



## ***Day One: Getting Off Track***

We talked last week about the choice that we have: Either to arise and shine, or to behold darkness.

**If we behold darkness, we going to get off track.**

Essentially, the darkness is the work of the enemy. In the same way that if we look at our sin, we actually strengthen sin (1 Cor 15:56), looking at the darkness instead of the light will strengthen what we don't want. To behold darkness is to take our eyes off the Lord, and place it onto the works of the devil.

Are we to live in denial of what's happening in our world? Absolutely not! But when we keep our eyes on the Lord, He alerts us to what we need to know and do at any moment. He will also keep us in a truthful perspective. But if we behold darkness, it will darken our entire perspective.

We need to challenge many long-held mindsets which have been preached from pulpits for generations. We can never be who God has called us to be while holding onto these mindsets, because they require us continually to behold darkness.

There have been many lies spoken, which have tried to steal the dream of God and replace it with satan's dream – of darker, and darker, and darker! We participate with furthering satan's dream when we proclaim darkness instead of light. We must align ourselves with the dream of God for this world, arise and shine, and proclaim truth and hope.

Here's how the body is beholding darkness in this time: Any time we are...

- Proclaiming the judgment of God; instead of proclaiming that everything is fully paid for and there is peace between God and man.
- Declaring that things are getting worse and worse; instead of declaring God's nature of increase which makes things better and better.
- Looking for the rapture as our escape strategy; instead of looking for His promised restoration; or
- Begging God for a revival He's already given us or excessively focussing on spiritual warfare as though it's our responsibility to win victory; instead of simply walking in the victory He's already won for us.



This week, we're going to shine light on the darkness and discover God's perspective as He contends to see His dream fulfilled on this earth.



Have you heard any of these things being preached from pulpits, or online?

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What affect do these perspectives have on your heart?

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## ***Day Two: #1 God is Not Judging Anyone***

Many may initially 'fall off their chairs' when I say this, but let's hear the whole story first:

**God is not judging this earth.**

I recently saw a post on social media, which said: *"The judgment of God may hit America as early as this summer!"*

This post is representative of many such opinions that there is an angry God in heaven, ready to dish out judgment to those who refuse to bow down to his name, or to those who engage in sin (which, I might point out, includes ALL of us – believer and unbeliever). And in one way, it's no surprise that people would have this perspective, as in the Old Testament, when men lived on this earth without the Holy Spirit in their hearts, God had no option other than circumstances with which to train, teach and guide people.

It was actually God's desire that we would never even know judgment, or the difference between good and evil. Once man ate of the fruit of the tree and lawlessness entered the world, however, it was an act of mercy for God to bring in the law to show us what the standard of righteousness was, - to stem the tide of growing sin while He strategized to bring Jesus into the earth. He also needed to show mankind that we could never fulfil the law and therefore reveal our great need for Jesus. This was to prepare our hearts to receive the righteousness offered by Jesus when He came.

However, we have to understand that Jesus changed everything about how God deals with mankind! The doom and gloom declared about the judgment of God on this earth, just doesn't mesh with the angelic words spoken to declare the birth of our Saviour: *"Peace on Earth, Goodwill Towards men"* (Luke 2:14).

Many people still believe that sin is the issue. But it's not. Sin is not the issue! Sin has been dealt with by Jesus. 2 Corinthians 5:17 – 19 & Colossians 2:14 tell us to know that we've been reconciled to God by Jesus, and that our trespasses are no longer being imputed against us.

***2 Corinthians 5:17 – 21 (ESV)*** *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of*



*reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

How can sin still be the issue in this world, when God made Jesus to BE sin?!?! God is not wringing His hands about our sin because He doesn't count it against us any more. He's far more interested in showing us who we now are in Christ Jesus! And after all, the one who knows that they're righteous, tends to sin far less than the one who's identity is 'I am a sinner', anyway! God's focus is on transformation – His dream being fulfilled on this earth - not judgment.

## *Soak Time*

Do you see God as judging the world or do you see bad events which happen on the earth as part of His present-day judgment? Why or why not?

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### ***Day Three: For the Whole World***

So now, let's look at another scripture which shows us that God is not judging anyone.

***Colossians 2:14 (NLT)*** *You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. He cancelled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross.*

How can you be judged for something that is no longer a part of your 'record'? People with a clean slate can't be condemned.

