



# LIGHT

AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

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# Light at the End of the Tunnel

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# The Gospel of Being a Housewife

Yesterday was beautiful.

The sky was super clear, so I braved the cold in my long black winter coat (er, duster lol) and my way too big sunglasses.

(The perks of being nearly forty and forgetting to care).

I spent the walk praying and meditating, just being thankful that my legs were moving, I was breathing in fresh air, and that God has never given up on me.

*But there was something niggling in my heart that I'd like to write down here.*

The other day, I read something about what it means to be a Biblical woman. I've seen this often: posts that boast of more traditional family roles—how being a woman of God means staying home with your kids and how this is far superior to working outside the home.

And I'd like to address this topic as a former atheist feminist who is continuously learning to submit every single inch of herself to our Lord and has lived several different lives before finally bending my knee to our supreme and sovereign God.

**All I know is this: He was with me every moment.**

- *He was with me when He asked me to go back to work because my husband and I had gotten ourselves into \$70,000 of debt.*
- *He was with me as I worked and received calls from my daughter's principal nearly every single day that she was acting up again.*
- *He was with me during the ADHD diagnosis and while praying whether medication was the right path for our daughter.*
- *He was with me when He put the seed in my heart to come home and homeschool our daughter (something that was **NEVER** on my radar).*
- *He was with me as I struggled to submit to Him as a wife and*

*mother working in the home and doing something I had vowed to never **EVER** do.*

Ultimately, I'm writing this because it would be very easy for a fellow sister to feel shame if I, too, touted the gospel of being a housewife. Life just isn't that black and white, and there are a million different ways God uses to sanctify us (something truly evidenced in Scripture).

And I wouldn't trade a moment of my heart change for anything.

It's easy to idolize a certain kind of life, and I certainly am not saying being at home isn't a blessing. It has truly become one for me because I get to write these words, homeschool my daughter, and laugh with my husband in the kitchen (who now works from home, too).

But ultimately? God is in the hard parts when you second-guess yourself and nothing looks Facebook-perfect. So, to those women who are working right now, who might have that desire in their hearts to come home and feel like maybe they aren't "Christian" enough because they're not living for the Lord from the comfort of their kitchens right now, just know none of that is the point.

The point is that Jesus loves you. He died and suffered for you and was raised on the third day to eternally wash away your sins. He sees you. And it doesn't matter what anyone believes is the "right" way to live your life. The only thing that matters is where the Holy Spirit is leading you right this very second.

And that, my friends, is the ultimate way to live.

# Like a Twig on the Shoulders of a Mighty Stream

We watched *Planes, Trains, and Automobiles*<sup>1</sup> for the five billionth time this Thanksgiving, and I'm always amazed at how a movie with that much swearing can get to the heart of the Gospel.

But alas, God is everywhere.

One of the protagonists, Del Griffith (played by John Candy), has a bigger story going on than what meets the eye (and I will not ruin it for those of you who are quitting work early just to go watch it. Also, shame on you. Also, good call), but what's even more intriguing about Del, is the way he always rolls with the punches.

In contrast, Steve Martin's character, Neal Page, has never found a punch he hasn't taken straight to the face. Instead of adopting a thankful heart like Del, he instead is very not thankful for the little everyday inconveniences of life.

And it's a wonder the movie doesn't involve a scene where Neal suffers a stress-induced heart attack.

This movie reminds me of two Scripture verses that came into play for me this past week.

The first one is from James and reminds me of Neal's character (or more accurately, the exact opposite of Neal's character):

*"My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires."*

**James 1:19-20**<sup>2</sup>

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1. <https://amzn.to/49iirIH>

2. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James%201%3A19-20&version=NIV>

"...because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires." Huh. I know it's easy to read the Bible and not actually follow it, but what if we took verses like these to heart?

What if whenever we got angry, we realized this wasn't producing godly fruit but a demonic hold that hurts families, ruins friendships, and causes more trouble than we ever intended to be part of in the first place?

