

**Light and Darkness**  
**[Psalm 23](#), [Ephesians 5:8-14](#), [John 9:1-41](#)**  
**Rev. Curtis Bablitz**  
**March 15, 2026**

This has been an absolutely disastrous year for the Vancouver Canucks. They are a truly terrible hockey team – as of this morning, they are the worst team in the entire National Hockey League, in 32<sup>nd</sup> place, eleven points behind the 31<sup>st</sup> best team. This year they have traded away most of their best players, including their captain, Quinn Hughes, who is probably the most talented player to ever play for the team. Most of the players they didn't trade are injured, probably permanently. They stink. And all of this, all of this, is really good news. I'm serious. It's the best thing that could've happened to them. Because if we're being honest, they've been a bad team for a long, long time, but because they've always been just barely good enough to challenge for a playoff spot, every year for the past decade and a half, they've just tinkered with the roster, adding a player here and there, thinking that if they just get a couple moves right, the Stanley Cup will be theirs for the taking. And that is not true. It hasn't been true for years. And this year, finally, after all this wasted time, it seems like the team's management and ownership have finally seen the light, they have finally admitted to themselves what has been obvious for some time, and they are finally going to take the painful but necessary steps to tear the team down and start rebuilding. And as someone who would really like to see the Canucks win a Stanley Cup before I die, that really is good news. You can't

fix what is broken until you've admitted that there's a problem – you need to shine a bright light on the situation and figure out exactly what's wrong, and what you can do to make it right.

And that's also what's happening in the gospel reading Tom read for us this morning, the healing of the man born blind. Jesus and his disciples are going through town, minding their own business, and they meet a man who had been born blind from birth. And that kind of tragedy doesn't make sense to the disciples – this man doesn't fit into their theological framework for how the world is supposed to work – so they try and explain away this man's disability. It must be someone's fault. Somebody must've messed up here, somebody must've sinned, either him or his parents or someone, to produce this tragedy. And Jesus makes it clear that sin has nothing to do with it. The man's blindness isn't anyone's fault. This is an opportunity for God's power to be displayed to the world. So Jesus heals the man's blindness. For the first time in his entire life, this man can see.

And you would think that would be the end of the story. Jesus heals the man, Jesus fixes the problem, Jesus chases away the darkness and solves the trouble, and it only took him seven verses! Easy! No problems. But the story doesn't end there, because the blind man's troubles aren't over. The man goes home, and all his neighbours cannot believe that this is the same man as the blind beggar who used to sit on their street everyday – they've been walking past him every day for years, never making eye contact, patting their pockets sympathetically, "sorry buddy no change today", but

they don't actually know him. They don't recognize him. So they bring him to the authorities, the teachers and wise leaders of their community, but they don't know what to do with the man either. Just like the disciples, they're all trying to fit this formerly blind man into their rules, their theology, their understanding of how God is supposed to heal people, how the law is meant to be obeyed, and this man just doesn't fit. His very presence in the community is causing more trouble, more division, and so in the end, they throw the man out. He loses his home, his friends, his family. He's banished from the only world he ever knew. Jesus heals the blind man, but that healing just reveals the brokenness and cruelty of the world he's been living in all this time. Everyone around him thought that the blind man was the problem – that his disability, the darkness he was living in, that that was the problem that needed to be fixed, cured, and healed, but when Jesus actually heals the blind man, it just shines a light on the problems of his world. This man can see now, but he's seeing his world in all its ugliness, all its cruelty, all the trouble that the world can throw at him, now he can see it all.

That's the thing about light – it doesn't actually solve trouble, it reveals it – it lets you see what the world around you is really truly like. Light doesn't fix our problems, it helps us understand what those problems really are, and usually reveals just how ill equipped we are to deal with them. Just like the disciples and the religious authorities, we all have our systems for understanding the world, we all have these neat and tidy little

ways of how things are supposed to be, and we usually don't realize just how unreliable those systems really are until they're forced into the light, until we see them for what they really are. When Jesus heals the blind man, all the nice neat pat theological answers that the religious teachers in that community have been spinning for all those years, they just fall apart. They can't stand up in the light of what Jesus Christ has done. Light doesn't solve the trouble, it reveals it.

