Glow in the Dark - Part One

# About Midnight

## (Genesis 1:1-5)

I’m so glad that you are here today because we’re starting a brand-new message series entitled “Glow in the Dark,” celebrating Jesus Christ and all that he has done for us. We’re going to begin this morning in the book of Genesis, a very familiar passage of Scripture in chapter 1, reading verse one through five. And I believe God has spoken a word to prepare our hearts for this season.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters” (Genesis 1:1-2).

“And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning — the first day” (Genesis 1:3-5).

The text begins introducing us to a time of transition, a time of change and transformation. And as we have assembled here today, we are people of different ages, different colors, different shapes and sizes, but one thing we all have in common is that we all have something in our lives that we would like to see change.

I mean how many times have you ever heard somebody say, “I can’t wait for this day to be over,” because like shuffling cards we just want to be dealt a new hand. And so, for many of us we’d like to change our circumstances, change our appearance, change our jobs, maybe a new car or a new house, maybe a little hotter or a little colder, but all of us have something that we would like to change. However, the truth of the matter is that change doesn’t come easy.

Personally, I would like to change my body’s genetic predisposition to following my father and grandfather’s tendency for heart disease. That’s the main reason why I have developed a pattern of healthy eating and regular exercise because I want to see change, I want to see progress. My father had his first heart attack and open-heart surgery in his late forties and I wanted to see change, I wanted to experience something different for my life. The problem is that change doesn’t come easy and where I was when I was 20 compared to when I was 40 didn’t necessarily feel like success.

Now that I’ve turned 57, I have embraced the importance of developing patterns of healthy eating, regular exercise, and sleeping longer, because like the rising and setting of the sun, God created us that there would be a consistency, a rhythm, and a pattern to so many things in our lives. And so, healthy change, consistent change, positive change doesn’t just happen randomly, but there has to be some sort of forward momentum. There are still areas in my life where I would like to see change, where I would like to see an increase or patterns that would help to enrich this season of life.

And I wish I could tell you that I had it all figured out but I don’t. What I do recognize is that there is a rhythm, a consistent pace, a time and season of which we all have an allotment. Having just celebrated another birthday last week I was contemplating the importance of time as I considered future goals and I recognized that time becomes a much more valuable commodity when you have less and less of it.

As we come to our text today in Genesis it is commonly accepted that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible. And so, we understand that when Moses got this revelation he was looking back at the creation. In other words, it’s not an eyewitness account from somebody who was there taking notes, but this is revelation that Moses received from God. Much like we find in Exodus, chapter 33, when God said to Moses in verse 23,

“I will remove my hand and you will see my back…" (Exodus 33:23).

I think many of us have taken this literally, but God didn’t mean that he was going to show Moses his behind. I believe what he was really saying was that he was going to show him where he had already passed by. In other words, he wasn’t going to show him things in the future, but he was going to show him where it all started. And so, he took Moses back as far as he could understand, as far as a human mind could go, and he said,

“In the beginning God” (Genesis 1:1).

Now, I want you to understand that this was not God’s beginning, but he took Moses back as far as he could go, as far as he could comprehend, and he said, “in the beginning God.” In other words, God was still there just like David said,

“Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God” (Psalms 90:2).

Moses begins writing, “In the beginning God” because this is God’s story, this is his story, what we call history. And so, Genesis chapter 1 begins with God, and Revelation chapter 22 ends with the promise of reigning with God forever and ever (verse five).

And so, Moses begins with God and he continues in verse one saying,

“God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters” (Genesis 1:1-2).

Now, as the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the deep, it was empty and formless, but things are about to change. You see, up to this point there hadn’t been any transformation, but the Spirit of God was hovering over the potential and endless possibilities that were there.

We know, you and I know, that with just a word God can do anything, right? And so, true lasting change comes from the Word, in the beginning was the Word, and it was in the silence of that moment that God said,

“Let there be light," and there was light” (Genesis 1:3).

Now, up until that moment there had not been any light, not even a flicker, just complete darkness. And we need to understand that just because it is dark out it doesn’t mean that it is Satan. In other words, he doesn’t deserve that much credit because he’s not that powerful, he doesn’t have that kind of authority. On the other hand, when Jesus speaks, when Jesus touches you,

“What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open” (Revelation 3:7).

And what I hope you will understand is that just because it is dark, just because the door is shut, it doesn’t mean that there isn’t possibility and potential. In fact, often when God says no, it’s because it’s not the right time, things are not in place yet, but when God said, “Let there be light,” it was just as the psalmist said,

“The unfolding of your words gives light” (Psalms 119:130).

