

General Topics :: The Dark Night of the Soul**The Dark Night of the Soul, on: 2016/3/27 17:08**

The dark night of the soul is not something pleasant to go through and does not end with a fellowship supper after church on a Sunday night. It is a grueling experience that requires an absolutely strict detachment from everything that you normally rely on so that you are only left with Christ.

The dark night of the soul separates those who are genuinely interested in following Christ from those who just have a curiosity about the deep things of God. We surely want God to do His work in our lives, but we want the lights left on. We want God to do in our hearts and lives that which will bring Him honoring glory, but we want to know and understand every step that He takes in our lives.

Darkness speaks of not knowing. We want God to do, but we want Him to do what He does within the scope of our comprehension. The dark night of the soul, however, is a work of the Holy Spirit that exceeds the ability of any man or woman to understand. When we come through the dark night of the soul, we do not know what has really happened to us, but we do know what has made it happen (A.W.Tozer)

Tozer is here talking about the dark night of the soul. This is a concept well-known to the Body of Christ. Tozer describes it very well in the above quote. I would say that for centuries men here and there have went through this experience and they have had a profound effect on the Body of Christ. It is a kind of refiners fire that purges away reliance upon anything else other than God. It has happened to individuals and small groups of people but now I want to suggest that God is taking the Body of Christ, the genuine saints, the remnant, through a dark night of the soul corporately so to speak. He is and has been and is continuing to separate his children from ailing and compromised institutions. He is drawing them out. And as they come out He is drawing them into the desert. Now the desert is typically a place of death but the saints in their dark nights of the soul, in their journey to complete dependence upon Him will find life in the desert.

Perhaps you are being drawn out? It is scary. You are full of doubt, you are surrounded by darkness, you cannot hear from the Lord or discern His purpose for your life but you are being driven. As much as you cannot see the way ahead you know you cannot stay in a place of compromise and lukewarmness. No one understands you where you are. When you speak of deeper things and desiring to take up your cross for Christ people look at you like you are an alien. So you are driven. Driven into darkness and solitude and loneliness. Driven to a place where your only fellowship is the Lord Himself and His word. This is alien at first but the longer you journey into this place the more you realize the wonder and the glory of complete dependence upon the Lord for all of your spiritual needs. He is establishing your feet upon a broad place. He is equipping you to be a light in the gross darkness to come. He is enabling you to be a source of encouragement to the Body of Christ in the age in which we live.

As the saints come out of this desert I believe God is drawing them to each other. All around the world in the days to come God is drawing His Body together after they have come through the darkness and complete separation from the world and now completely rely on Him. He is and will continue to equip the saints in every generation for what they have to face. I believe our generation will face the greatest darkness that has ever faced the Body of Christ universally. Men and woman of the past whom the Lord brought through the dark night of the soul, as few as they were, had a tremendous effect on the Body of Christ. Imagine what effect the Body of Christ will have on the world when the Lord has finished His work of taking His Church through this experience.

But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years. And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts. (Mal 3:2-5)

Re: The Dark Night of the Soul - posted by Renee_is_His (), on: 2016/3/27 18:46

Thank you for this, brother Frank. I have this book of Tozer's, and this particular passage is highlighted.

You said, "As the saints come out of this desert I believe God is drawing them to each other. All around the world in the days to come God is drawing His Body together after they have come through the darkness and complete separation from the world and now completely rely on Him." This is certainly my experience as of late, as it pleased the Lord to lead me to a small house church fellowship after 5 years of being alone, sitting at His feet. I depend on no one or nothing but Him. I am excited to see what the Lord will do. Thank you for another timely word.

Re: , on: 2016/3/27 20:27

Thank you brother Frank. Here is more of the same from Tozer.

"I am convinced that in New Testament Christianity the object of the Holy Spirit is twofold. First, He wants to convince Christians that it is actually possible for us to know the beauty and perfection of Jesus Christ in our daily lives. Second, it is His desire to lead us forward into victory and blessing even as Joshua once led Israel into the promised land.

The first is not too difficult. Most Christians will honestly confess that there are still spiritual frontiers before them which they have not been willing to explore. There is still ground to be taken if our object is to know Christ, to win Christ, to know the power of His resurrection, to be conformed to His death. If our object is to experience within our beings all of those things that we have in Christ judicially, we must come to the place of counting all things loss for the excellency of this knowledge.

We know our lack, but we are very slow in allowing the Holy Spirit to lead us into deeper Christian life and experience, that place where the intent of our heart is so cleansed that we may perfectly love God and worthily praise Him. In spite of our hesitation and delay and holding back God does not give up, because the Holy Spirit is faithful and kind and patient and ever seeks to lead us forward into the life of the special kind of Christian.

I well remember the caution of one of the old saints I have read who pointed out that "a persuaded mind and even a well intentioned heart may be far from exact and faithful practice" and "nothing has been more common than to meet souls who are perfect and saintly in speculation."

