Advent 2024

Week 2

Mike Colaw

# Production Notes:

* Green highlighted text on the screen.
* I will have AJ and Taylor join me on stage at the beginning to talk about the transition of groups ministry to AJ.

# Next Steps Cards:

Pull your next steps card out. Let’s pray that God speaks to us today. You can keep this for personal notes or turn it in at the end of the service.

# Opening Illustration:

Do you all remember this Christian Sunday School song?

“This little light of mine, I’m going to let it shine.”

There are a lot of kids’ songs that actually have significant theology in them. There are people who put things on display in a whole new way for us. They “shine a light” that makes the world look different.
Many of you know one of our ministries is to the Mizo refugees in the city. Pastor Khamh, who was a Mizo refugee himself, leads the ministry and is on staff with us. A few years ago I was driving him home during the Halloween season. While on the road we passed one of the Scream Park haunted house signs. He asked me in the most innocent way something similar to this. “Pastor Mike why do the people here make evil things so famous?” I tried to play it off a bit. “Khamh, it’s different here. People don’t see it that way. They kind of get a rush feeling scared.” In his oh so innocent immigrant way he continued asking me about it. “They know they are dressing up like evil things and pretending to kill each other in horrible ways?” I responded with, “Well, yes, I guess that’s kind of correct.” He continued, “Christians don’t do this do they?”
After a lot more very innocent questions from a Christian with a very fresh perspective, I ended up agreeing with him by the time we got to his apartment.
Pastor Khamh has been a person who often “shines a light of clarity” on the world for me.

“This little light of mine… I’m going to let it shine…”

Lectio:

**The History:**
Zechariah’s journey to his prophetic moment in Luke 1:76–79 is one of transformation through God’s discipline and grace. As a faithful priest, he and his wife, Elizabeth, were righteous yet burdened by childlessness. When the angel Gabriel announced they would have a son, Zechariah doubted due to their old age and was struck mute as a consequence. During Elizabeth’s pregnancy, his silence became a time of reflection, allowing him to ponder God’s promises. When their son was born, Zechariah’s act of obedience in naming him “John” restored his speech, and he immediately praised God. Filled with the Holy Spirit, he prophesied about John’s role as the forerunner to the Messiah and God’s tender mercy in bringing salvation. His journey shows how God can turn doubt into faith, aligning our hearts with His purposes.

Luke 1:76-79 (ESV)

"And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." (Luke 1:76-79, ESV)[[1]](#footnote-1)

# Medatatio:

* Feel the weight of this: after months of silence—a discipline from God for his initial doubt—Zechariah’s voice is finally restored. His first words, inspired by the Holy Spirit, are not complaints or personal reflections but a powerful proclamation of God’s redemptive plan.
* This is Zechariah’s prophecy, known as the Benedictus, a profound hymn of praise to God for His salvation and the unique role his son will play in preparing the way for the Messiah. John is the last Old Testament prophet.
* Through this prophecy, Zechariah reveals the purpose of John’s life and uses the imagery of “the sunrise” (anatolē in Greek, meaning “dawn” or “rising”) to signify the coming of Christ. John’s role is to prepare the way by pointing people to the light that brings right meaning to all things, the Messiah.
* “*I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen, not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.*”- C.S. Lewis, The Weight of Glory[[2]](#footnote-2)
* This little light of mine, I’m going to let it shine…

Actio:

What does it mean to be one who puts on display the light of Christ?

You radiate the sum of what’s growing in your heart. We all can have bad moments, but our goal is to be the type of person who makes Jesus easier to see and understand.

So there I am driving down the road with Khamh. As we talked about that brightly lit up horror billboard, Kahmh was lighting it up in a new way. His innocent and explicit love for Jesus and confusion about our culture put a bright, fresh light on my relationship with Christ. Here me clearly, there was zero shame. Like a child who is incredibly proud of their dad, Khamh was just radiating his unmatched love for Christ. It’s like he was simply saying; “Pastor Mike, don’t you want to make things famous that would make Jesus smile?” When you are around people who radiate Christ, it lights up the world in a new way.

This little light of mine, I’m going to let it shine.

Next Steps Cards:

In what ways do you need help letting your light shine?

Is there a dark place, person or posture of your own heart that is keeping you from leaning into and radiating the light of Christ?

Take some time and write on your next steps card.

Invite up the prayer counselors: If you need the Holy Spirit’s help would you consider meeting with a prayer counselor?

1. The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2001. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Lewis, C.S. The Weight of Glory. Revised edition. New York: HarperOne, 2001. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)