

# Harvest/Remembrance

## dark and light

### AIM

To provide some resources for meditation and prayer on the theme darkness and light

### INTRODUCTION

In the northern hemisphere the autumn signals a time when the day length shortens and the nights are said to 'draw in'. It gets darker earlier until at the mid-winter point in December the darkness is the longest part of the 24 hour day. This change in the pattern of day and night has been a part of human life for generations and a source of inspiration to Christian (and other) spirituality and prayer. As the winter approaches again you might like to spend sometime alone or in a small group, thinking about this theme, using some of the suggested Bible readings and prayers and activities to go with them.

### Bible readings:

A slow and careful reading of any of these Bible passages can be a good preparation for prayer:

Genesis 1.1-5; Psalm 139:7-12; John 1:1-5

### Prayers from darkness or light

Here are two very different prayers from the same writer. One is a prayer from the darkness and one is a prayer from the light. Spend some time thinking about them or discussing them in a small group or with another person.

- How do you think the writer felt when praying these prayers?
- Can you think of times when you could have prayed these prayers?

### 1. A PRAYER FROM THE DARKNESS

O Lord –

everything looks dark right now!

I don't like it!

Do you realise that God –

I DON'T LIKE IT!

Do you care?

Are you there?

I'm shouting at you God,

'cos you seem miles away –

WHERE ARE YOU?

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I'm stamping my feet!

I'm angry!!

I think I know you can do miracles,

but I wish I didn't –

'cos where are they?

If you can heal –

why don't you?

If you can speak –

why don't you?

If you are the light of the world –

WHERE ARE YOU THIS DARKNESS?!

Oh! Don't bother!

Get lost!

I don't want to know!

(pause)

Did I really say that out loud?

I don't suppose it matters –

you know what's in my heart anyway –

so what's the point of pretending?

Here I am God ...

sad, angry and sitting in darkness ...

but I've come ...

## 2. A PRAYER FROM THE LIGHT

*Many people find using a visual aid useful during prayer. This prayer was inspired by looking at a candle and asking God to speak in that experience.*

I looked at a candle flame

I gazed at the wick alight

I wondered, "Why doesn't the wick burn out - it's very short?"

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I realised it wasn't the wick that was burning -

The wick just displays the flame;

It's the wax that supplies the fuel,

It's the wax that gets used up and keeps the flame alight.

Sometimes the wick gets too long and the flame goes mad -

Smoking, flickering, leaping – it's rather alarming,

The wick needs cutting back,

Then the flame is steady, useful and clean.

I saw a lesson in that candle.

This is what I saw:

The flame is God's light,

The wax is the Holy Spirit,

And the wick is me.

I am to display God's light to the world.

I need to rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to do this -

Otherwise I will get burnt out,

(I need to be 'in Christ' like the Bible keeps saying).

Sometimes I need cutting back -

I might go haywire if left unattended.

(I don't appreciate this at the time,

But once things have settled down again,

I realise it was necessary.)

So I asked God to help me.

And this was my prayer:

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"Dear Lord

I want to display Your light -

Help me remember it's Yours, not mine.

I want to be immersed in your Holy Spirit,

Help me remember it's Your strength, not mine

And although I don't really like the idea,

Help me remember that sometimes I will need trimming,

But you will always relight me!"

### YOUR PRAYER

Spend some time quietly thinking about your prayer. Is it from the darkness or from the light or both? Can you, either alone or with others, put together a prayer on this theme which you might share in an act of worship during this season?

### EVALUATION

Please try to answer these questions for yourself and for others who will use this material:

1. What was the most helpful thing?
2. What was the least helpful thing?
3. What would you like to try now?

### THE NEXT STEP

If you want more Harvest or Remembrance material please revisit the website.

### Acknowledgements

This material has been prepared by Ruth Sermon to whom copyright belongs and who has given permission for it to be used in the Vision4life process.

### HOW TO FEEDBACK TO VISION4LIFE?

If you wish to offer any feedback – brickbats and bouquets are equally welcome! – you can do so in various ways.

You can email the Vision4Life steering group about general or website V4L issues via the website or at [admin@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:admin@vision4life.org.uk)

If you have comments and particularly contributions to the prayer year, you can email the V4L prayer year coordinator via [prayer@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:prayer@vision4life.org.uk)

If you want to make contributions or ask questions about other V4L years you can email:

Year 3 – Transformed for Evangelism: [evangelism@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:evangelism@vision4life.org.uk)