

# Sermon Starter – Called to Light

*1 Samuel 16:1-13, Psalm 23, Ephesians 5:8-14, John 9:1-41*

The power of light to stimulate life is dramatically revealed around us as the Lenten season unfolds. Buds swell with promise, birds start to nest, and all of nature begins to be transformed. Like daffodil bulbs and birch trees, we are phototropic. We were created to be light-responsive. The tension between light and darkness underlies this Sunday's texts. In the Samuel text, only the light of God's guidance through the prophet Samuel brings discernment in selecting David as God's anointed king.

Psalm 23 celebrates the light of God's protection and care even in "the valley of the shadow of death."

Ephesians 5 lays out the ethical power of light. As we turn to the light, we turn away from the works and deeds of darkness.

What happens when light penetrates darkness? The answer is dramatically revealed in John 9, in the story of the healing of the man born blind. The climax of the drama occurs sometime after the healing. The formerly blind man sees Jesus for the first time, and Jesus reveals himself with the words, "I am he!" Jesus is the "Son of Man," the One who is fully human. The man exclaims: "I believe!" and worships him. The one who claimed "I am the light of the world" heals, confronts darkness, and searches out the outcasts. This remarkable story graphically uncovers the varieties and stages of encounter with the light in the life of each of the characters. Some turn away from the light, but the blind man experiences healing through the light, not only in his eyes but also in his soul.

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