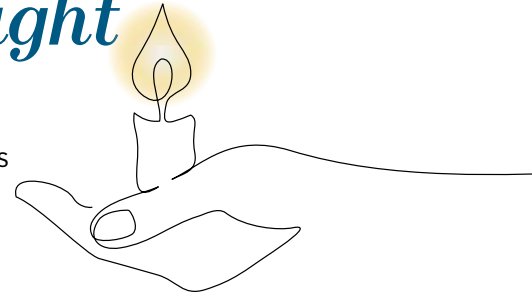


# Reclaiming Our Light

DARREN M. HENSON, PhD, STL, and JILL FISK, MATM  
MEMBERS OF CHA'S MISSION DEPARTMENT, ST. LOUIS



## OPENING AWARENESS

As we gather, we may find it difficult to find the words that resonate with a meeting agenda, time of year, or the things happening in our neighborhoods or worldwide. We humbly acknowledge the seemingly unending pressures faced by health care leaders today:

Lingering upheavals stemming from the pandemic years include:

- Workforce shortages and challenges.
- Natural disasters.
- Financial belt-tightening.
- Organizational overhauls.

(In a moment of silence, acknowledge how you and those around you face challenges.)

## SACRED TEXT

Our weariness and wandering are as old as the human race. In the Hebrew Scriptures, at the conclusion of the Book of Joshua, Joshua reflects on his long life and the many preceding generations. (Joshua 24:1-15) The message is clear: God has been faithful.

Joshua recalls how God led Abraham and Sarah away from their homeland across the river. Of Abraham's many descendants, some went to Egypt, where they were enslaved. While their exodus appeared a liberation, they were pursued by soldiers in chariots and on horseback. There was a long period in the wilderness. There was fighting with the Amorites, then with King Balak, then with Balaam. Though the Lord rescued them, the people again encountered tension and harm from those in Jericho.

This history has not been easy!

Completely aware of the torturous events of the ages, Joshua prepares to die and offers a farewell, uttering that recognizable line, "As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." The people echo in reply, "... we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God." They say this to him not once, but three times. Even when recalling great hardships and generations of suffering, they emphatically state, "No! We will serve the Lord!"

Joshua's reflection recalls plagues, battles, curses and destruction. Yet none of this shakes the confidence that God has been with them.

## REFLECTION

Spend a few moments contemplating:

- What would your own history sound like, interpreted in this way?
- What is it like to say, "We will serve the Lord," amid the struggles in ministry today?

The final time the people assure the dying Joshua that they will serve the Lord, they add, "... and will listen to his voice." (Joshua 24:24) In saying this, they claim their own inner, God-given light.

## FROM FAITH TO LIGHT

It's precisely in moments of struggle when we may be dogged by doubts. If we remember the times of God's fidelity, we awaken to rediscover God's faithfulness once again. When conflict appears, when relational strife peaks or when circumstances unexpectedly turn, life has a way of testing human capabilities. Divine help is needed.

And in the reaching, in the finding, in the relocating of God as Source and

Light and Faithful One, the light of Christ within is once again lit. As the Lord of Light reignites one's being, the present reality dims and God's steadfastness is on display, luminous and constant.

Let us pause and reflect on the following:

- What circumstances might reignite you to recognize God's faithfulness?
- How might reclaiming the light of Christ within allow you to be a light in your current circumstances, for yourself and those you lead?
- Are there particular practice(s) that help you keep the light of Christ bright within you?

## CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray.

O Faithful One, you are our constant source of help.  
You light our darkness.  
You abide with us as we wander in the day.

Attune us to You, all that we are.  
No matter where we find ourselves,  
may we be people of the light.  
May we be luminous, and may our light emblazon our workplaces,  
neighborhoods and communities.

O Light Eternal, let our light shine for others, now and forever. Amen.

## NOTE

This prayer service is inspired by the Pray As You Go daily prayer website and app — located at <https://pray-as-you-go.org/player/2023-08-18> — and was further adapted due to CHA member request after its use at a mission leader seminar last year.