Jesus did not say, "You will be my disciples by speculation." He did say that by your fruit and by your behavior you will be known. This is one rule that is never deceiving, and it is by this that we should judge ourselves.

God will sift out those who only speculate about the claims of Christ and He will lead forward those who by His grace see Him in His beauty and seek Him in His love.

The story of Gideon is an illustration of how God seeks His qualities within us and is not concerned with us just as numbers or statistics. Gideon was about to face the enemy and he had an army of 32,000 soldiers. But the Lord said to Gideon, "You have too many, let all who are afraid go back". When this sifting was all done, Gideon had an army of 300 men.

God seeks out those who are willing that their lives should be fashioned according to His own grace and love. He sifts out those who cannot see God's purpose and design for our blessing.

Some of you know something of that which has been called "the dark night of the soul." Some of you have spiritual desire and deep longing for victory but it seems to you that your efforts to go on with God have only brought you more bumps and more testings and more discouragement. You are tempted to ask, "How long can this go on?"

Let me remind you of the journey of Jesus Christ to immortal triumph. Remember the garden where He sweat blood. Remember Pilate's hall where they put on Him the purple robe and smote Him. Remember His experience with His closest disciples as they all forsook Him and fled. Remember the journey up the hill to Calvary. Remember how they nailed Him to a cross, those six awful hours, the hiding of the Father's face.

Remember the darkness and remember the surrender of His spirit in death.

This was the path that Jesus took to immortal triumph and everlasting glory, and as He is, so are we in this world! "

General Topics :: The Dark Night of the Soul

Re: , on: 2016/3/27 20:34

More from Tozer. I think the 3rd paragraph down describes my life right now, if I was to be brutally honest.

"Yes, there is a dark night of the soul. There are few Christians willing to go into this dark night and that is why there are so few who enter into the light. It is impossible for them ever to know the morning because they will not endure the night. In The Cloud of Unknowing, we have been told: "This work asketh no long time before it be truly done, as some men think, for it is the shortest work of all that men may imagine. It is neither longer nor shorter, but even according to the stirring that is within thee, even thy will."

The stirring within us often is not enough. There are too many other factors;—there is not yet a vacuum within, a prepared place into which the Holy Spirit may come and be at home.

I think the more we learn of God and His ways and of man and his nature we are bound to reach the conclusion that we are all just about as holy as we want to be. We are all just about as full of the Spirit as we want to be. Thus when we tell ourselves that we want to be more holy but we are really as holy as we care to be, it is small wonder that the dark night of the soul takes so long!

The reason why many are still troubled, still seeking, still making little forward progress is because they have not yet come to the end of themselves. We are still giving some of the orders, and we are still interfering with God's working within us.

We struggle to keep up a good front, forgetting that God says the most important thing is for us to be humble and meek as Christ gave us example. It seems that Christians are obsessed with keeping up that good front. We say we want to go to heaven when we die to see old Jordan roll, but we spend most of our time and energy down here just putting on that good front. It seems that many of us say to God, as did King Saul the apostate before us, "Oh God, honor me now before these people!"

Re: , on: 2016/3/27 22:20

Great quotes bro Mark, one of my favorite authors.

I had a vision one time. I could see folks getting into covered wagons back in the 19th century in Independence Missouri (not to far from where I live now and where the settlers used to take off from) They would struggle through all the different states as they headed towards California. I could see each state and their names were something like pride, lust, unforgiveness, ambition and so on. A last great effort got them over the mountains and to the coast. All along they had been following well worn paths and were aided by maps. They finally arrived at the pacific ocean which, in my vision was called the sea of dependence.

So they had come from Independence, struggled through storms and trials of various kinds and overcome certain obstacles and here they were at the sea of dependence. They set up temporary accommodations. After a season a boat appears and the Lord is the captain and He calls to the people on shore to come and join Him and continue the journey. He told them there would be no maps for this part and they would just have to trust him beyond the horizon.

Only a few took Him up on His offer, some because of fear but many had become comfortable in their "temporary accommodations." Jesus would come in the boat every day and most ignored Him. Then He did not come as often and His voice was faint to those on the shore. Finally the boat did not show up anymore and this pleased the people and their temporary accommodations became their permanent dwellings. The Lord showed me that this was Christendom.....bro Frank

Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2016/3/28 1:05

I used to read Saint John of the cross, and other Mystics,,the dark night of the soul was completely different to what frank is talking about if I remember correctly,,and achieved through meditation ,a state where the presence of the holy spirit completely leaves the person for a season , and despair sets in, I know tozer spoke highly of those saints ,that's my only issue with tozer ,,I see the mystic path way as not being taught in scripture but closer to budisim ,then Christianity

Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2016/3/28 1:14

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Dark Night of the Soul

For the album by Danger Mouse and Sparklehorse, see [Dark Night of the Soul \(album\)](#).

Dark Night of the Soul (Spanish: *La noche oscura del alma*) is the title given to a poem by 16th-century Spanish poet and Roman Catholic mystic Saint John of the Cross. The author himself did not title the poem, on which he wrote two book-length commentaries: *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* (*Subida del Monte Carmelo*), and *The Dark Night* (*Noche Oscura*).

