

HOW TO WALK IN THE DARK

GETTING READY TO MEET THE BRIDEGROOM



1

PSALM 119

- Your word is a **lamp** to my feet and a **light** for my path. (v. 105)
- I have taken an oath and confirmed it, that **I will follow your righteous laws.** (v. 106)
- I have suffered much; **preserve my life,** O LORD, according to your word. (v. 107)
- Accept, O LORD, the willing praise of my mouth, and **teach me** your laws. (v. 108)
- Though I constantly take my life in my hands, I will not forget **your law.** (v. 109)

2

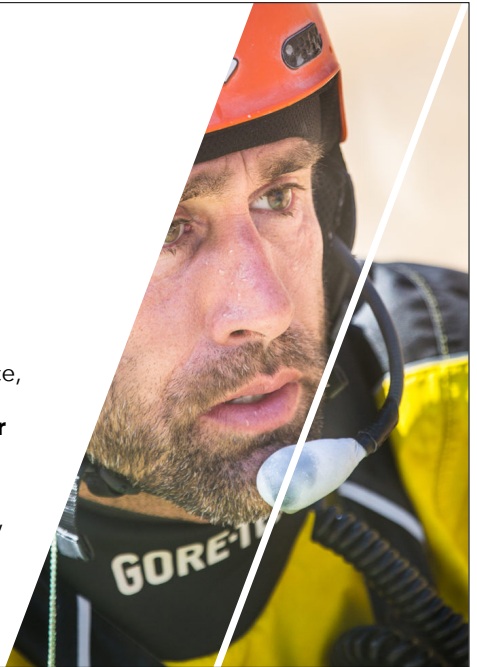
PSALM 119

- The **wicked** have set a snare for me, but I have not strayed from your precepts. (v. 110)
- Your **statutes** are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart. (v. 111)
- **My heart** is set on keeping your decrees to the very end. (v. 112)

3

INTRODUCTION

- **Erik Weihenmayer** is an amazing athlete and adventurer.
- He's kayaked all 277 miles of the **Colorado River** and through the Grand Canyon, which, according to one source, is "**considered one of the most formidable whitewater venues in the world.**"
- He has climbed the "**seven summits**" of the world, that is, the highest mountain peak on all seven continents.



4

INTRODUCTION

- He has climbed the face of **El Capitan** in Yosemite National Park.
- He has biked from **Hanoi** to **Ho Chi Minh City**.
- He has climbed **Mount Everest**.
- And after accomplishing this feat, he was featured on the cover of **TIME magazine**.
- Even more remarkable, **Erik Weihenmayer** is **blind**!



5

INTRODUCTION

- He's been this way since he was a kid.
- When he was only **15 months old**, he was diagnosed with **juvenile retinoschisis**.
- Doctors said he would be **totally blind** by age 13. And he was.



6

INTRODUCTION

- He tells the story of a descent off the face of **El Capitan**.
- He was with several other climbers.
- They had already spent one night in a **slung-enhanced bivouac** on the cliff, and were now trying to get off the mountain before nightfall.
- Unfortunately, **They failed**.



7

INTRODUCTION

- Night descended on them before they were able to finish their descent.
- **They were all in the dark**.
- So they turned to the one man who had the most experience climbing in the dark: **Erik**.
- He led them down and out safely.
- The **blind** leading the sighted.



8

THE DARK

- Our Scripture reading tonight is a series of quotations about the overriding importance of the **Word of God**.
- Each verse stands alone.
- But the psalmist says in verse 110 that ***“the wicked have laid a snare for me, but I do not stray from your precepts.”***
- So, the theme of tonight’s sermon is: **How to walk in the dark and keep our feet from falling.**

9

THE DARK

- Often when we’re in the **dark, we’re clueless**.
- For instant, when we are in **uncharted territory** without lights, signal markers, hints, landmarks, white roadside stripes, a flashlight, a smartphone or infrared night-vision goggles, it can be terrifying.
- And when we are terrified or afraid, we can become **immobilized** and don’t know what to do.
- Life can even come to a **standstill** where we don’t know whether we should turn to the left or turn to the right.

