

KIRBSTONES

ALONG THE NARROW WAY

curb-stone (kürb'stön') - *noun* - one of the stones or a range of stones forming a curb, as along a sidewalk or roadway. Historically, the curbstones were placed vertically along the edges of the roadbed and the paving material was backfilled against the row of curbstones. The curbstones served ⁽¹⁾to hold the material in the roadbed, ⁽²⁾to prevent the scattering of the material along the edges, and ⁽³⁾to define the road itself from all the adjoining areas.

¹³ "ENTER THROUGH THE NARROW GATE. FOR WIDE IS THE GATE AND BROAD IS THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO DESTRUCTION, AND MANY ENTER THROUGH IT.
¹⁴ BUT SMALL IS THE GATE AND NARROW THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO LIFE, AND ONLY A FEW FIND IT." - MATTHEW 7:13-14 - NIV

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Comparisons of darkness and light abound in Scripture. There are countless examples of each, many illustrations of one pitted against the other, and darkness depicted as: *nothing good ever happens in the darkness.*

While this may be true from God speaking Creation into existence, through the latter verses of Revelation, we must consider that God intended to use darkness for his purposes, and that God still uses darkness for his purposes here in the twenty-first century.

*² 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 1:2—NIV*

Genesis 1:4 teaches an implied belief that darkness was bad, since God saw that the light was good, and he separated it from the darkness. During the enslavement of Israel in Egypt, God instructed Moses to stretch his hand out toward the sky so that darkness would spread over Egypt—a *darkness that could be felt.*

*²² So Moses stretched out his hand toward the sky, and total darkness covered all Egypt for three days.
Exodus 10:22—NIV*

Prior to the passage in Revelation regarding the plunging of the kingdom of the beast into darkness, we read in Jude that the blasphemers, who do not understand, have reserved for them the blackest darkness...*forever!*

*¹³ They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever.
Jude 1:13—NIV*

But, what good can come of darkness? What good can come of time in the wilderness? What good can come of being put on the shelf for a season?

***²⁷ What I tell you in the dark,
speak in the daylight;
what is whispered in your
ear, proclaim from the roofs.***

Matthew 10:27 — NIV

Our main passage, Matthew 10:27, says that what God tells us in the darkness, we are to speak in the daylight. What God whispers in our ears in darkness, we are to proclaim, preach, and shout from the rooftops!

What is the difference here? How does God use darkness to *enlighten* us? And, how can we profit from our time on the metaphorical shelf during this yearlong pandemic of COVID-19. It has been one year since we have worshiped together. It has been one year since we have met together, in our homes or at our church, in fellowship in Christian community.

What have we learned? Have we spent all our time consumed with 24-7 news on television, much of it repeating the same mindless chatter? Have we spent one year growing in girth, in animosity, and in resentment for our desire to get back to *the way things used to be?*

What have we learned? Have we spent this past twelve months gnawing at the proverbial bit in our mouths, as we want to take that trip to the mountains or to the beaches, or do we simply want to visit a favorite restaurant?

What have we learned? Have we spent this special time focused on God's gift of time in the wilderness? What has God told each of us in the darkness of this pandemic? What have we learned that we can proclaim from the rooftops? Is God is putting unrealized opportunities before us as we spend time on the shelf?

What have you heard God saying to you? Are you listening for the voice of God to give you instructions required to fulfill the mission God put before you? And, will you act on these instructions?

We have opportunities all around us to experience God and God's purpose for our lives. What is God telling you to do? What will you proclaim to others?

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