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Poem and treatise by Saint John of the Cross Edit

John of the Cross

Saint John of the Cross' poem, in 8 stanzas of 5 lines each, narrates the journey of the soul from its bodily home to its union with God. The journey is called "The Dark Night" in part because darkness represents the fact that the destination, God, is unknowable (as in the 14thc. mystic classic *The Cloud of Unknowing*—which goes back, as does John's poem, to the 6th century writings of Dionysius the Areopagite), and the path is unknowable. *salÃ- sin ser notada, estando ya mi casa sosegada*, John writes in the first verse of the poem, which verse in its entirety is translated:

In an obscure night

Fevered with loveâ€™s anxiety

(O hapless, happy plight!)

I went, none seeing me

Forth from my house, where all things quiet be

â€™that is, the body and the mind, with their cares, being stilled. At the beginning of the treatise *Dark Night*, (the *DeclaraciÃ³n*) John writes, "In this first verse, the soul tells the mode and manner in which it departs, as to its affection, from itself and from all things, dying through a true mortification to all of them and to itself, to arrive at a sweet and delicious life with God." The "dark night of the soul" does not refer to the hardships and difficulties of life in general, although the phrase has understandably been taken to refer to such trials. The nights which the soul experiences are the necessary purgations on the path to divine union, of which there are two: the first is of the sensory or sensitive part of the soul, the second of the spiritual part (*Ascent of Mount Carmel*, Ch.1.2). Such Purgations comprise the first of the three stages of the mystic journey, followed by Illumination and Union. John does not actually use the term "dark night of the soul". His term is "dark night, *noche oscura*."

There are several steps in this night, which are related in successive stanzas. The main idea of the poem can be seen as the joyful experience of being guided to God. The only light in this dark night is that which burns in the soul. And that is a guide more certain than the mid-day sun: *AquÃ©sta me guiaba, mÃ¡s cierto que la luz del mediodÃ-a*. This light leads the soul engaged in the mystic journey to divine union.

The *Ascent of Mount Carmel* is divided into three books that reflect the two phases of the dark night. The first is a purification of the senses (It is titled "The Active Night of the Senses"). The second and third books describe the more intense

purification of the spirit (Titled "The Active Night of the Spirit"). Dark Night of the Soul further describes the ten steps on the ladder of mystical love, previously described by Saint Thomas Aquinas and in part by Aristotle. The time or place of composition are not certain. It is likely the poem was written between 1577â€‘79, and has been held that it was composed while John was imprisoned in Toledo, although the few explicit statements in this regard are not very convincing nor first hand.

The treatises, written some time between 1578â€‘85, are commentaries on the poem, explaining its meaning line by line. Padre Lucinio del SS. Sacramento, who edited the critical edition (edition 5), with extremely thorough notes, of John of the Cross's Complete Works in the Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos series, writes that "The idea of the 'night' to analyse the complex psychology of the soul under the purifying influence of grace is the most original and fruitful symbolic creation of the Mystic Doctor's doctrine." The Ascent and the Dark Night should be considered as forming a single body as P. Lucinio states, quoting Andr s de la Encarnaci n and P. Silverio de Santa Teresa. Both works were left uncompleted.

Spiritual term in the Roman Catholic tradition Edit

Main article: Spiritual dryness

The term "dark night (of the soul)" is used in Roman Catholicism for a spiritual crisis in a journey towards union with God, like that described by Saint John of the Cross.

Saint Th r se of Lisieux, a 19th-century French Carmelite, wrote of her own experience. Centering on doubts about the afterlife, she reportedly told her fellow nuns, "If you only knew what darkness I am plunged into."

While this crisis is usually temporary in nature, it may last for extended periods. The "dark night" of Saint Paul of the Cross in the 18th century lasted 45 years, from which he ultimately recovered. Mother Teresa of Calcutta, according to letters released in 2007, "may be the most extensive such case on record", lasting from 1948 almost up until her death in 1997, with only brief interludes of relief in between. Franciscan Friar Father Benedict Groeschel, a friend of Mother Teresa for a large part of her life, claims that "the darkness left" towards the end of her life.

In culture Edit

Ernest Dowson alludes to the 'obscure night of the soul' in his absinthe poem, Absinthia Taetra.

In The Crack-Up, F. Scott Fitzgerald penned his famous line, "In a real dark night of the soul it is always three o'clock in the morning".

As a comment on the shallowness of modern spirituality, author and humorist Douglas Adams parodied the phrase with the title of his 1988 science fiction novel, The Long Dark Tea-Time of the Soul.

English electronic band Depeche Mode make a clear reference in their song "I Feel Loved", the second single released from the album Exciter, in which Dave Gahan sings, "It's the dark night of my soul and temptation's taking hold, but through the pain and the suffering, through the heartache and trembling I feel loved...".

