

Chapter 1

The World of Darkness

In the darkness, I cannot see my way—in the darkness, I do not know what my next step should be. Give me light in order that my fears may leave. For I know wherever there is light, darkness cannot exist...

You are sitting in a room that is absent of light, sound and comfort. Nothing is certain except for the fact that your consciousness is full of fear, doubt and uncertainty. You're in a relationship, but feel lonelier than ever. You've got a good job, but dread sitting down at your desk every day. You had dreams once, but aren't sure what happened to them. This is the feeling that leads most to the understanding that there is indeed a problem. Your world is dark, absent of any form of certainty and it is in desperate need of the light.

The World of Darkness is a troubling place for any soul to reside. After living in the dark world for an extended period of time, our eyes adjust to the absence of light. We do all that we can to move around that place, even though we are unable to see what our next step should be.

This becomes a problem for us, because all of our actions are based upon what we think instead of what we know. When I am able to see, my steps are calculated and precise; however, when I am walking in the World of Darkness, my successes and failures occur by chance or stroke of luck. If my happiness or failures depend upon chance, I don't know how to preserve a state of happiness or leave a state of unhappiness.

What is the World of Darkness?

I remember the day I fell into the World of Darkness. May 3rd, 2011 was a tough day for me. Around 4:30 p.m., the weight of the world came crashing down upon my shoulders. I immediately felt stressed, heavy, burdened down, weary, full of doubt. What happened? That's the million-dollar question—I don't know! I wasn't watching, listening to, or conversing with any person that would compromise my spirit.

These feelings are atypical for me. I am normally happy, energetic, joyful, positive, and focused; however, a dark cloud was over me and I couldn't shake it. I had feelings of doubt, lustful thoughts; I craved foods that were unhealthy and bad for my temple. I had streaks of anger and even dreams that were far from positive. What was happening to me? Was I losing it? Was I going crazy? Had some sort of spirit unknowingly attached itself to me, trying its best to capture the light that had been given to me by Christ?

When I got to the dark place, I was able to recognize that it was not my home. I had to do something, but I didn't know what to do. I wanted to quit, I had no inspiration, I felt as if my life stood for nothing. As I read the Word of God I saw nothing but black letters on thin, white, transparent pieces of paper—at that moment, even the Word of God seemed impotent to me.

The World of Darkness is not a place, but rather a state of being. We dwell in this common place whenever we find ourselves in constant states of

confusion, disillusionment, frustration, anger, depression, anxiety as well as other like emotional and spiritual states. You may find yourself in this place as a frequent visitor, but sometimes we take up permanent residency.

If you find yourself constantly having arguments or feeling like the world is “getting on your nerves,” if you have feelings of jealousy and envy towards others, if you frequently feel *blah*, if you’re worried and nervous about what life holds—you’re residing in the World of Darkness.

No good things come as a result of living in this place. Life lacks meaning, happiness is nonexistent, joy only appears in your dreams—this is a place that no soul made by God is designed to experience or endure. When humankind is isolated from the light of the sun, the body is deprived of essential vitamins and minerals. In a relatively short time, bones become brittle and psychosis will even creep its way into the mind. The absence of light is detrimental to the human body. Likewise, we must understand the soul was not designed to be out of communion with the pure, unrefined light from which it came.

Without sunlight, the body essentially begins to decompose. Likewise, when the soul is not exposed to the light of happiness, joy, peace, and love, it begins to long for its home. This causes its keeper, the body that the soul resides in, to continually exist in a state of misery. The state of misery that is often experienced while being in the World of Darkness is the soul’s defense mechanism, allowing the person to understand that they must leave this place or face consequences that could be potentially life-threatening.

Are you living in this place? Do you find yourself in a constant state of misery, pain and discontentment? Do you have strong urges to leave but do not know where to go? Are you experiencing joy, love and peace in brief spurts, but the good feelings flee as quickly as they come? You were not designed to remain in this state. It is not your home.

You want to change, but you don't know how. Your life becomes hell on earth because you are unable to tap into the joys of your existence. When we dwell in this unnatural place, we do all that we can to cope, but most do not attempt to leave this place because they believe that's just how it is. We have been trained to deal with our problems ourselves, so we turn to our own understanding.

The World of Darkness breeds spirits of the dark world. These spirits are evil, satanic and wish to do all that they can to suck the goodness from the vessels of those who reside there. Those who live in the dark world are not all themselves evil; however, when we are forced to remain in a place that we were not made to survive in, we become a part of the place that brings us so much pain.

As we live in the world of confusion, anger and fear, these feelings can bleed us of our light. When we are bled of the light that is happiness, peace and joy, we often look for it in other ways. Many times, we stumble out of the sheer desire to feel good. It's in the dark world where spirits of addiction often attacks us. These spirits can attack us with many faces.

Lustful Sex

The human brain has a natural pleasure center, which allows for the production of endorphins. Endorphins are “neurotransmitters manufactured by the brain to reduce pain and induce a feeling of euphoria.”¹

The World of Darkness stifles our ability to naturally produce these feelings of euphoria. We are vessels of light, made to be filled with light, which is a byproduct of happiness, joy and peace. When we are unable to be what we were made to be, we long to have those feelings even if they are caused by unnatural pleasures of the dark world.

The process of engaging in sexual relations to the point of orgasm releases an abundance of endorphins. This process is pleasurable for human beings; however, the experience is one that does not last. “The endorphins released during orgasm create a temporary, but intense, sense of well-being.”²

These brief but intense feelings can become a conduit to addiction for a person who dwells in the dark world. Though they are deprived of light while living in the dark world, the desire to “feel good” forever stays with that person.