10

THE DARK

- If were on a **well-known path**, we might not need a light at all.
- Sometimes, the **light of the moon** is sufficient to guide us on a common, if narrow, pathway.
- This text tonight suggests that the **traveler** of Psalm 119 is both in the dark and walking an unknown path.
- He is also surrounded by the **wicked** who want him to stop serving God.

11

THE DARK

- This is why the **wayfarer** is so glad to have a **lamp** or a **light**.
- It **illuminates** where his feet are stepping, and it shows the path ahead.
- Now there are three important things to also consider when walking at night or in the darkness:
 1. Watch your step **directly in front** of you for there might be a rock, root, or children’s toy that might cause you to trip.
 2. Keep an eye **up ahead** because the terrain might be changing drastically, and
 3. Know **where** you are going.

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LOW & HIGH BEAM

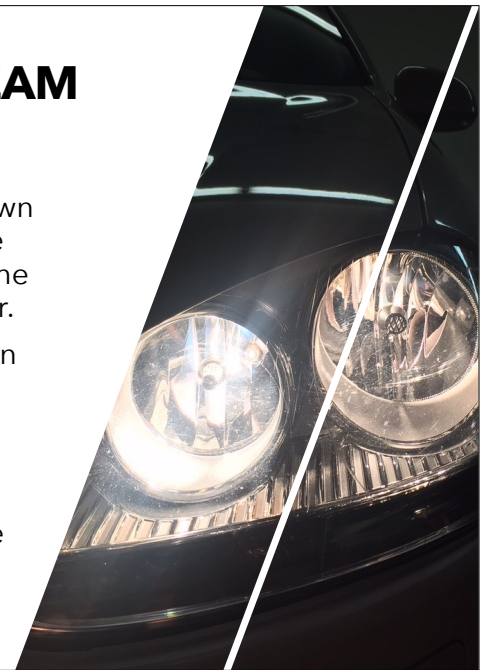
- When we're walking in the dark or especially driving down a dark road, we want to have **some idea** of what's ahead.
- In fact our **automobiles** are equipped for that important need.
- We have a **low beam** to see things right before us and a **high beam** to see things far off.



13

LOW & HIGH BEAM

- When we're driving down a **familiar road** and the moon is out, we don't the "**high beam**" on our car.
- However, when we're on unfamiliar territory and things are moving fast, we're going to need all **the light** we can get.
- Especially, when we are also in a **storm**.



14

LOW & HIGH BEAM

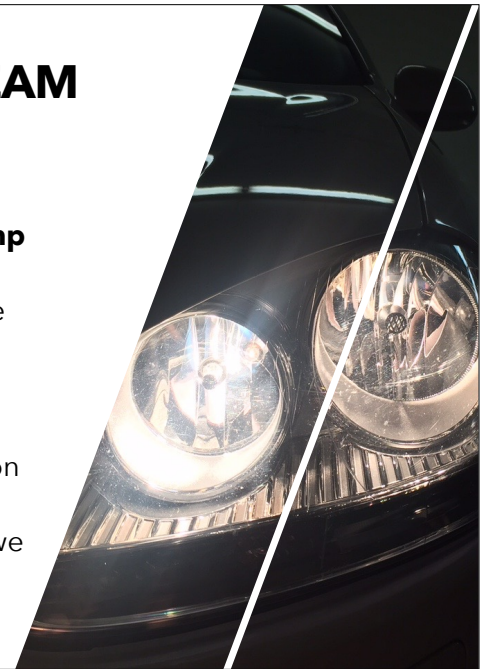
- This is when the **High Beam** on our cars becomes very important.
- It **shines** a lot further down the road where we can see things rushing toward us.
- If we see **danger** before it gets to us we have time to prepare.
- If we have time to **prepare**, we can deal with the **trouble** and possibly avoid a major catastrophe.



15

LOW & HIGH BEAM

- Since **evil lurks** in the darkness, we need a **lamp** for our feet.
- But when evil lurks in the **darkness** and life is moving ever so fast, and we're also in uncharted territory, that **Spiritual Lamp** of ours needs to be on its **high beam** settings.
- We get this **light** when we press in to God.



