



Toward The Dawn – Easter 2022

I'm a city slicker. Well, perhaps not a city slicker, but most definitely an unabashed child of the suburbs. Rolling hills and tranquil woods are wonderful during the day, but when I lay my head down at night, I want to see the streetlamp peeking through the blinds. More than anything, if something were to happen at night, I want my neighbors to hear my manly scream. You could say I'm scared of the dark. To some degree or another, we all are.

As night falls, we can't see as well (or at all depending on how deep, and dark the night is). And as our ability to see diminishes, our other senses are enhanced. Sounds are more jarring and distressing because we can't pinpoint their origin. What may be perfectly innocuous during the day — the sound of squirrels chasing each other on the roof-top — comes to us as a ghoul trying to force its way in through the roof at night. That which is easily understood and explained in the light of day is unknowable and terrifying under cover of darkness. There is danger in darkness.

Consider God's grace to Israel as He led them to the land He promised them. By day He gave them relief from the scorching sun (a pillar of cloud), and by night He drove back the darkness of the wilderness and all its unknown dangers (a pillar of fire). Jesus tells us that He is the light of the world. He is that by which we truly see. Through the season of Lent, the light dims and the darkness grows as we consider our sin and the terrible price it brings — judgment, exile, death. As Holy Week comes to an end, the Son is laid low, darkness reigns, and people rightly tremble. But the darkness of night is deep only in contrast to the light of dawn.

Easter people (Christians) live our lives toward the dawn. We are people of the light, who walk in the light of our risen Lord. We are a people of hope and life because, *"the light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it."* We shine light, resurrection light, so that which is concealed, dangerous, and deadly is exposed. We shine resurrection light so those who are stumbling around in the darkness may see, and live.

Each day as the sun rises we are reminded that the Son has risen. And as the sun drives back the darkness of night, the Son of Righteousness drives away the darkness of our sin and rebellion. Like

the two Marys, wending their way to worship with their faces lightened by the dawn, we must worship because the Son is risen, indeed.

Alleluia! Alleluia! The Lord is Risen!

Questions:

- In which direction are you set? Towards the darkness or the dawn? How would/do you know?
- What are you afraid of?
- What do you think it means to live in the light of the resurrection? How will you live in that light and help others do so?