And there was light, because darkness is simply the absence of light. And so, wherever there is light, the darkness must flee because it can’t resist, it is overwhelmed by the light, because it is empty and void.

And so, let’s go deeper, let’s continue in verse three, because there’s just so much more to discover in this text. The Bible says,

“God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning — the first day” (Genesis 1:3-5).

Now, did you notice the progression of things in verse five? “There was evening, and there was morning, the first day.” In other words, God started the day in the dark, and so your new day started in your darkest moment. In fact, some of you may have been in the dark for what seemed like forever, and maybe it’s 12:01 AM, maybe it’s 2:20 or 4:30 AM, and you’re waiting for a new day, but it’s already a new day.

You see, the day doesn’t start with the entrance of light, the day starts in the deep darkness of night. God said,

“There was evening, and there was morning — the first day” (Genesis 1:5).

And so, the coldest, loneliest, deep dark moments of life are not wasted, they are the foundation, because if there was no evening, no darkness, there would be no morning.

What we discover here is that the first day actually starts in the darkest moments of the night. And some of you listening need to know that the deep darkness, the overwhelming darkness, is a sign that new things have begun. In other words, you have already stepped into a new day, you have already crossed over into it, and right now you are walking in the darkness of a brand new day.

And so, today, I want to encourage you to glow in the dark, because it was the absence of light, the darkness that shrouded the globe in the beginning that actually started the day. And so, you may not be able to see anything, it may not seem like there has been any change, but look at the clock, because if it is 12:01 AM it is a new day. That is why God said that we should,

“Live by faith, and not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7).

And so, I want to encourage you not to wait until you can see to start working and moving. You can’t wait until dawn’s first light, because it is already a new day, and so you just need to reach out and claim it, you need to walk in it by faith.

If there are any of you walking through the deep darkness of midnight anywhere in your life, maybe in your business, in your marriage, or in your relationships, I want you to know that from the very first day of creation the Lord promised you a new day. In fact, your new day has already started because it started in the dark. And so, the darkness is not evidence that God is not with you or that he’s not on your side. Your new day has already begun because over and over and over again, six times the Lord repeated the same phrase,

“There was evening, and there was morning” (Genesis 1:5).

And so, right now you need to decide if you’re going to believe the Word of God or if you’re going to believe the whispers of the enemy or even the shouts of our culture.

You see, the enemy doesn’t want you to think that it is a new day, he wants to keep you in the dark, he wants to keep you focused on the darkness, and worrying about what you can’t see. And it’s no secret today that our world is living in darkness, all you’ve got to do is turn on the news channel, and all you see is the darkness of evil, hate, and greed. But the Lord says this in Ephesians chapter 5, here’s what the Spirit is saying to the church, he says,

“You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. (Therefore) Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth)” (Ephesians 5:8-10).

“Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible” (Ephesians 5:11-14).

And so, yes, we live in a dark world, but I want to encourage you to glow in the dark, and to expose the deeds of darkness. We live in a broken world filled with broken people, but the true light that gives light to every man, woman, and child has come into the world. His name is Jesus and he said,

“Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life” (John 8:12).

And so, from the very beginning of time, when God first created the world, he said let there be light and there was light. But when he created the first man, when Adam and Eve first decided to disobey God, a deep spiritual darkness fell upon the world again. Therefore, God sent his son Jesus Christ to restore what the enemy has stolen and today you and I have the light of life. And so, I want to encourage you to glow in the dark, because everything exposed by the light becomes visible, and Jesus said,

"You are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14).

And the light in you is greater than the light of the day, because unlike the sun which lights up one side of the world while leaving the other side in darkness, Jesus Christ, the son of God, spiritually illuminates the entire world all at once so that all people can encounter his light.

Today, Jesus is calling those who follow him, those who are walking in the light of life to impact the world with the gospel. We are the church, those empowered and gifted by the Holy Spirit, created in Christ Jesus to be a catalyst for change, declaring the good news of the gospel, but our spiritual adversary Satan has dug in his heels. He doesn’t want us to walk in the light of life, he doesn’t want us to make disciples, and he doesn’t want us to be the light of the world.

In fact, Satan’s goal is to keep us covered, smothered, overwhelmed by our culture, and the challenges of life. He wants to keep us in the dark, lonely and isolated, like we find Paul and Silas in Acts chapter 16. They had come to Philippi to preach the gospel and found a group of women who had gathered for prayer down by the river. They began to tell them about Jesus, and they were responding, people were being saved, but then in verse 16 it says,

“We were met by a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling" (Acts 16:16).

