

Luke 11:33-36
You Wanna See?

Main idea: God revealed Himself through Jesus. When we've seen Jesus, we've seen the Father. And perhaps the most remarkable thing about all that is the unbelievable way in which Jesus revealed to us His glory.

Don't you just hate when you're late for work, or late for something, and you can't find your keys? So you start frantically searching all over your house, looking in every place that you can possibly think to look, on the kitchen table, in the bathroom, on your nightstand, and just about the time that you're about to pull your hair out, you realize that your keys have been in your hand the whole time? Has that ever happened to you?

Well, imagine that you misplaced your keys, and you were trying to find your keys in the dark. It's so much harder to find what we're looking for in the dark, and therefore it's so much easier to find what we're looking for in the light. But what if the thing you're looking for is the light itself? When it's dark, it's impossible to find the light, because there doesn't appear to be any light, but when it's light, it's easy to find the light, but only if you're looking for the light, and you're not distracted by looking for something else.

So much of our lives, we seem to be searching for something. For some elusive quality of life that always seems to just slip from our grasp. We're searching for happiness, success, purpose, or love. And sometimes we think we find such things, but even when that happens, after a period of time, we often feel like we lose them and need to find them again. Well, maybe without even realizing it, by searching for any of these things, we're actually searching for Jesus.

Luke chapter 11, starting in verse 33.

"No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a basket, but on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light. Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. Therefore be careful lest the light in you be darkness. If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, it will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light." (Luke 11:33-36)

Father, thank You for revealing Yourself to us through Jesus. Help us to see You, Your light, and live in Your light, and reflect Your light to others, that they, too, might give You glory. In Jesus's name, Amen.

When Abby was in college, she worked as a Applied Behavioral Analyst to help children with autism learn to function in a classroom setting. You see, it's often difficult for those with autism to relate with others and express themselves appropriately. Depending on the type and severity of their autism, they often resort to mumbling to themselves or quoting various things they've

heard in the past. That was the case for one little boy that Abby worked with. He loved to quote songs and tv shows, especially VeggieTales and songs he heard at church. In fact, he rarely if ever said anything without it being a quote from something he had heard before.

One day, as Abby was working with him, he had something in his hands, and Abby asked him what it was, and the boy responded, "You wanna see?" And Abby's thinking, "This is amazing! He responded perfectly appropriately to me! After all this time, he's finally getting it! This is a breakthrough!" And a second later, the boy repeated it, "You wanna see? You wanna see Jesus lifted high!"

Well, it's important to see Jesus lifted high. To see Him high and lifted up. Because when we see Jesus this way, He helps us to see everything more clearly. He's like a lamp that we put on a stand. Verse 33.

No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a basket, but on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light. (Luke 11:33)

Now, we don't use oil lamps as often anymore, so let me put it like this. No one turns on a light in a room, and then immediately tries to hide the light. You don't turn on a light and then cover the light with black spray paint to cover up the light. Not only would that waste electricity, it's completely opposite of the reason you turned on the light in the first place. When you turn on a light, you want to be able to see. And you want to give everybody else who enters the room the ability to see.

The same is true of Jesus. When you trust in Jesus, you trusted in Him because He truth, and helps you to see the truth about yourself and the world. Jesus is the light, and by Jesus, we can see everything clearly.

But Jesus took this illustration a step further than we might have in order to make a point. If we were telling the story, we would have ended with the word, "see," like this: "No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a basket, but on a stand, so that those who enter may see." So that we can see the room. So that we can see things. When you turn on a light, you do so in order that you and everyone else in the room can see everything that's in the room. The light illuminates the room so that you would not be in the dark. The light itself isn't the focus, but only a means to get what you want.

But when it comes to Jesus, He is the focus. So He says, "No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a basket, but on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light." In His illustration, Jesus tells us that the most important thing that we should all want to see and show others is the light itself.

Because Jesus is the light. He's the light of the world. And not only does He illuminate our darkness so that we can see the truth about ourselves and the world, but He shines primarily so that we can see Him, and show Him to others.

So when we see Jesus, we should let that light shine! Jesus was talking about Himself, His ministry, and comparing it to a lamp. If you recall, last week we saw how we should not be enamoured primarily by His signs, but by Jesus Himself. He's the light of the world, the Bright Morning Star. And the thing is, His glory shines continuously. Because when He came to the earth, He never kept who He was a secret. He never hid His light. He let Himself shine, so that all who saw Him might see the light of His glory and truth, and thus share Him with everyone who is still in darkness.

So it's really strange when we don't. He reveals Himself to us, He loves us, He forgives us, and then we conceal Him, hiding Him in our cellar or under a basket, not putting Him up on a stand, not displaying His light for all to see, like we're ashamed of Him. Like we don't really think He is light.