The next verse reminds me of Del:

*"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."*

### **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18<sup>3</sup>**

Again, what if we acted on a verse like this? What if the next time you were deeply annoyed, heartbroken, sitting in a big ol' stinking pile of fear, you gave it all to God and thanked Him that you are alive, breathing, and given the beautiful opportunity of bringing Heaven to others right down here on earth?

Wouldn't life for you (and for everyone) be a little bit different?

There are a lot of favorite parts from *Planes, Trains, and Automobiles* (otherwise, I wouldn't have watched it five million LITERAL times), but this next little scene says it all.

Neal's miffed after he's left in a parking lot with keys for a nonexistent rental car, and he must trek three miles back to the airport. Del, on the other hand, easily gets a rental car, and this is their exchange:

*Neal: Well Del, you're a charmed man.*

*Del: Nope.*

*Neal: Oh, I know. You just go with the flow.*

*Del: Like a twig on the shoulders of a mighty stream.*

"Like a twig on the shoulders of a mighty stream." May we all live such wisdom.

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3. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Thessalonians%205%3A16-18&version=NIV>

# No Thanks, I'm Not Hungry

My TV keeps feeding me demons.

Like last night, there we were, minding our own business and watching *Tiny House Hunters*, wondering how a family of six can defy the laws of physics and squeeze into a two-hundred-square-foot box on wheels when the Discovery app decides to offer us a demonic commercial involving an old woman who is “possessed” by the “Holy Spirit,” a slew of none-the-wiser victims, and Brandy, the former R&B popstar who has obviously taken her life in a very different direction (fellow 90’s kids: remember her “feud” with Monica? Cue “That Boy is Mine.” ...also, whatever happened to Monica???).

But I digress.

It’s odd the ideas Hollywood has about Jesus. It’s odd the way they throw out His name constantly as a curse word. It’s odd that they have no real understanding of who He is, and instead of bending a knee, they mock Him without a care in the world.

Or is it?

*“Above all, you must understand that in the last days **scoffers**<sup>1</sup> will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires.”*

## **2 Peter 3:3<sup>2</sup>**

It’s easy to be blindsided by the visceral hate and disregard that people have not only for our faith but also for Christ the King Himself. But to be honest, we shouldn’t be. Scripture warns us of people like these (remember **the pigs we aren’t to throw our pearls to**<sup>3</sup>?).

Frankly, it never surprises me, considering I used to be one of them.

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1. <https://www.gotquestions.org/Bible-scoffers.html>

2. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Peter%203%3A3&version=NIV>

3. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%207%3A6&version=NIV>

*Oink, oink.*

When Jesus doesn't take the rightful place in your heart, you must put Him somewhere because He is Lord and Creator of the universe. And that, my friends, just can't be ignored.

So, when you're uncomfortable recognizing that you're merely an incredibly small mound of flesh that could be eviscerated in the blink of an eye and have absolutely no control over that fact, it's easy to place blame and mock what you fully and completely do not understand.

*"The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit."*

### **1 Corinthians 2:14**<sup>4</sup>

Scoffers are **spiritually blind**<sup>5</sup>, choosing this course for themselves because they refuse to put their faith in Jesus.

So, what is the cure for spiritual blindness? Complete faith that Jesus is who He says He is—the Son of God.

*"As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard the crowd going by, he asked what was happening. They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by."*

*He called out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"*

*Those who led the way rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"*

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4. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%202%3A14&version=NIV>

5. <https://www.gotquestions.org/spiritual-blindness.html>

*Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?”*

*“Lord, I want to see,” he replied.*

*Jesus said to him, “Receive your sight; your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus, praising God. When all the people saw it, they also praised God.”*

### **Luke 18:35-43**<sup>6</sup>

Look, not everyone is going to get on board. Many will continue to hate us because **they hated Jesus first**<sup>7</sup>. And in the event that someone won't hear you out about God's unyielding love for them, then **brush the dust off your feet**<sup>8</sup>, friend, and move on.

Because eventually, **every knee will bow**<sup>9</sup>, whether willingly or not. And it's not our job to change Hollywood's mind or anyone else's, for that matter.

