


Day 10: Tuesday

Our Light in the Darkness

Luke 1:67-79

 *Key Verse:* “By the tender mercy of our God,
the dawn from on high will break upon us,
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.” Luke 1:78-79

It was an ordinary Sunday morning. Several people were standing just inside the front door of the church when a young man walked in. The word *Hope* was stitched in white letters on the front of his navy blue winter hat. This led to several jokes about how wonderful it was that Hope just walked into the church! Then the man explained he was a graduate of Hope College in Holland, Michigan.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if hope could just walk right into our lives? Hope: that optimistic, trusting view of the future. Hope: that confidence in the days to come. Hope, which too often seems nothing more than an elusive and too often empty promise.

Hope, but a different sort of hope than the world points to, is what Advent is all about. Our Advent hope, our Christian hope, is not grounded in outrageous promises. Our Christian hope is grounded in the reality of the cross. Our hope grows from our knowledge that God has acted in amazing ways in the lives of people since the dawn of time. Our hope is grounded in the powerful reality that even now we know there are beautiful ways God is acting in the lives of people each and every day. Trusting in the past, celebrating the present, we can look to the future with hope-filled confidence. If God has acted once, surely God will act again and again.

So we wait and watch and prepare. We turn our eyes to the cross, watching the glorious light of Jesus rising in our lives. You see this light breaking in through the slats of blinds drawn across hospital room windows. You see the light streaming through stained glass church windows, in the brightness of the sun reflecting off newly fallen snow, and in a child's smile that lights up a room.

You see this light shining in the darkness wherever you see the promise of God's mercy and compassion alive and active in the world.

Still, we long for more, fully knowing God's kingdom is always just beyond our human abilities. So we pray, not that the world would suddenly become perfect, but that God would be active in our lives. What a beautiful prayer from Luke's Gospel: Guide our feet into the way of peace. Peace is a journey, not a destination. The way of peace is the path we travel in this life. These Advent days, may our feet find paths of peace and may hope light the darkness, as we sing of God's mercy that will "drive away the gloom of death and lead us into peace" (ELW 250, stanza 3).

Questions to Ponder

- Where do you see the light of God's kingdom shining in the world?
- When have you noticed God guiding your feet into the way of peace?

Prayer

Open my eyes, merciful God, that I may see the glory of your kingdom shining in the darkness of this world. Lead me each day to bring messages of peace to those in need. Amen.