And that is a good thing – it really is. We might not always appreciate how good a thing it is – we might prefer to live in comfortable ignorance of the danger, but we are much, much better off knowing the world for what it really is than continuing to believe its something it isn't. Over the past decade, we've all watched as the institutions and authorities that we've trusted to govern our world well – governments, alliances, trading relationships, health care systems, media, technology – all the frameworks that govern our world, they've all been tested, and they all keep coming up short, they keep failing to keep the promises they've made to the world. We have seen the world for what it truly is, and it isn't a pretty picture. Light allows us to see clearly, to see the world and to see ourselves for who we truly are.

But the story of the blind man still isn't over yet. The man is tossed out of his community, banished from the only world he's ever known. He's completely alone, socially isolated, cut off from friends and family, and then for the second time in his life, this man meets Jesus Christ. And all

throughout this story, people have kept asking him, who was this guy who healed you, and his answers have been getting wilder and wilder – first he says he was a man, then he says he was a prophet, then he says he was sent from God. But now, when he's got nothing left, now he meets Jesus again, and he sees Jesus for the first time. Now he sees Jesus and understands who he truly is, the Messiah, the Son of God, and he chooses to follow, he chooses to dedicate himself to following Jesus Christ for the rest of his life. This man was blind, and then Jesus gave him sight, first to see his world as it truly was, and then to see Jesus for who he truly is. And his life will still be difficult – he'll still face trouble, he's still lost so much of his old life, but he's gained so much more. Ever since he met Jesus Christ, ever since Jesus spoke to him and healed him and shone light into his life, this man has been able to see, see that he is not alone, see that he has someone to follow through every trouble, every valley, every storm.

And the light that Jesus gave to that man so many years ago, he gives to us today. In the light of Jesus Christ, we can truly see where we are, we can see our world for what it truly is – all the trouble that human selfishness and pride have caused, all the pain and poverty and need that exists all around us, it's all so easy to ignore, it's all so easy to walk past and not notice, not recognize the people in need all around us, and sometimes it takes a crisis before we really understand how fragile our own safety and security really are and we begin to recognize Jesus Christ in the faces of the least of our brothers and sisters. In the light of Jesus Christ, we can see where we are.

And in the light of Jesus Christ, we can see who we're with. In the light of Jesus Christ we can see that even in the trouble, even in the pain, even in the valley of the shadow of death, we are not alone, because God is with us, his strength and love comfort and sustain us through every trial. In the light of Christ, we can see the one who gives us light and life, the one who gives us hope, the one who sought us out and found us when we had lost everything, the one who reaches out to us in the depths of our despair and lifts us up and carries us home. Our God doesn't promise that we will never experience trouble, that our lives will be free from darkness or pain. God promises us that in every kind of darkness, every shadow, every valley, we will not be alone, even in death, we will not be alone, because Jesus Christ has already walked through that valley for our sake. And God promises us that the darkness will not last forever, that God's light is coming, God's power is coming, and it will shine into every corner, every heart, every place where fear and hopelessness still thrive, God's light will shine. Today and everyday, we are called to live as people of the light, to see the world for what it is, in all its brokenness, to see it clearly, and then see Jesus Christ in our midst, here in this world, in the faces of the least of our brothers and sisters, in the vulnerable, in the lonely, in the lost, to see Jesus Christ there and follow him through the valley, through the darkness, follow him into the house of the Lord, into the kingdom of heaven, into the everlasting light of God. The shadows we see around us will not last forever. The darkness cannot prevail against the light of Jesus Christ. Christ is here with us in the

darkness, and when we see him, we know who we are, we know where we're going, and we know we have nothing to fear. In the name of Jesus Christ – Amen!