Alternative rock band Sparklehorse, along with producer Danger Mouse and director and visual artist David Lynch, collaborated with a number of other artists â€‘ including Vic Chesnutt, Jason Lytle, and Wayne Coyne â€‘ on an audio-visual project entitled "Danger Mouse and Sparklehorse Present: Dark Night of the Soul."

The phrase has also been used as a song title by several other bands and music artists, including Steve Bell, The Get Up Kids, Ulver, Mayhem, and Shai Linne in The Solus Christus Project.

Canadian singer Loreena McKennitt set the poem to music on her album The Mask and Mirror.

Composer Ola Gjeilo has written a choral setting with piano and string quartet, fourteen minutes long, influenced by the phrase.

Northern Irish singer-songwriter Van Morrison writes about the "dark night of the soul" in two of his songs, "Tore Down a la Rimbaud" on A Sense of Wonder, and "Give Me My Rapture" on Poetic Champions Compose.

In his novel, "Insomnia," Stephen King makes a reference to the F. Scott Fitzgerald usage when his protagonist first begins

ns experiencing the signs of insomnia following the death of his wife.

See also Edit

Ascent of Mount Carmel
Ego death
Existential crisis
Loevinger
Stages of ego development
Dabrowski
Theory of Positive disintegration
Kenosis
Lawrence Kohlberg
Stages of moral development
Nigredo
Psychology of religion
Theosis
References Edit

^ Underhill, Evelyn. (1974). *Mysticism*. 12th ed., New York: New American Library. , p.83

^ Underhill, *Mysticism*, Ch. 4

^ Lucinio del SS. Sacramento, Nota Introductoria a la 'Subida' y la 'Noche' in *Vida y Obras completas de San Juan de la Cruz*, 5th ed., Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1954, p. 358.

^ *Vida y Obras de San Juan de la Cruz*, 5th ed. Lucinio del Ss. Sacramento, Ed. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1964.

^ Lucinio del SS. Sacramento, Nota Introductoria, p. 359.

^ Nota Introductoria, p. 357.

^ Martin, James (29 August 2007). "A Saint's Dark Night". *The New York Times*.

^ David van Biema (23 August 2007). "Mother Teresa's Crisis of Faith". *Time Magazine*.

^ Groeschel, Father Benedict (9 September 2007). "The Mother Teresa I Knew" (RM). *EWTN Sunday Night Live*. The chapter titled "The Dark Night of the Soul" from Evelyn Underhill's *Mysticism at Gnostic*

Re: , on: 2016/3/28 2:10

brothagary,

Why cast aspersions on Tozer's writings quoted here? What do you hope to accomplish? To discredit Tozer? All this will do is distract from the discussion and breed contention, which tends to happen way too often on this forum.

This is a very good thread about a very important topic and has nothing to do with mystical meditation or whatever you are alluding to.

The dark night of the soul that Tozer wrote about many times deals with the seasons in a person's life when it seems that God is far from them. When God's presence is apparently nowhere to be found. It is not a matter of if, but when this will occur in a believer's life. The problem with many people is that they give up "during the night" and never make it through to the morning light.

This is very common. I know many people who used to walk with God with a bright step and now it seems that their faith is cold and formal. Perhaps the dark night came upon them, but they wrestled not until the morning light?

It would do us all well to learn from such greats as Tozer and Wilkerson and others who have walked the walk and been through the fires of affliction. We can learn much from them.

Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2016/3/28 4:10

Well as frank would understand ,it's worth deciphering ,where this teachings comes from ,and how it can lead people in to the wide road of Catholic romon teachings , of mysticism and what ever else that is falsely called knowlage

Tozer would be possibly be my favourite teacher , Iv listend to more sermons from tozer then any one else bar Paul w asher possibly....

I'm being honest when I say ,that I struggle at his love for the righting of the saints of the romon church ,

It can be a stumbling block to the weak ,,,,,,I tripped up on teachings on mystasisim and medatation, years ago ,so I know what I'm talking about , for the sake of the weaker saints ,it's worth mentioning ,this won't cause contention ,unless you want it to , your better then that ...

Re: brothagary , on: 2016/3/28 4:16

Quote:
-----achieved through medatation ,a state where the presence of the holy spirit completely leaves the person for a season , and despair sets in

I have studied the Christian mystic writers extensively, in order to understand the strange dealings of God that I had been through, and must disagree with this statement. It might be common in non Christian writings, the aim of 'meditation' being an activity whereby one becomes detached from everything and enters 'Nivarna' or nothingness, which can be related to Christian writings, but it is not the same thing at all.

The process one goes through to become entirely sanctified, or possess a pure heart, is not something that one can decide to embark upon as the motivation will more than likely be from one's flesh and not for the glory of God. The suffering involved will soon put an end to that endeavor.

It is usually a response to the longings in ones heart for purity and righteousness.

As the writing shows, both believers and unbelievers will claim to be going through it or have gone through it, but the fruit of it does not show in their lives. They are not transformed by it, and if it were the true dark night, as John the Cross says, they will barely be able to recount it as it is so terrible. Many 'dark nights' are due to the human condition and probably depression.

