One of my friends is currently looking for work at other churches all over the place.

He has been working for a church for a little while now.

After working there for a bit, he realized the church he moved into held their tradition high on a pedestal.

It seemed like his church did not honestly seek after God’s kingdom.

Instead, they focused on flashy and exciting things and focused on their traditions.

They wanted their youth to have fun and go to camps and play games, not really worship or focus on God.

So, lately, he’s been looking for a new place to share God’s word.

Interestingly, he applied at a church and during his interview, he asked, “Besides Sunday morning, what other ministries do you have?”

Their answer bugged me. Apparently, their only other ministry is small groups.

Are they reaching enough people on Sunday mornings? Are they preaching the gospel?

Are they performing any outreach? Are they complacent in their faith?

I feel like we should never be complacent when it comes to God.

His word is timeless. His goodness never ceases. He constantly loves us even when we find new ways to fail Him.

If He can roll with the punches and evolve His love and forgiveness for us, why would we ever subject ourselves to complacency?

We should play new songs and add new elements to worship Him differently.

Should we allow ourselves to add God into our routine?

Wake up, shower, get ready, go to work, come home, eat dinner, go to sleep. Pepper some prayer in there.

It is so scary how well this world can put blinders on us and lead us right into the garbage.

And we let it. We are willing participants.

***John 3:19-20 – “This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.”***

It’s easy for us to stand up and say, “I’m a Christian and this world is bad.”

We need to flip the judgmental pendulum the other direction and realize that we are just as bad, just as dirty.

***1 John 2:9 – The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now.***

Just because we’re saved doesn’t make us any better than anyone else.

We are not superior, we are not better. We are all sinners who have fallen short.

We all need God’s grace. We all need God’s direction.

***Psalm 18:28 – For You light my lamp; The LORD my God illumines my darkness.***

***Psalm 119:105 – Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.***

We need God to not only light our paths and direct us, but we also need conviction of the Holy Sprit to show us where we are.

To show us that we need God. To show us that we are surrounded by darkness and we desperately need His light.

***John 8:12 – Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”***

“He who follows Me.”

I’ve got to be honest, it’s really hard to focus earnestly and honestly on God as much as I should.

There’s a reason God tells us to be in a constant state of prayer.

How could we ever navigate without the light of God? The funny thing is we imagine the path of life as some hiking trail.

In reality, there are potholes and rocks and shards and twists and turns and storms and sleet and rain and lightning and anything else that are all actively pushing us and pulling us.

Even the small things do a great job of pulling our focus.

Late for work. Stubbed toe. Spilled drink. Dirty diaper. An argument.

The bigger things do a good job too.

Death in the family. Cheating significant other. Lost job. Injury. Late bills.

This world is full of darkness. We tread in darkness. We live in darkness. But we do not have to remain there.

We have the gift of God’s grace. We have a torch that never burn out.

***John 12:46 – “I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.”***

It doesn’t have to make sense. It isn’t something we are meant to understand.

God’s grace. God’s gift. God’s love. God’s forgiveness. God’s goodness.

***John 1:4-5 – In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.***

We are surrounded and beat down but God reaches for us with an outstretched hand.

It’s not a matter of asking why. God chooses to reach for us. That is where it should end.

We don’t have the ability to comprehend the motives of the creator of the universe.

We just need to recognize that we cannot navigate this life nor what comes after without God’s grace.

This is why it is important to seek after God’s kingdom.

This is why tradition pales in comparison to spreading God’s word.

We can all be better. We can all focus on God deeper. We can all be used by God.

God reaches through the darkness and opens His hand to us… Are we reaching back?