And so, this slave girl began following Paul and his team disrupting their services. “She kept this up for many days” and became quite a distraction. Paul recognized that she was attempting to pervert the gospel, and knowing that you can’t negotiate with demons, he finally…

“Became so troubled that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her” (Acts 16:18).

Now, the owners of the slave girl didn’t mind her going down to the river with the women, but when Paul and Silas cast out the demon, when they lost their source of income, they weren’t okay with that.

And right now, I believe that God is waiting on some of you to stop being okay with demons messing with you, messing with your children, messing with your calling and your ministry. And God is waiting for you to become so troubled and frustrated that you stand up in the authority of Jesus name and command them to come out. You see, Jesus gave you that authority, that is a believer’s authority, in fact he said,

“These signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons” (Mark 16:17).

And so, going back to Acts chapter 16,

“When the owners of the slave girl realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities" (Acts 16:19).

Even the crowds joined in on the attack against Paul and Silas and the magistrates had them stripped, beaten, and thrown into prison. Now, watch what happened, Luke tells us in verse 25, “About midnight,” in the deepest darkest moment of night, in the dawn of a new day, the Bible says,

“Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God” (Acts 16:25).

In other words, they’re not complaining, this was not a prayer to get out of jail, but they’re lifting their voices in praise. Like Job they’re praising God,

“Who gives songs in the night” (Job 35:10).

This is the praise that Paul gives, a praise that will rise up over your situation, a praise that starts something deep down in your spirit until things began breaking off and you are set free.

I want you to know that your praise is always going to proceed your greatest breakthrough. It’s just as the psalmist said,

“At night his song is with me” (Psalms 42:8).

And so, if there are any of you going through the deep darkness of night right now, can I encourage you to praise God? If you are going through the midnight hour anywhere in your life, would you praise him right now?

The Bible tells us that everybody heard Paul and Silas praying and singing hymns to God. In other words, they were not praying quietly in the corner, they were having church, and the Bible says,

“The other prisoners were listening to them” (Acts 16:25).

And right now, somebody in this room, somebody watching online, your praise not only has the power to change those who hear you, but it has the power to change your circumstances, and to bring about the breakthrough that you need. And so, let the darkness encourage you, because we live by faith and not by sight, believe what you can’t see, believe what you’re about to receive, because how you react to the darkness determines what happens next.

At this moment, at midnight, when Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God the Bible says,

“Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose” (Acts 16:26).

My prayer is that somebody hearing this word, somebody praising God in the darkness, is going to experience breakthrough, doors opening over your life, and that which held you back coming loose.

If we’re going to be the church, if we’re going to glow in the dark, if we’re going to be a light in a dark place, we’re going to have to praise God. Because when we are praising God, we are giving him something, and you can’t expect God to give you something without first giving God something. Jesus said, that’s not how it works, he said,

“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you” (Luke 6:38).

Some of you may be giving him praise in the darkness, praising him at the midnight hour, and your new day has dawned. For some of you, doors are flying open and chains are coming loose, because you’re praising God, but you’re not just praising God because you are expecting something. You’re praising God because you believe him and he said,

“Let everything that has breath praise the Lord” (Psalm 150:6).

And so, God said, if you’ve got breath, if you’re not dead, give me some praise. This is amazing, he doesn’t ask if you’re Pentecostal, he said if you are breathing?

My goal in sharing this word is that you would recognize as a follower of Jesus Christ that you have a divine assignment. You have been called to glow in the dark and that is why the Bible says,

“Be very careful, then, how you live — not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 5:15-20).

This is the praise about midnight that ushers in your breakthrough and I believe that there are some of you here who are about to see God shake some things. You may have felt like you were stuck in the darkness, but it was only for a season. The door may have been shut, you may not have been able to go where you wanted to go, but God wasn’t saying no, it’s just that,

“There was evening, and there was morning” (Genesis 1:5).

And so, I want to encourage you to keep trusting him, to hold on for a little bit longer, it may be dark, but the morning is coming.

Don’t stop praising God, because we live by faith and not by sight. You may not know where you are, you may not know how to get out, but morning is coming. It doesn’t matter whether it is dark outside right now, don’t stop praying, don’t stop singing, because it’s about to break as the psalmist said,

“Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning” (Psalms 30:5).

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