It is entirely biblical as the Lord has provided us with an example in scripture, that is to say, in the story of Job.

Job's reaction to sudden and profound loss, was to accept it with grace as if from the hand of God, with thanksgiving and praise. We are presented with a man who walks in the Spirit, a faithful servant of Almighty God. Later he would lament:

Oh that I were as in the months of old
as in the days when God watched over me
when his lamp shone over my head and by his light
I walked through darkness when I was in my prime. 29.2-4.

'It did not matter whether deep darkness might be around him for, by the light of God, he saw the path, and was able to walk with him through darkness' explains J. Penn-Lewis.

For Job, each successive blow is accepted magnanimously: The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. 1.21. On recounting his past experiences 29.23, Job does not speak of his worldly loss, but expresses his grief about his loss of light, or in other words, the presence of God.

Job is shown to be a holy man, walking in the light, having put on the righteousness of God.

The thing which he had dreaded the most, had occurred, leaving him speechless: The heavens were silent; God had de

parted, and creation has seemingly been reversed. The deserted lover in this case is not at fault and sought him but found him not, Song of Solomon 3.1. Likewise from J.S. Bach:

If each day is filled with sorrow
And lamentation does not vanish
Ah, then this pain must
Pave the way to death
My dearest God lets me
Still call in vain. (cantecals)

Job pleads, Make me know my transgressions and my sin, 13.23. All of the understanding of his past dealings with God were being demolished because there is silence regarding his request and readiness to repent, had he inadvertently sinned. His claim to righteousness was due to light given, but now, circumstances lead him to believe that his convictions are in doubt, which brought extreme confusion and despair.

Job feels that God has become his enemy and is attacking him, the name YHWH being changed to El-Shaddai denoting destruction Is. 13.6, in the poetic section of the book 3.1- 42.6. To deal with El-Shaddai is a bitter and terrible experience, as in: Call me Mara (bitter) for El-Shaddai has dealt bitterly with me, Ruth 1.20.

The human condition is such that man will only accept what he has experienced himself, so he will deny it. Most of the great evangelists and preachers of the past, recount a period of having gone through this devastation where they seem to lose everything that is dear to them.

The feelings of alienation from a dry and lifeless church does not necessarily mean it is the dark night.

Just because the world hears about these things and tries to emulate it, does not mean that it is not experientially Christian and anyone who has been through the dark night and then reads St John, will recognise every little thing he describes so magnificently. He was a master of his craft and I side with Tozer in his admiration of him. Don't forget he was imprisoned because of his beliefs.

Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2016/3/28 5:12

There just so much of what the Mystics teaches that one one hands is plain pagan mysticism , in Christian garb ,and on the other hand no scriptural support or examples of those things contained their in , but one would need to completely spiritualize a text and milk it to make it say what has clearly never been interpreted to say even by most or all evangelical greats and small alikenot even tozer taught mysticism or contemplation ,as taught by John of the cross and Teresa of Avila , neither did wilkinson ,or weasly or Whitfield ,,nor Edwards , yet men like Edwards and weasly taught greatly on fillings and baptisms in the spirit ,

Do we really need to overlook all the fathers of the faith who held God in one hand and the bible in the other hand ,and plum in to tainted well of the Roman Catholic teaching,,

I think not !

Re: brother gary, on: 2016/3/28 5:32

The Roman Catholic church has always been wary of this teaching and those who believed it have been persecuted by it. Madam Guyon is another example. It cannot be called a catholic teaching just because some catholics believed in it. I don't know why they remained in it but in the past they had limited choices.

The people you mentioned were familiar with these writings but did not emphasise them, no doubt due to the prejudices against them by those who had not walked that path.

Baptism of the Spirit is very much involved with this pathway.

Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2016/3/28 6:08

Your last paragraph „is plain assumption Brenda , unless you can provide me where they said that , or else it may be that you are just plain wrong about ,,I'm sure we can all think up reasons why those men never emphasised or taught monkish way of life and the teachings like contemplationits just hearsay

Re: , on: 2016/3/28 6:17

Well it is a highly controversial subject as you know Gary.

Thank the Lord that we have more to agree about than disagree over.

Re: Gary , on: 2016/3/28 6:26

Gary, respectfully, I read Brenda's statements and I'm inclined to agree with them. Just because Tozer or somebody else quotes from those we call the Catholic Mystics does not mean that this is an embrace of the RCC.

Many of our Calvinistic brethren quote from St. Augustine. He was definitely a Catholic. Does quoting from St. Augustine mean that these Calvinistic brethren endorse the RCC? I hardly think so.

As usual bro,

My thoughts.

Brother Blaine

Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2016/3/28 7:11

Yes Brenda I'm thankful for that,,,,but at that the same time I'm not ruling those teachingsjust wanting harmony with the scriptures.....

Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2016/3/28 7:18

Yes Blaine , I understand that , and if I thought tozer embraced Roman Catholic doctrine ,,he would not be my favourite preacher....

