

Learning to Move through Darkness, Part 3 of 3

by Todd Clark

Psalm 18:28 “For it is you who light my lamp; the Lord my God lightens my darkness.”

The first time I experienced a trust walk, it was overwhelmingly powerful and simple—and each time I have done one since then, those same feelings have returned. A trust walk is a walk in darkness, even more literal and sacred than having skinny-dipped at midnight in a secluded country lake as a youngster. A trust walk is simple—usually best on a quiet mountain path or on a trail deep in the woods, guided by someone trustworthy.



Walking just behind my guide, with my hand on their shoulder, my eyes are closed or covered, and we simply walk, me trusting their guidance and slowly walking more firmly and bravely as we move along a path unseen to me. I am in complete darkness, moving cautiously at first and then building trust more comfortably and assuredly.

There is something so liberating and freeing to be able to move in darkness down a country path with all other sensations, besides sight, now heightened and on alert. I hear the crunch of gravel or twigs beneath my feet, the rush of wind or a quick breeze across my face, the chorus of birds and

animals filling my ears, the sudden warmth of the sun emerging from behind a cloud, on my arms.

Sometimes, I would be tempted to run, but the fear that this would be going too far, too much, too soon would slow me down and I would simply walk, one blind step after another. There is this wonderful, simple joy of feeling comfortable in this new trusting arrangement, step by sightless step. Perhaps in knowing it is temporary, we can feel liberated into wanting to really move deeper and longer in darkness, along a path somewhere, without worry or

concern. We can befriend this darkened world, listen to it and feel it, embrace it and move through it, because it is both sacred and renewing.

I always catch myself, eventually, smiling, a big smile, because of what? Victory? Discovery? Awareness? Due to the trust I had in my guide who did not lead me astray, I exulted in the sense of doing it, of managing it, of not opening my eyes or not stopping in fear with worry that I would get hurt or fall down. Moving in this darkness was joy.

John 8:12. Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the Light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life”.

Sitting here, writing about the many ways moving through darkness can look and feel, I meditate on the universality and timelessness of the experience. There can be darkness, even in the midst of a sunny day, when a looming presence of threatened evil and violence can seek to envelop and extinguish hope and life. There is also the exquisite celebration of knowing you can feel truly alive and protected, even in the darkness of deep water and ultimately, naturally, in the sacred warmth of the birthing womb waters.

There can be joy in the darkness of a trusted walk, where nothing can be seen ahead, behind or around you. The disciples and crowds that followed Jesus through the darkness of their midnight sojourns, between villages and sermons, learned to trust Christ’s reassurance that He would never reject them, and this alone is a timeless and life-giving meditation.

To learn to move through the darkness is to remember that if we come to Christ, we will find Christ waiting with open arms. Christ's invitation extends to everyone, and he accepts all those who follow him.

Dear God, you who are our trusted guide, the shoulder upon which we can place our hand, so that you can lead us on a path of righteousness, never to lead us astray. God, I pray with comfort, certainty and faith that your light will never be extinguished.

Dear Lord, let us move with you through darkness together, let us be light and hope for all those around us. Let us be strong for those who need strength. Let us be guides for those who need sight. Let your light shine where there is darkness. Let us celebrate everlasting life that is your love. Forever, Amen.