Why do we do that? Well, perhaps it's because we still think we can find light in something else. Like you can find happiness purely in your job, or in your family, or like you can find love purely in another person. And don't hear me wrong, these can be wonderful gifts from God, but they are not the light.

Verse 34.

Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. (Luke 11:34)

If we're discontent, feeling like we're missing something, even as believers, our problem is not that we don't have Jesus, but rather that we're still looking for light in dark places. It's like you're frantically searching for your keys all of your house with the lights off, when all along, your keys are in your hand. If your eye is bad, that lens through which you see all of the world, if that's bad, then instead of looking for the true light, we look for things that we think will pass for light, even if they are truly darkness.

You know, we have this problem called sin. And sin affects every aspect of our being in some way. And although we have God's grace upon us, sin still clings to us, and it clouds even our desire to rejoice in the light.

And if that's true of us who believe, just imagine what it's like for those who do not yet believe. God has opened our eyes to see that Jesus is the light, and yet sometimes we still prefer darkness. But for those who have never trusted in Jesus, all they know is darkness. Everything they love, everything they desire, everything they consider to be light, and good, is not Jesus, and will not lead to eternal life. Verse 35.

Therefore be careful lest the light in you be darkness. (Luke 11:35)

How can the light in you be darkness? Well, if you're blind. If you're blind, there is no light, because you don't have eyes to see, or at least they're not functioning properly. So the light in you is darkness, because there is no light.

Thomas Edison is credited for inventing the light bulb. But did he create light? No, he didn't create light, he created the light bulb, which, in a way, is a testimony of light. Inside a lightbulb is a coil of tungsten filament, which when heated with electricity, will begin to glow and produce light. If the tungsten filament were to be exposed to the oxygen in the air, it would immediately burn out, so the glass enclosure of a lightbulb simply harnesses the light and allows the light to shine. It's a testimony to the light. And when we talk about letting your light shine, what we're really saying is that we should be a testimony to the light, who is Jesus.

Well, I watch another Thomas Edison on youtube, except he goes by Tommy, and he's blind, and he makes videos about what it's like to be blind. And in one of his videos he described the biggest source of light that we know.

[video: Tommy Edison]

People wonder a lot about my perception of things that sighted people see all the time. You know, big giant things that I probably couldn't even get my head around.

The sun maybe. Like the sun, I understand, is what? 93 million miles away from earth, right? You know? First off, I can't imagine 93 million of anything. And then it's funny, like a cloud could come and block it, you know, just in your backyard, or wherever you are. But how come nothing's ever come between it and the planet? Wouldn't that be the easiest thing in the world?

I guess it's like a ball, right? It's like a big, what, like a yellow ball of fire? Or red ball? I don't know. What color's the sun?

So like, sunrise, or sunset, I can sort of feel the sun start to hit me and start to be warm again. But like, that's it. And conversely, at the end of the day, I can feel it go away. But people say it's so beautiful, you can see all these colors, and I don't even know what. See, there's all these things that I know about, but I just don't know what they are.

For Tommy, the sun isn't something he can see, but something he can feel. He may not be able to see the sunrise or sunset, but he can feel them both. He can feel the warmth of the sun on a hot day, and the absence of the sun on a cloudy day. So my question is this: does Tommy Edison live in darkness? In some ways, yeah! But in other ways, no. Because even if he can't fully comprehend the sun, he's still very aware of its presence, maybe even more aware of it than we who see it and take it for granted.

Here's my point. Even for those who are spiritually blind, there's still a glimmer of hope. Even when things seem completely dark, the light is still there, waiting for you to feel His presence. Even when you feel like happiness, purpose, and love have slipped through your fingers, don't lose hope, because Jesus is right there beside you. He is the hope. Draw near to that hope. Approach the light, that's called sanctification, so that as you come to know Jesus more, you love the light more and more.

Because it's tempting not to love the light, that is Jesus. It's tempting merely to say that you love the light, and then secretly, or maybe even not so secretly, continue to love darkness. When our greatest joys come from sin, we continue to love darkness. When we say we believe in Jesus, but don't obey Him, we continue to love darkness. When we talk like Christians, but walk just like everyone else the world, we may even rationalize how our lifestyle is okay, but if we turn away from the light, we walk in darkness. So be careful lest the light in you be darkness.

Because when you come to love Jesus, you won't want to live in darkness, in sin, but rather fully in His light.

Verse 36.

If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, it will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light." (Luke 11:36)

So, knowing that even after we come to trust in Jesus, we still sin, how can we live so that our whole bodies are full of light? Number one, admit that without Jesus, you are in darkness. You are full of sin. Number two, trust in Jesus, and believe that He brings you into His light, because He is light. He saves you by His grace. And number three, live in His light, that is, obey Him out of love, because He first loved you.