But it can still lead to confusion , and false doctrine and the stumbling of the young in Christ ,and those not yet in Christ

I don't want to derail the thread more than it hasjust the name of the thread brought back memories of when I followed the Mystics ,and how it brought confusion .so I thought it was worth a mention of the original term the dark night and what led to the one who used the term

Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2016/3/28 7:18

double post edit

Re: , on: 2016/3/28 7:45

Brother

Yes I know that there is the danger of confusion and going astray into non Christian teachings regarding the 'higher life' if we can call it that.

If we think about it, it is to be expected that Satan would do this to put people off. Wherever there is truth there is also counterfeit.

I was fortunate in that I was not being influenced by anyone due to my illness preventing me from going to church quite often, but it did not stop the Lord from answering my burning desire to be His pure bride. A few important books came my way and the truth was confirmed to me and there was no confusion. I was fortunate to have not been introduced to this teaching beforehand.

A young believer needs to be taught to be led by the Spirit in understanding scripture and not the teachings of men first and foremost so that he will be able to discern the truth for himself. And that truth comes to those who stand against sin in themselves and do not compromise.

Re: , on: 2016/3/28 8:00

But getting back to what Frank said, I know that there are many who are disaffected and outside the church, whom you say are in the wilderness, but is this the same as them going through the 'stripping' in which they lose all that is dearest to them? I would love to think so.

Not in a bad way but would love too see warriors arising

Re: , on: 2016/3/28 9:14

Gary writes.....

"I don't want derail the thread more then it has"

I agree with bro Mark that too often threads are derailed or hijacked by oftentimes well meaning people but undoubtedly the enemy gets his way. So I thank you for your above statement Gary and now hopefully we can get back to the good conversation that we were having about this subject that has and is affecting so many saints.

Bro Mark writes.....

"The dark night of the soul that Tozer wrote about many times deals with the seasons in a persons life when it seems that God is far from them. When Gods presence is apparently nowhere to be found. It is not a matter of if, but when this will occur in a believers life. The problem with many people is that they give up "during the night" and never make it through to the morning light."

Amen brother, a vitally important truth and one of the main reasons I believe the Lord put this on my heart. I think in the last few years of his life, bro David Wilkerson realized that there was a huge uptick on saints around the world going through this kind of trial and he realized that it had some connection with the times in which we live and the times we were about to face. And in the deepest part of my heart I do not want to see anyone, as Mark put it "give up "during the night" and never make it through to the morning light"

If your reading this and you find yourself in such a place I want you to be encouraged, you are much closer to the Lord than you think. Stand fast saints for the day is dark no doubt but there is a coming light, there is a morning light coming and His name is Jesus. The enemy is thrashing around because he knows his time is short. When a rat is backed into a corner he attacks with great viciousness. This is what we shall see but we know that the victory is already won and the promises are made to those who overcome. God bless all the saints and may you keep on keeping on.....bro Frank

Re: , on: 2016/3/28 11:57

Thank you brother Frank for this important topic. The mystical teachings of St John of the cross just so happen to use the same phrase as Tozer but that's where the similarity ends. What St John of the cross writes about and what Gary has raised has absolutely NOTHING to do with what Tozer is writing about. It is a side issue and off topic. Let's move on from that and talk about the very important topic at hand...what and why do we go through seasons of "darkness"?

Seasons when we know that God has not actually left us but it sure does feel that His presence is far, far away.

Tozer wrote:

"There's a place where a Christian goes through darkness, where there is heaviness. God isn't going to take us off to heaven all wrapped in cellophane, looking as if we ought to be hanging on a Christmas tree. God is going to take us there after He has purged us and disciplined us and dragged us through the fire and has made us strong and taught us that faith and feeling are not the same—...although faith, thank God, brings feeling sometimes. I believe that just as Daniel determined that he would not eat of the king's meat and as Jesus set His face like a flint, and just as Paul said "one thing I do," the true follower of Christ must be a man whose will has been sanctified. He dare not be a will-less man. I never believed that when we teach the deeper life we should teach that God destroys our will. But God unites our will with His will and our will becomes strong in His will, and sometimes as we go on in God we hardly know whether it is our will or God's that is working at a given moment."

Re: , on: 2016/3/28 11:59

From Tozer's - Men who met God.

"The number is great of those who will no longer admit that spiritual victory often comes through wrestling in a long, dark night of the soul.

"That is not for us," they contend. "Jesus did all of the suffering so we can be happy. And we are going to be happy even if we have to invent new ways to happiness!"