Some people argue that the issue with sin is not regarding believers, but unbelievers. That God is judging the nations because of the sin of the unbelievers and He's going to protect the believers but bring judgment on the nations themselves. Well, just in case you missed the highlighted text in 1 Corinthians 5 which states that *God is reconciling the world to Himself and is not counting their trespasses against them*, have a look at this:

***1 John 2:2 (NKJV)*** *[Jesus] is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

So we can see that the freedom from judgment of sin has been extended to the whole world – the unbelievers as well as the believers. Everyone is forgiven – some just don't know it yet! We can see that the issue of sin was settled on the cross. The only question is, whether or not we reject that settlement as fact for us today.

The consequences of sin are not the wrath of God. They are the natural outcomes for particular choices. If someone has illicit sex, they may get pregnant or contract an STD. If someone wastes all their money, they are not going to be wealthy. If they break the law, they may be fined or end up in jail. Everything bad that happens is not the judgment of God – it's the natural consequences of foolish actions and the body of Christ simply needs to take responsibility for our choices and stop blaming God for everything.

Yes, the Bible clearly states that there's a day of judgment - and God is not judging the world until that day! We are in the period of *Peace on earth, goodwill to men.*



So let's not behold darkness any more by participating with satan's strategy to do bad things in the earth and then cause people to reject the God 'behind it' by blaming Him for it all. Our God is a good God and He is love. We are ambassadors of that love, not His judgment.

## Soak Time

What does it mean to you to be an ambassador of God's love, in the midst of world events? How can you arise and shine with the influence that has been given to you, and declare God's true nature?

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## ***Day Four: #2 The Gospel Makes Things Better***

Another common teaching or expectation within the body of Christ, which causes us to 'behold darkness' is the belief (which is taught as fact) that 'things are getting worse and worse'. However, let me ask you: Has your life gotten better since YOU heard the Gospel?

The Gospel is GOOD news! 'Gospel' actually and literally means 'good news'. So how can the Gospel go out into the world in all the many places and through all the varied channels it is, and things not actually get better?!?!

The world only looks worse when our source of information is the news, or the fears of those around us. Un-renewed hearts will always partner with fear over hope – that doesn't make what they speak, true. We must also remember that the mountain of Media is not (yet) operating in the Kingdom of God, and is in fact controlled by forces of evil. We're going to take back that mountain, but as it stands at the moment, the media is declaring satan's storyline for this time. All those who align with this storyline are aligning themselves with fear and fear is definitely NOT from our God.

If we will just shut off the noise, we will hear Holy Spirit's voice in the secret place. And He will whisper His perspective to us, and speak life to us as He did for Caleb and Joshua, who saw the promised land as conquerable when every other leader of every other tribe, and every Israelite it represented, said it couldn't be done. God is the life giver!

So if we shut off the constant drone of fear coming from the world's media, and look at the full picture of what's happening in the earth, there's actually a very different conclusion to come to. In fact, things are NOT getting worse and worse. Because the Gospel makes things better and better, and it's been doing this since Jesus came to earth and gave us the good news in the first place.

Would you really have liked to have lived in the dark ages? With death outside of your front door, plagues wiping out millions of lives, and fear all around you all the time... and on top of it, the Holy Spirit shut up and the Word of God inaccessible? Not for me, thank you! I think the world has gotten better.

And think of places where missionaries have gone, and brought the Gospel. I remember hearing of some courageous missionaries who went to a place



where there was a barbaric practice of holding a festival in which infants were fed to crocodiles! They brought the Gospel to these people, the people received Jesus, lives were changed and the practice stopped. Is that not making things better? And accounts such as this could be told from places all over the world where missionaries have taken the Good News.

In Paul's day, worship to the gods included sex outside the temple with temple prostitutes. I'm sure glad we've moved past this one!

Even in the church, religion ruled more so than the Gospel. If we lived in John Calvin's day, people were regularly burnt at the stake or drowned – by the church!!!! Men died because they believed that we should all have access to the written Word of God (because it used to be locked away for only the priests to read), or for their belief in salvation by grace and faith (not works), or because they believed in baptism by immersion. Most of us in here today would be dead if we lived in this age and had the courage of our convictions! The church is nowhere near perfect, but I think things have gotten better, don't you?

