

Honesty becomes me  
*(There's nothing left to lose)*  
The secrets that did run me  
*(In Your presence are defused)*  
Pride has no position  
*(And riches have no worth)*  
The fame that once did cover me  
*(Has been sentenced to this Earth)*  
Has been sentenced to this Earth

Tell me, what's going on inside of me?  
I despise my own behavior  
This only serves to confirm my suspicions  
That I'm still a man in need of a Savior

### Repeat Chorus 2x

*(There's no other place that I want to be)*  
*(No other place that I can see)*  
*(A place to be that's just right)*  
*(Someday I'm gonna be in the Light)*  
*(You are in the Light)*  
*(That's where I need to be)*  
*(That's right where I need to be)*