



Reflection for September 15

**Devotions for the Wisconsin
Annual Conference**

Claiming the Light

By Scott Carlson



Don't you know? Haven't you heard? The Lord is the everlasting God . . . giving power to the tired and reviving the exhausted . . . those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength; they will fly up on wings like eagles; they will run and not be tired; they will walk and not be weary. (Isaiah 40:28 – 29, 31)

There was once a woman who was arrested in North Korea for distributing Bibles. She was thrown into a prison cell that had a single light bulb and no windows. Day after day she was subject to ridicule and torment from the guards.

One day after she was beaten again for not forsaking God, and the guard had been particularly cruel to her. She did not give in. And the guard shot out her only light bulb in the cell, and said, "Now what are you going to do since I taken away your only light?"

And the woman replied, “You may have taken away my light bulb, but you will never take away the light of Jesus Christ that lives within.”

That woman was able to live from a center where Jesus Christ resides. That center allowed her to face her challenges and not let them overwhelm her. It doesn't mean they didn't take a toll on her.

In this very challenging year, many of us have experienced the toll and pressure of living in the midst of a pandemic. We have seen the images on TV of incredible cruelty. We hear the voices of political leaders that lack honesty and grace. In a time such as this, where so much has changed and many are so very weary, I am reminded, like our sister from North Korea, that the light of Jesus lives within me. I want to nurture that light, so that it warms my soul and moves through me to touch others. Will you join me in allowing the light of Jesus to make a difference for us, and to shine through us to touch this world?

Prayer: Gracious God, there are days when we have felt overwhelmed. Come next to us in those moments and whisper to us of your love for us. Massage our weary bodies with your love and grace. Reside in our lives, in such a way that we can be renewed for the moment and share you with those we meet. Give us hope to live into the future you have for us, for our church, for our world. In the hope Jesus offers us, Amen.

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May this devotion provide you with a moment of faithful reflection and care. You are involved in ministries of justice and witness, in ministries of

standing up and standing with people working to create better systems and communities, in ministries of learning and searching and researching to become more aware and awakened, more technologically savvy and proficient, more virtually and personally present in your churches and communities and world. Each of us who serve as members of your Wisconsin Cabinet write these devotions in grateful prayer for you – for sustenance and buoyancy, for strength and courage, for safety and just actions, and for faith and love to be full and fulfilled in your daily lives. God’s grace and blessings, God’s challenge and healthy discomfort, God’s Spirit and energy be with you, in the hope Christ offers us all.

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