The worst part is that we also expect Jesus will do all of the loving. We have largely forgotten the first and great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

"

What I am anxious to see in Christian believers is a beautiful paradox. I want to see in them the joy of finding God while at the same time they are blessedly pursuing Him. I want to see in them the great joy of having God and yet always wanting Him! "

Re: , on: 2016/3/28 12:13

" I want to see in them the great joy of having God and yet always wanting Him! "

This can be the very heart of it. The hunger and the thirst, God is found in the hunger and the thirst. Yet how does a man become hungry, what creates a thirst? A lack of food, a lack of water? Too much food makes a man fat and lazy, too much water bloats a man. God knows the balance in the lives of each of His children. He does not want familiarity, He wants intimacy that goes along with His majesty. What a dreadful thing to take God for granted, He will not allow it and it is not good for us. He is glorified and majestic and high and lifted up and at the same time He is our Abba Father. The balance is in there somewhere and the Holy Spirit will lead us into that balance if we do not resist Him.....bro Frank

Re: , on: 2016/3/28 13:38

brother Frank writes: "What a dreadful thing to take God for granted, He will not allow it and it is not good for us."

Recently we sat down as a family and discussed this very thing. Over the last few years we have watched as an entire extended family of ours has gradually turned away from God, towards the world and no do not even believe God exists anymore. The father in that household is entirely to blame as he has allowed this to happen to his wife and kids. Many years ago I told him that one of his kids did not believe that God was real and he shrugged it off. Today he and the entire family are all on that same page. It is a tragedy and brings to mind Peter's words, "even denying the Master who bought them".

Why did we discuss this as a family? Because we are in grave danger of the same fate if we do not remain sober, on our guard and watch for the warning signs. I reminded our family that we are not special or any different from any other Chris

tians...if others fall away, it can happen to us too. It does not happen overnight...but gradually.

We concluded that Paul's warning to Timothy were for us too as a family.

"fight the good fight, keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith."

Just how easy is it to become shipwrecked in our faith? The wreckage is everywhere, no family seems to be safe. We must not panic but we also must not bury our heads in the sand either.

Re: , on: 2016/3/28 15:07

Not wanting to sidetrack the conversation further, but at the same time, not wanting the reputation of John of the Cross to remain tarnished when he has helped so many Saints in their darkest hours, I quote him on the impossibility of being saved by works and God's work in the dark night:

"And since no creature whatsoever, and none of its actions or abilities can confirm or attain to that which is of God, therefore must the soul be stripped of all things created and of its own actions and abilities - namely of its understanding, perception and feeling, so that when all that is unlike God and unconfirmed to Him, is cast out, the soul may receive the likeness of God and nothing will then remain in it that is not the will of God and it will be thus transformed in God."(ascent of Mount Carmel book 11 chapter V)

I read Tozer to be saying the same thing.

Mark four members of my family have done the same and now I am the only one who still follows Christ. It is heartbreaking I know.

Re: Scriptures to consider, on: 2016/3/28 16:54

Isaiah 50:10-11

Who is among you that fears the Lord,
That obeys the voice of his servant,
That walks in darkness and has no light?
Let him trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God.

Behold all of you who kindle a fire,
Who encircled yourself with firebrands,
Walk in the light of your fire
And among the brands you have set ablaze.
This you will have from my hand;
You will lie down in torment.

I think Isaiah is telling us there will be those times that Christians will go through a dark night of the soul. These would be those believers who fear God. And they are obeying Jesus. But for whatever reason they will enter into those times when fellowship with God seems distant. They will go into those times where the heavens are as brass and the earth is a stone. Somehow their prayers are not getting through or so it would seem to God.

Yet the exhortation is still to continue to trust God. The exhortation would be that of Job. Though he slay me yet will I trust Him. Such times call for a faith that only the Holy Spirit can give us.

Those who are prone to a dark Night of the Soul would be our persecuted brothers and sisters. Richard Wurmbrand recounts his own prison experience. He said you were led down a dark hall blindfolded. Then the blindfold is taken off of you and then you are pushed into a dark room. Then the door slam shut. And then it is only you. In such times one wonders where is God. Of course Richard Wurmbrand also recounts that he had many dreams and visions of Jesus and heaven while he was in prison.

But trials and afflictions can come in other ways that lead to a dark night of the soul. One of my intercessors on Persecut

ion Watch has been experiencing afflictions of the worst type. In just a matter of days she has been diagnosed with bone cancer, lost her mother, and now diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer. Yet the faith of her and her husband at times shaken. Still remains firm in Jesus.

Yesterday the family had to make the heart-wrenching decision as to whether a she would undergo chemo with the expectation of living perhaps three more years. Or to not undergo any treatment with the expectation of living only 6 months. I do not know what decision the family has made. But I can only pray that in the midst of this trial or affliction God is extremely close to them.

But I can only imagine that two people who had faithfully serve the Lord. Have a heart for the persecuted and missions. Must be asking the question, Why Lord? Even the psalmist asked that question when he said My God My God why has Thou forsaken me? We remember those words that Jesus cried on the cross. Our Word of Faith friends would say that Jesus needed a lesson in theology. That he should not speak that over himself. Yet Peter reminds us that Jesus continually trusted Himself to his Father in doing what is right.

And that is the exhortation of Isaiah and other scriptures. That in these dark night of the souls we must continually trust God. Even when it seems like He is not there. If we try to walk in the light of our own understanding. Then all we will reap will be torment.

