

## Three Lights for Living

- ✓ **Flashlight** (vv.21-26)
- ✓ **ER LED** (vv.27-32)
- ✓ **Spotlight** (vv.33-37)

In the name of Jesus, the Light of the World, dear fellow disciples, reflectors of His light:

Imagine flood warnings are out but you need to get somewhere. There's a railroad bridge with the roadbed narrowing beneath. You stop because the water is obviously flowing under that bridge. A foot of water can float your car; a few feet can stall it out and drown you. But a friendly policeman is there waving everyone on. Roll down the window, "You sure it's not too deep." "Ah, you'll be fine. No problem." Unfortunately, the curve just beyond and out of sight is under several feet of water. You join the crowd floating away in the flood. Bad police, false preachers – any difference? Your eternal soul.

Fortunately, God does not lie. Jesus says, "*The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.*" (Luke 19:10 EHV<sup>1</sup>) Why choose your own way or blindly follow blind guides who just wave you on? Crowds came to Jesus for clarity. He is the Light that pierces the darkness of sin and unbelief to bring you to God's joy and peace. Jesus lovingly turns on **Three Lights for Living**. First of all...

### ✓ **Flashlight** (vv.21-26)

Is it an age thing? A gender issue? Or do boys and girls, men and women of all ages just love flashlights? Wasn't it exciting when the Maglite came out? The focused beam is great, but the heavy housing made the Maglite a great safety club at night if needed. Darkness is danger for body and soul.

Apparently, a broad beam on the Fifth Commandment is too dim. Most people see, "*You shall not murder,*" and figure, "I'm good. Haven't shot anyone yet." Then Jesus focuses the high beam of God's magnificent **Flashlight**: "*But I tell you that everyone who is angry with his brother without a cause will be subject to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, 'Raca' [air head, numbskull] will have to answer to the Sanhedrin [high court]. But whoever says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of hell fire.*"

You mean God does not grant us "free speech"? Worse than that, my fellow sinners, God does not even allow sinful thoughts and feelings. Hatred is murder in the heart. Calling someone a "*fool*" in Biblical terms is way beyond *stupid* to *grossly immoral*. Hell must be a real place of *fire*. **Flashlight** ✓.

Apparently, God's Son loves you more than your money. "*So if you are about to offer your gift at the altar, and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother. Then come and offer your gift.*" Reconciliation is more important than offerings. *Quickly* or else you fall into the prison of guilt. Husbands and wives may lose sleep coming to the cross and reconciling with God and each other. God's grace wants you free from darkness, danger, and the death of unconfessed sin. **Flashlight** ✓.

### ✓ **ER LED** (vv.27-32)

Have you replaced your fluorescent tubes yet in the basement and garage? Recent discovery for me: Fluorecents grow dim in time. Some of you don't have to imagine because you're busy saving lives from the ER to the OR. It's so much brighter in surgery these days, isn't it? **ER LED** ✓.

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<sup>1</sup> EHV ~ *Evangelical Heritage Version* (<http://wartburgproject.org>) © 2019. NPH: 800-662-6022; also Amazon-Kindle.

Here's a major surgery none of us want but all of us need. God's **LED** pierces every private place in your person. Some married folk try to make excuses like, "Just because you already ordered doesn't mean you can't look at the menu." God turns up the lumens on the Sixth Commandment through His Son: **"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery,' but I tell you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart."** Lust is the sin that feeds on the Internet where women are falling into sin too. Bate...click...filth blinds your eyes as it grabs your heart. Thank-you, Great Physician, for your bright skill with your **LED**. Do I need surgery?

**"If your right eye causes you to fall into sin, pluck it out and throw it away from you. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. If your right hand causes you to fall into sin, cut it off and throw it away from you. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell."** 2000 years of New Testament history since Jesus lived...died...lives again for you – no report of Jesus' followers gouging out an eye or cutting off a hand to avoid hell. We get Jesus' point bright and clear: *Amputate sin from your life!* Joyful satisfaction with God in heaven is worth far more than any body part. Your eternal bliss in a glorified body meant enough for Jesus to sacrifice His own. He died for you and even for me. **ER LED ✓**.

**"If we walk in the light, just as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin."** (1 John 1:7 EHV) That's a sweet recipe, a bright roadmap, not just to avoid the pain and emotional violence of divorce, but to thrive in God's gift of marriage. **Walk in the light** with Jesus! He is so kind and caring that here Jesus reveals God's love for the victims of divorce too. As one faithful Christian said, "I know I could not have done anything to prevent my ex from divorcing me, but it still hurts. It's the shame." Jesus flips on the switch of God's bright love and healing kindness: **"It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' But I tell you that whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, causes her to be regarded as an adulteress. And whoever marries the divorced woman is regarded as an adulterer."** Obviously, God cares about our reputation in marriage too. At the cross: **ER LED ✓**.

### ✓ **Spotlight (vv.33-37)**

Anyone still under the delusion that you can escape the flood of sin if you just try hard enough? **"Whoever keeps the whole law but stumbles in one point has become guilty of breaking all of it."** (James 2:10 EHV) Drive 20' into a flooded road and start slipping 5' short? Still lost, aren't you?

God has to expose our self-satisfaction that ignores our own sin. Jesus was tested by self-righteous church leaders who caught a woman in the act of adultery, a capital crime under Moses' Law. Ignoring God's Word that spoke about the man being executed, they only brought the woman. If Jesus condemned her, He'd be in trouble with the Roman government. If He excused her, He'd break Jewish Law. Jesus told them, **"Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." ...They went away one by one, beginning with the older men. Jesus was left alone...and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, Lord," she answered. Then Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin anymore."** (John 8:7-11 EHV) **Spotlight ✓**.

"Is that the same mouth you pray with?" Our dormitory supervisors, a.k.a. *tutors*, used to call that out when someone swore. Jesus' half brother echoes our Savior in the epistle of James: **"Above all, my brothers, do not swear—not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. Just let your "yes" be "yes" and your "no" be "no," so that you do not fall under judgment."** (James 5:12 EHV) God wants His people as truthful as He is. So Jesus says that anything beyond "Yes / No" **"is from the Evil One."**

**God is love** to stop us and show the danger on the road ahead. And if we've already been lost in the flood, that why He came to seek and **"to save the lost."** In Jesus all the past is totally forgiven. Today is a new day of grace for grateful love to God and our neighbor. **Three Lights for Living** and you shine with joy and peace! Amen.