On the other hand, let's also realise that there simply is no depravity being committed today that we cannot find in the history of the world. We don't like the rainbow agenda infiltrating our society? Think of Sodom and Gomorrah – it was so bad there, God had to destroy the cities! I've not yet had neighbours who were willing to send their daughter outside to be defiled in order to calm down a sexually crazed mob.

And think about abortion. It is not something new, that has only started happening in our generation. It's just that it's out in the open now. In the past, abortion was more of a 'backyard' practice. There has been prostitution and murder and every kind of evil, since the beginning of the world. Let's stop convincing ourselves that it's getting worse and worse, as though these social ills have never ailed us before! The first parents on the planet had a murderer in their family! These evils have always been there - but God has a plan to eradicate them!



## Soak Time

Have you had a mindset of the world getting worse and worse or better and better? Why?

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## ***Day Five: Caleb and Joshua Perspective***

So let's get some present day Caleb and Joshua perspective:

- Last century was the least bloody century, even with two world wars.
- In America, abortion rates are half what they were in 1990 and 2/3 of abortion clinics have closed since that time.
- In the same 4 months when Isis hit the world news, just one ministry saw 6 million Muslims come to Jesus.
- There are transformation stories evolving all over the world. Ed Silvano, of *Transform Our World* ([www.transformourworld.org](http://www.transformourworld.org)) is an incredible source of vision for what is REALLY going on in the earth. They have been painting a vision of transformation around the globe, and where the body is coming together and contending for their cities and nations, and they are seeing incredible transformations. For example, Ciudad Juarez, in Mexico, was not too long ago, known as the murder capital of the world. Yet when God ignited His people to believe for transformation, violent crime decreased by 93% and it is now a safe city.
- There are many other transformation examples in places like Uganda, Newark (New Jersey USA), Argentina, the Philippines and Hawaii, where the Kingdom of God is displacing the kingdom of darkness, and they are seeing extensive spiritual and natural change.
- Miracles are becoming more and more commonplace – Andrew Wommack Ministries (based in the USA) has seen 50 – 60 people raised from the dead. An American missionary in Mexico, David Hogan, has at the time of this writing, personally seen 28 people raised from the dead, and through others associated with his ministry, they have collectively seen over 400 people raised from the dead! Profound miracles are becoming more and more commonplace! As much as we honour men in the past like Smith Wigglesworth, these accounts are far higher in number, and yet there remains a mindset of spiritual 'greats' in the past and the 'good old days' of revival, as though it is not happening now. It is!
- Read reports from Christ for All Nations ([www.cfan.org.au](http://www.cfan.org.au)) if you want to get some Caleb and Joshua perspective – there are constantly miracles occurring! The blind are seeing, and the deaf are hearing; the paralytics are walking! Praise Jesus!



- This is happening in Australia, too. Danny Nalliah of Catch the Fire Ministries ([www.catchthefire.com.au](http://www.catchthefire.com.au)) and Rise Up Australia political party ([www.riseupaustrialiparty.com](http://www.riseupaustrialiparty.com)) has seen numerous miraculous healings, including the dead raised to life again. Just watch 'The Normal Christian Life' ([www.thenormalchristianlife.com.au](http://www.thenormalchristianlife.com.au)), which documents the body of Christ in Brisbane, praying for people on the streets and seeing incredible miracles happen. There is no place on earth where God is not moving. It's not just happening in third world countries – it's happening here, too!

We think we've gone backwards because we look at the book of Acts and compare, but our comparison is drowned in negative media. Every single miracle in the book of Acts is happening today. EVERY SINGLE ONE!!! Transformation of society IS happening today. If there was a book written today to contain all of these stories, it would read as excitedly as the book of Acts, maybe even more so.

So the question is, whose report are we going to believe?

The fact is that the kingdom of darkness is being displaced by the Kingdom of God and He intends for this to cover the whole world.

## Soak Time

Are you aware of the miracles and the transformation that is actually happening in the earth? If not, check out some of the links in this devotional and find out. What do you think and feel when you see these things?

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Do you need to change your sources of information, so that you can better arise and shine, and avoid beholding darkness?

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Another great source of Godly perspective about what's happening in the world comes through the prophetic voice of Johnny Enlow ([www.johnnyandelizabeth.com](http://www.johnnyandelizabeth.com)). His books, *The Seven Mountain Prophecy*; *The Seven Mountain Mantle*; and *The Seven Mountain Renaissance* are alive with hopeful perspective and we highly recommend them to you.