Personally, as of yet, I have not gone through a dark night of the soul. Or maybe I have and did not know it. But I am sure that I will soon go through one. And in that time I must cleave as unto Christ. And ask for the help of the Holy Spirit to trust Him. Or even in those dark times when every man will be found a liar. God will always be found true.

My thoughts and reflections.

Brother Blaine

Re: , on: 2016/3/29 0:38

Great post brother Blaine, a perfect Scripture for the subject at hand.

I think of David in the cave in Psalm 57. He has fled and his enemies are seeking him, hunting him down to kill him. He takes refuge in the cave. This will not be David's last dark night of the soul. Yet even in the darkness of his situation he cries out to God that his heart is steadfast, it is fixed. He is surrounded by enemies and he may not make it but his heart is fixed on God and he says he will awaken the dawn with the praises of God and he will once again praise the name of the Lord among the nations.

Even in my darkest moments, when all around me seemed to have been failing, I knew and loved my God. Even if I could not understand it, even if I thought that it seemed that He had abandoned me and I wept bitter tears, sad tears in the night watches, I knew, I know that my God loves me. This knowledge is ripped away from my feelings for there are times when feelings fail us and there are times when we feel nothing. Walking in the numbness that trials can bring, that darkness can bring, that bitter enemies can bring. One of the highest aspects of faith is the cry of Job " even though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." Abraham battles on up the hill with his son at his side. Every part of his flesh is screaming, yet his face is set like flint.

There are today a thousand fires set by the hand and the imaginations of men and these men sit down and praise the light that comes from this fire of their own making. They make the comforts of this world, prosperity and health and position and they seem to prosper as they surround themselves and are illuminated by the sparks from their own fire. It can only be temporary. The terrors of this world will visit them as the fire wanes and the darkness descends and there is no light. There is a light in the hearts of saints that can never be extinguished. It can be hidden for a time but yet the saints are steadfast, they are fixed upon the Lord our God.

The Word of God is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. When all else fails the word of God remains true. Trusting, having faith when our eyes fail us, when our situations seem without hope, lifting our eyes to God from where our

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help comes from. Stand fast saints all you who are walking in darkness. This night will end in light. The dawn will rise, the day shall come and our Lord is at the door. Why don't you awaken the dawn with shouts of triumph.....bro Frank

Re: , on: 2016/3/29 2:30

"Trusting, having faith when our eyes fail us, when our situations seem without hope, lifting our eyes to God from where our help comes from. Stand fast saints all you who are walking in darkness. This night will end in light. The dawn will rise, the day shall come and our Lord is at the door. Why don't you awaken the dawn with shouts of triumph."

Thank you for writing this brother Frank. Right now as we speak I am enduring one of the "darkest nights" in decades it would seem.

I have put this down to a spiritual warfare and at times I feel like I am in a fog, groping around in confusion and seemingly unable to fix things or to know what to do next. The words of the Apostle Paul have helped me greatly, "having done all to stand...just stand". Do not give up, do not put off your confidence in God.

Another thing the Lord has shown me is to be very careful to not fall victim to self pity and to complain and grumble in the midst of trials and in so doing wane in faith. My prayers become impotent when they are not prayers of faith. Instead I must discipline myself to give thanks in all things and through all things and rejoice that all things work together for good for those who love God and who are called according to His purposes.

Amen brother Frank, and others who have/are walked through these things...there can be many tears in the midst of the "dark night", but JOY COMES IN THE MORNING!!!

Re: , on: 2016/3/29 10:45

Hi bro Mark,

I got this reply to the piece on my own website, I thought I would paste it below for edification.....

Thank you for the encouraging Spirit filled words brother. God truly has a plan for our "wilderness" experience. Stay strong in God's Word, allow the Spirit to lead you, and pray for a closer relationship with our "Abba Father." Ezekiel foretold of the true people of God being scattered in Ezekiel 34:5-12.

5 So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. 6 My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them.

7 "Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: 8 "As I live," says the Lord God, "surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became food for every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock" 9 therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the Lord! 10 Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; or I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them."

God, the True Shepherd

11 "For thus says the Lord God: "Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. 12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day.

Jesus said in Mathew 26:31, "Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written:

"I will strike the Shepherd,
And the sheep of the flock will be scattered"

God scattered His people for a purpose! If you are feeling forgotten by "the world!" If you feel as though you are misunderstood by those you once felt connected to! Remember, God has led you where you are by "The Helper" (John 16:7) and he has a purpose for you being away from the "man-made" stuff of this world. John 4:23 says, "The

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But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is drawing His own to a closer, more intimate relationship with Him and Him only! Our journey has not been easy! At times it has been very difficult! But, when the confusion of the world clears your soul, God has an open doorway to draw you closer to Him and Him only. I have a long way to go, but so far, I am beginning to comprehend the importance of this wilderness journey..to forsake everything else and rely only on Christ Jesus! To God goes the glory!

Re: , on: 2016/3/29 19:52

Amen brother, I can relate! Now my heart goes out to the others who are scattered and languishing...may they gather them all up and join them together in true Christian fellowship.