

By Jim Langham

### **Light Dispels Darkness**

There are few things that are more disconcerting than trying to make our way in darkness or when visibility has practically been cut to zero. For some reason, one day as I was driving down the road recently, I was thinking of such situations, moments like trying to wonder through a strange house or motel room in the middle of the night when we are totally unfamiliar with our surroundings, circumstances that can lend themselves to falling over shoes, kicking our foot on a bed post or walking into the bathroom door.

While such situations sometimes end in a bit of humor, the feeling of trying to make our way in the midst of darkness is anything but secure and enjoyable at the time.

Several years ago I had gone to a major hospital to be with a family during a difficult time. The weather forecast that morning had been ominous, with near blizzard situations expected later in the day. Still, with the calm of the morning, I decided to make my way to those who were hurting to spend time with them during a treacherous moment in the health of a loved one.

As I left the hospital, all was still well; there was even a bit of hope that I might make it home before the storm would strike, but that all changed approximately 50 miles from home. Suddenly, there were a few snowflakes, then more and within a few minutes, blankets of snow were blowing across fields as the storm roared with a quick attack in the area I was traveling.

Still, I managed to navigate my way through the drifting and swirling snow until another problem presented itself when I was approximately 10 miles from home. The lights on my car started to dim, first slowly, then rapidly, until suddenly, all light was gone. Cautiously, with feelings of peril, I prayerfully followed the trail toward a farmhouse where I was able to call a close friend who

agreed to brave the elements to lead me home.

Upon his arrival, it was decided that, with an apparent electrical problem with my lights, he would lead the way, complete with snow blade and his bright lights to the safety of our driveway. Literally, at that moment, he became “my light.” We made our way through the blizzard conditions as a close-knit team, thanks to his leading, until we crashed the last drift into our drive.

As I thought back about that scary night of darkness in the midst of a storm, I began to think about many comparisons with life itself. For example, there are those times when “light” seems to burn out within us, our energy is exhausted. We might have given all that we could give for a certain situation. It seems like there are no more answers and we collapse at the edge of “wit’s end.”

There are those times when we may need to admit that our strength to recovery is going to be through the light of another, a pastor, counselor, close friend or special confidential person that we can trust. We may need to lean on someone who has experienced what we are going through, but who is just a bit further down the road. In the snow rescue, my friend was just far enough ahead to break the trail and I was trusting the path that he was leading.

Another dimension to all of this is the possibility that it is our time to become a light to another. We may be the one breaking trail for a hurting individual who feels the fears of darkness, a grieving soul or someone who needs to lean on us for strength. We may be the mediator to guide someone to a place of safety and opportunity for wholeness. Our strength may be all that someone has to lead them out of a long, dark night of the soul.

Then there are those times when it seems like there is “no one” around at all, that a literal light cannot be seen. It’s during those times that we are reminded to follow the light of God, even when we can feel or see nothing. For it is for times such as that when we receive the invitation to, “Come to me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and You shall find rest for your souls.” (Matthew 11:28, 29)