You see, as believers, we shouldn't just want to see the light once in awhile, say on Sunday mornings, or occasionally when you pray before a meal, but you should want to live in His light every moment of every day, reading His word daily, praying without ceasing, not out of religious duty, but because Jesus is light and beauty, and love, and you should want no part of you to be dark, but wholly in the light.

That is possible. We can get a glimpse of it here, but we'll fully see it when God takes us home. But only if we love the light. That is, if we love Jesus, who is the light.

I was talking with someone not long ago about God, and he refused to believe in God without more evidence. And I told him, look around, the evidence is all around us. Love, beauty, goodness, these are all from God, and they don't make sense without God. He loves you. But he insisted, "I need more evidence! I want to see it for myself! If God were real, then He'd show me!"

But the thing is, the greatest evidence for God is Jesus Himself, nailed to the cross, demonstrating the love of God. And it's as if, before even going to the cross, Jesus said, "You wanna see? You wanna see a sign? You wanna see proof of My love? My light? Then see Me, Jesus, high and lifted up! Shining in all My glory! And don't cling to your darkness, but live in My light, by trusting Me to forgive you of your sin, for which My body is broken and My blood is shed."

And yet, we prefer to cling to our darkness. We exchange the glory of God for worthless substitutes, and don't even realize what we're missing. So we continue to do it, until God Himself opens our eyes.

Trevor read it just before our praise songs. Isaiah 42:16-18:

And I will lead the blind in a way that they do not know, in paths that they have not known I will guide them. I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground. These are the things I do, and I do not forsake them. They are turned back and utterly put to shame, who trust in carved idols, who say to metal images, "You are our gods." Hear, you deaf, and look, you blind, that you may see! (Isaiah 42:16-18)

You see, God opens the eyes of the blind! If you want to see, ask God to open your eyes.

When we trust in Jesus, we find that He takes our darkness with Him to that cross. He takes our pain. He takes our tears. He takes our brokenness, our sin, our autism, our blindness, our cancer, and all infirmities, and heals us, so that when we enter His heavenly kingdom, we're whole.

Jesus is the light. Only because of Him can we truly see. So do you wanna see? Simply believe the gospel.

Because, you see, when God sent Jesus, He didn't put Him in a cellar, or under a basket, but on a stand. On a tree. On a cross, and He raised up that cross so that all would see Jesus, high and lifted up. Revealed in all of His glory, so that all who saw Him would see the light.

And when you have eyes to see, you will see His light, and your whole being will be in the light. But if you refuse to see Jesus, you will continue to live in darkness. You'll still be searching for happiness, success, purpose, and love. You'll still be searching for Jesus, even though you've rejected Jesus. But without Jesus, happiness, success, purpose, and love are just more forms of darkness. Your greatest light is darkness, because you've rejected the true light, who is Jesus.

But if Jesus is your light, then you'll begin to live in the light. You won't be able to keep it to yourself. You'll desire to serve Him, and tell others about Him. You won't be able to keep silent. Like Peter and John said in Acts 4 when they were questioned by the Jews,

"We cannot stop speaking about what we've seen and heard." (Acts 4:20)

Like Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians,

"The love of Christ compels us!" (2 Corinthians 5:14)

Like David wrote in the Psalms:

You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; you have loosed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness, that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever! (Psalms 30:11-12)

Is that the cry of your heart? Now, I understand that actually sharing the gospel isn't always that simple. We have fears of inadequacy, and we don't want to get it wrong, and we don't want to burn bridges, I get all that. But do you at least want to share Him, but you see Him as the light and the truth? Do you long for people to ask you about the hope that's in you so that you can respond, "You wanna see? You wanna see? You wanna see Jesus lifted high?"

Because if you don't at least want to share Him, maybe you haven't yet seen how good He is. So to you, I ask, "Do you wanna see Jesus lifted high?" Because Jesus said this in John 12:

"And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." (John 12:32)

He was talking about His death on the cross for you. I'm convinced that if you really see Jesus and His love for you, you can't help but be drawn to Him. Jesus loves you so much that even while you disregarded His commands, cursed His name, and nailed Him to the cross with your sin, He died for your sin, and from the cross, cried to the Father, "Forgive them, they don't know what they're doing."

Jesus loves you. He is the way, the truth, and the life, and He loves you. So rest in His love.

Jesus, we admit that we have lived in darkness. We were blind to our sin, and we even chose this blindness over You because we loved our sin. But now we see that You are light and love, and You invite us into Your light. So we surrender to Your love. Help us to walk in Your light, because by Your grace, we see that You are good. In Your name, Amen.