

Chapter 2- The Light Shone In

As I grew up, I struggled with what I heard from others about this Creator. Here are some of the things that I was hearing (you may have heard some of these too):

- Just do your best and at the end if you are good enough, God will be pleased with you, and you will get into heaven.
- God gives us a list of things to avoid; if we do them, God will not be happy, and we will not go to heaven.
- There are many ways to believe. They all lead to the same place; do your best."
- Give money and that will be a step closer to heaven.
- Follow this person or teaching, and you will please God and be closer to getting into heaven.
- Belong to this group, and you will be guaranteed a place in heaven.

The list could go on and on. All religions tell us that at the end of life, we will find out our fate. I was surprised to find that everything that I heard as a child about God was true. When I learned what God really said about life and eternity, it was very freeing, comforting, hopeful, and came with much relief. What did you hear early in life about what people thought God was saying? What do you hear now about what people think God is saying?

A few years back I was mentoring someone. Two months into the mentoring relationship, he rolled his vehicle and suffered brain damage resulting in residence in hospitals and a nursing home for two years. During this time, one of my friends had been writing a letter to him everyday. These letters were read aloud to him by a volunteer activity staff at the nursing home. As the patient could not read or speak, he only communicated by blinking his eyes. One week, my friend wrote a letter, which included a prayer that the volunteer staff read. The prayer asked God to reveal himself in a way that would bring encouragement to him. It was a very overcast day. Right after the activities staff read the prayer, a bright light came into the window. It was so bright that the only thing the two of them could see was the light. It was a powerful moment and made them both weep.

This is a compelling story, because it shows that God wants to reveal Himself to us. I do not know of anyone else that has had that exact experience. I was inspired by that story and wrote a prayer for you. I asked God to reveal Himself to you. It may be that today, for the first time in a while, that God meets you right at the point that you need Him to. God knows what each of us needs. He wants us to ask.

The prayer for you: "I pray that the person or group reading this would be encouraged by you, Lord, in a way that they will know You and all the truths that are about to be revealed.

Thank you, Lord. Amen." If you would like to you can pray too. Here's something to pray if you don't know where to start. "God, I am searching. Please reveal the truths you want me to learn here. Thank you. Amen."

Reflection Time

Think about it and put yourself in that man's place. You have been in a nursing home for two years; you can only blink to communicate. You have a feeding tube and are bedridden. The setting is an activity person is reading you a letter with a prayer for you that God would reveal himself to you in this time of trouble. Then a light comes in the window, on a cloudy day, so bright that it completely captures your entire gaze. If you were that man with light coming into his room, what would you be thinking? How do you think you would feel?

What do you think that person (the one who wrote the letter and prayer for him) was thinking after hearing what happened? It took me years to figure out why a light coming in through the window was not experienced by more people. Should I be asking God for that experience? The answer is "no." If God did that for many, we would start worshiping that experience. We would try to start a new religion around that experience just as we've seen many times in our world. In the Bible, there are hundreds if not more experiences shared, and they seem to all be stand-alone situations. He will reach out to us in a way that will be meaningful to us, and we will know that it is Him. We can ask for that assurance.

We can know today how to have confidence, peace, and hope in life and death. Our Creator never planned for us to wait until the end of life to know where we

are going or how to have a relationship with Him. For some that might be a surprise, but at its core, this truth is very comforting and life-changing. In life, whether we are stuck in a ditch, a financial crisis, or even in the depths of sorrow from loss, we will find ourselves in need of some sort of rescue. For me, losing my spouse to cancer was the place that God met me and rescued me. I'd love for you to check out this video- go ahead and click the link below.

Rescue by Lauren Daigle

This song is God's heart for all of us.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9PugD11k3JU>

These are some of the truths you heard in *Rescue* by Lauren Daigle- these are from God!

- You are not hidden
- You are not hopeless
- You will never be forgotten
- There is an army coming to rescue you
- You will be found in the middle of your darkness
- I (God) will rescue you
- You are not defenseless
- I (God) heard you
- I (God) will never stop coming to rescue you
- I (God) will reach you in the middle of your hardest times
- I (God) will find you
- I (God) will never stop
- I (God) will be your armor

Questions for you:

- What did this say about God?
- What did this say about you?
- Is there an action step needed for me today?