

W2 | D5

NO MORE NIGHT

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One day we noticed that the trim around our door frames was especially dark. I assumed we hadn't dusted enough. Then we noticed discoloration on the concrete floors, and it hit us—there's mold in the house! This led to major upheaval in our lives. Then, within weeks, financial investments bottomed out, my wife was in a car accident, and I lost my job.

We struggled with anxiety about finances, worry that we would lose our home, and a sense of injustice. But mostly, we were sad. It felt like we were in the pitch black of night. When our pastor asked my daughter how she was handling everything, she replied, "We are grieving. We also know that sometimes you have to sacrifice things for the spread of the gospel. But we're also sad."

It's important to hold both of these realities in tension: grief over loss and hope in gospel gain. If we just brandish our hope, we won't experience the deep comfort of releasing our sorrows to the suffering Savior. But if we get mired in our grief, without a sense of what God is doing, we will spin out into despair.

In Revelation 21, John writes about our future with great hope: "The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there" (vv. 23–25).

Within this stunning description of life under the unwaning sun of God's glory is a hint of previous darkness: "and there will be no night there." In this brief phrase, John acknowledges the unwelcome darkness of suffering. Earlier he describes God's judgment wiping out a third of all lights in the sky (8:12). The exiled apostle writes about the glory of Christ with a profound sense of how dark things can get. Yet he knows the night is on notice.

One day, there will be no more night. Life will be so peaceful and safe that the protective gates of the city will never need closing. There will be no threat of loss, no pain of grief, no more injustice. Only light.

The good news is that light can break into our lives now. Jesus' undiminished glory illuminates our present path like a shaft of light in the darkness. If we trust him with our heartaches and step out to follow him, he will lead us into the light of the eternal city. While this doesn't immediately resolve the tension between grief and hope, it does diminish the darkness of night.

Another daughter had strep and was confined to the house for several days. Toward the end of the week, we decided to go outside together. As we stepped out into the warm sunlight, she said, "Daddy, the light hurts."

I replied, "That's because you've been in the dark so long. Once you get used to the light, you'll see it's a beautiful day."

Coming out of the darkness can be painful, even scary, but as we step into the light, our eyes adjust to take in the brilliance of Jesus, who brings us unique comfort and hope. ✨

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