



**February 24, 2025**

### **DARK TIMES?**

We are living in very dark times. Changes — affecting thousands of people— are happening in break-neck fashion. Fear abounds. We, of course, keenly remember this kind of fear because we have just recently lived through a time when thousands of the people in our nation were dying from Covid. In both instances — then and now — we feel anxious, untethered, not knowing what tomorrow will bring, how we will cope, how our family members, friends and neighbors will cope — much less those we read about and hear about facing the threat of deportation, job loss, and more.

The title of these weekly missives could not be more true — FAITH MATTERS. Keeping the faith matters. It is perhaps the only thing keeping us afloat in these deeply troubled and troubling times.

For me that means being in God's Word, not occasionally, but continuously. What can I glean that will get me through today's dire news cycle. What will give me hope, bring me peace, allow me to be the beacon of light God asks me to be.

Today I turn to the opening of John's gospel where he writes about the "preexistent" Christ. Imagine that! Christ — here way, way, way before you and I and even John came into being. And what does he tell us about this preexistent Christ? He tells us that — "*Life itself was in him, and this life gives light to everyone. The light shines through the darkness and the darkness can never extinguish it.*" (John 1:4-5)

Unlike the authors of the other three gospels, John is way less concerned with telling us about Jesus' actions, and way more concerned with what his actions tell us about him. Jesus — on the pages of John's gospel — is truth, love, the good shepherd, the door, the resurrection, the life — but first and foremost, he is the LIGHT.

We — you and I — are fellow travelers, living in the light. We see this light in the glistening white snow that covers our hills and the brilliant blue sky that on occasion causes it to sparkle. We hear it in the bird song that lifts our spirits when we venture outside to listen to it. We feel it on a Sunday morning when we greet a familiar smiling face and say to one another, "the peace of Christ be with you." We taste it in the soothing comfort foods we ladle from crock pots and casseroles.

Without a doubt we are living in very dark times. But, we cannot forget, that we are people who through God's grace have seen the light. Let us rejoice in it. Let us share it with those around us. Because this light — "shines through the darkness and the darkness can never extinguish it." Praise God!

~Written by Bonnie Garbrecht

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