16

THE LIGHT OF LIFE

- 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."** (John 8:12)
- When we follow Christ and walk in his teachings, we grow in virtue and our **ability** to discern all things and so avoid **danger** on the road of life.
- If fact, through Christ, God has *rescued us from the dominion of darkness* (Col. 1:13), so that we can walk in his **wonderful light (High Beam)** (1 Peter 2:9).

17

FUEL FOR THE LIGHT

- The source of every **light** requires **fuel**.
- If we don't have **fuel**, we won't have light.
- If we don't have **light**, we can't see in the darkness.
- If we can't see in the **darkness**, we can get **hurt** or **led astray** regardless of our intent.
- So then, **wisdom** teaches us to always carry fuel for the fire so that we can have **light**.
- Common sense would tell us, to do otherwise would be **foolish**.

19

SONS OF THE LIGHT

- This is why the Apostle Paul says what he says to the Thessalonians. He says,
 - *Brothers, you are not in **darkness** . . .*
 - *You are all **sons of the light** and **sons of the day**.*
 - *We do not belong to the **night** or to the **darkness**.* (1 Th. 5:4-5)
- Does anyone remember what the context was to the above verses?
- *That **this day (day of evil)** should surprise you like a **thief**.* (1 Th. 5:4)

18

FOOLISH VIRGINS

- However, Jesus predicts this very thing in the Gospel of Matthew in the **Parable of the 10 Virgins**. [See Matthew 25:1-13]
- In this parable,
 - All ten virgins **fall asleep** while waiting for the bridegroom.
 - But only five have a **supply of oil** for their **lamps**.
 - When the bridegroom arrives the five without oil have nothing to light their lamps.
 - By the time they get oil, it is **too late** and the door is closed and it can't be reopened.

20

FOOLISH VIRGINS

- So then, what is the point of this parable?
- When the bridegroom comes it will still be **dark**.
- To see our way around and find the bridegroom we will need **illumination**.
- Therefore, **be ready** and don't forget to store up some oil.



21

VIRTUE

- So then, what is **virtue**?
- It is behavior showing **high moral standards**.
- **Virtue** can also be described as: goodness, righteousness, morality, integrity, honesty, faithfulness and trustworthiness.
- Things that were lacking in the person of the previous parable in Matthew, called the **Parable of the Unfaithful Servant**. [See Matthew 24:13-51]
- As many of you know, it didn't end well with that individual.

23

WISE VIRGINS

- We know that anyone who follows Christ will have the **"light of life"** and the ability to discern all things.
- However, according to Peter, if we lack this **one thing**, we will be nearsighted and blind.
- And what is this one thing?
- It is **virtue**.



22

VIRTUE

- According to the Apostle Peter, adding **virtue** to our faith does something that is very special.
- It helps us from *being ineffective and unproductive in your **knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ***. (2 Pet. 1:8)
- In other words, **virtue** produced by faith draws us close to God where we have the **"mind of Christ"** and can discern all things—even the **signs of the time**.
- Without it, we will be *tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their **deceitful** scheming* (Eph. 4:14)

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CONCLUSION

- While it is true, "**God's Word**" is a lamp for our feet, walking out "God's Word" shines the **high beam** on our path.
- Therefore, let us be like **Erik Weihenmayer**, who was able to see even in the darkness and negotiate his way around every obstacle in **total darkness**.
- Today, we are living in **dark times**. *Good is being called evil and evil good.*
- No doubt the bridegroom is on his way and will soon **judge** the earth in righteousness.

25

CONCLUSION

- So in the mean time let the **light of Jesus** grow in our hearts and add to **our faith** all goodness, faithfulness, and trustworthiness.
- *Do not be overcome by **evil**, but overcome evil with **good**.* (Rom. 12:21)
- If we do, we will **never fall** and receive a **rich welcome** into the **eternal kingdom** of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. [See 2 Peter 1:10-11]
- **Look**, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who **pierced him**; and all the peoples of the earth will **mourn** because of him. So shall it be! Amen. (Rev. 1:7 NIV)

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