It's our job to remind people that God originally created a stunningly beautiful world for us to grow and flourish in Him, and through the sin of our own hands, we ruined and are still ruining that perfect world.

But when we give our hearts, our minds, our everything over to Jesus, we receive God's ultimate gift of love and forgiveness and will forever be called His.

And I'm not sure about you, but I think that trumps any weird old movie, even if it stars Moesha herself.

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6. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%2018%3A35-43&version=NIV>

7. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2015%3A18&version=NIV>

8. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2010%3A14-15&version=NIV>

9. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians%202%3A10-11&version=NIV>

All right, time to figure out how seventeen children are going to squeeze themselves into a questionably constructed overhead loft.

This one's a doozy.

*If you want to learn more about my personal encounter with demons, click **here**<sup>10</sup>.*

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10. <https://erickaclay.com/my-testimony/>

## It's a Little Too Loud in Here

A lot of people look sad at Walmart.

This is most likely because they're at Walmart (no offense Walmart, but also, kind of some offense). But it might also be because there's a constant war going on in their hearts and minds.

I forget about that sometimes. Not that Satan isn't trying to finagle his way into my life or ministry, but because I've gotten into the practice of battening down the hatches pretty securely.

I'm not online. I don't watch the news. In fact, I watched *The Daily Show* for the first time in years the other day, and watching the clips from it was like watching one of my favorite movies, *Idiocracy*. I've been waiting for the time that movie would ultimately come to fruition. And it totally seems like it's now.

But why wouldn't it be? People are constantly being bombarded by news of everyone and their literal mother, especially if they're still loitering around on Facebook. And considering comparison is the thief of joy, and social media is a playground for that particular thief, I'm not surprised the sadness I see when purchasing a man-sized bag of Sour Patch Kids.

(Like I said, Satan messes with me too.)

But the online thing is like another universe to me now. When Matt mentions somebody we know is in Disney and looks like they're having fun, I panic thinking he's either having a stroke or maybe he's somehow stumbled upon a wormhole in a fourth dimensional wall.

And then I remember Facebook exists.

No, this is not a "everyone should give up the news and social media like I do because I'm the best person alive" post. (That will be Monday's).

This is more of a "it's okay to detach from the madness, even for a little bit" post. Because I sometimes think we feel unable to give ourselves permission to walk away from being in the know because of FOMO and what not.

Well instead, let's FASTDBUJ (Forget About Stuff That Doesn't Bring Us Joy). And I didn't even have to eat a pound of sour gummy candy to come up with that.

Because ultimately, the louder the noise, the harder it is to hear our God who is quietly calling out.

## Eighty Percent Less Greens

Did I ever tell you about the time I was going to have a hypnobirth?

This was notably during my "becoming vegan" phase, where I decided everything not made in an old medicine woman's cast iron tub was harmful to everyone under the sun, and how dare you?

Eventually, I did become vegan, and my husband did, too, (by default), and I could dive into that, but maybe it would be better if you just showed up Wednesday evenings at St. Mark's in the basement where you can hear him share the post-traumatic woes of eating something called "bok choy."

That's not even one of the hardcore vegetables, but I digress.

Just as "default vegan" as my husband was, he was also a "default hypnobirther" because guess who was nominated to softly serenade me into a soft, twilight trance that would obviously (and most definitely) make me forget that I was ushering my daughter out into this world via the smallest door in the universe?

My husband.

Granted, he does have a soft, angelic-like voice that makes one lose control of their extremities if donning the exact right timbre, but I highly doubt there was anything he could have said, danced, mimed with his hands, that would have made me forget what was about to happen to the lower half of me.

Oh, and last minute, I chose the epidural.

Sometimes, I laugh. Okay, fine, I laugh a lot. I realize, out of everyone, my husband has had a front-row seat to knowing the person I was before Jesus and the one after, the one still growing and changing and being refined like silver in the fire (**Psalm 66:10<sup>1</sup>**).

And man, has he seen a lot.

But he, above all people, is thankful for my **sanctification**<sup>2</sup>. If not for the fact that we eat roughly eighty percent less greens in this house now,

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1. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%2066%3A10&version=NIV>

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