¹ Judy Ford and Rachel Greene Baldino, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to: Enhancing Sexual Desire* (New York: Penguin Group, 2007), 243.

² Cindy M. Meston, Ph.D. and David M. Buss, PhD, *Why Women Have Sex: Understanding Sexual Motivations--From Adventure to Revenge (And Everything In Between)* (New York: Times Books, 2009) 251.

Many times, an individual will act on feelings of depression in order that the pain may temporarily subside. If this individual is ignorant to his true state and the causes of his problems, he will remain in that realm, doing all that he can to prolong the good feelings. Once orgasm is achieved, the person finds a temporary state of pleasure; however, the feelings of ecstasy soon subside and he returns to his original state of misery.

This process becomes a recurring cycle—achieving temporary states of bliss punctuated by periods of sadness or other negative emotions. As the cycle continues, that state of satisfaction becomes ever more difficult to reach. The wanderer in the dark world jumps from one soul to the next, stealing the light that it has lost from others. The person is never satisfied, but becomes more and more of a sexual deviant, doing things that cross the line of sexual normalcy and intimacy.

Has sex become your opiate? Has this spiritual union and expression of authentic love been something you have abused for the temporary state of ecstasy that it brings you? As you indulge with multiple partners and endless sessions of masturbation, do you find yourself lonely, lost and overwhelmingly disappointed with where you are? This is the case because when we walk and wander in the dark world, we are ignorant to the direction of the light. The light is what you really want; however, you settle for the endless rings of self-torture that bring you to your current state.

Drug and Alcohol Abuse

Like sex, alcohol and drugs both have a direct correlation to the release of endorphins. These illicit substances cause those who consume them to feel overwhelming feelings of ecstasy and bliss. Whereas an orgasm lasts for a few seconds, the effects of drugs and alcohol can last for several hours. In essence, the person remains in a state of bliss for as long as the drug affects their senses.

Just as with those who develop addictions to sex, dependency and tolerance levels to the substances increase. As the person continues to pursue those feelings of ecstasy, they require greater amounts of the drug to produce the same level of pleasure that they experienced as a new user.

The manacles of the dark world can be overwhelming for all who experience its grasp. Those who do not understand spirituality or what has happened and what is happening to them often resort to these harmful outlets to create a temporary separation from their lonely world.

When you look at the effects of sex, drugs, and alcohol on human beings you find a consistency: All of them directly manipulate the body's pleasure centers. Wounded souls often reach out to these Band-Aids for temporary relief, without understanding the effects or the spiritual consequences of their actions. Drinking too much can cause job loss and health issues like cirrhosis of the liver. Sexual promiscuity can lead to low self-esteem, unwanted pregnancy and disease. Abuse of illegal or prescription drugs can cause financial and legal strain or death.

The truth of the matter is, when a person gets involved in these activities or ingests these chemicals, they are searching for happiness. Feeling good or happy is not a byproduct of the physical world; rather, it is a spiritual and emotional state of existence. This, then, becomes a trap for those caught up in the World of Darkness. They reach for physical measures of fulfillment in order to satisfy spiritual deficiencies.

This action creates a continual wheel, which never allows the person to achieve authentic happiness. When a person is authentically happy, their joy is not connected to anything of this world. It's not based on them having a lot of money or living in a certain home.

When a soul continues to reside in the dark world for any amount of time, the by-product of that state will sap the individual of all happiness, joy and peace. Happiness, joy and peace release the same endorphins as sex, drugs and alcohol. When a person is in the light and not in the darkness, they are able to control these natural feelings of happiness without the repercussions of addiction or chemical dependency.

If people who reside in the dark world are shown how to live in the light, their desire to look for external ways to feel good will forever leave them. They will never reach for anything or any person to lift them from their state, because they understand that the light comes from within.

Extended Stay in the Dark World

No Sense of Purpose

There are many people who recognize that they are inhabitants of the dark world. We might find ourselves in continual states of loneliness, depression, or anger. Once we understand how it has impacted our lives and our ability to enjoy the life we live, we want to free ourselves from this place. However, we're unsure as to how to make that happen.

When souls remain in the World of Darkness, all inhabitants experience certain repercussions. For one, a sense of purpose will be lost. Every soul that exists possesses consciousness or awareness of a purpose. Within the world in which we reside, purpose is often reduced to an action or a position. For example, many of us equate becoming a minister, doctor, lawyer, saving a person's life, or helping to create some law that feeds the hungry with having a purpose. When purpose is misunderstood as an action or as a position, it causes our focus to be outward and not inward.

Authentic purpose has nothing to do with doing; instead, it has everything to do with being. Authentic purpose is a state of consciousness whereby the soul, mind and body are in perfect harmony and unity. We are human beings, not human doings.

Many people who are living in the World of Darkness have issues discovering their purpose. Feelings of frustration and unhappiness are regular occurrences. These individuals will do all that they can to discover their purpose in life. They will read books, go to seminars and spend countless time and energy focused on this discovery.

A person who dwells in the World of Darkness is unable to find her true self for two reasons.

1.) She is looking in the wrong direction. She may say, “If only I had a new job or a new relationship,” thinking that new friends and opportunities will cause the negative feelings that she experiences to dissipate; however, this is far from the case. Even when new relationships, jobs, and territories are explored, the same empty feelings and lack of true fulfillment will exist because the problem is not in an outward direction. The issue is from within. It is not a question of doing, but being.

2.) The second reason purpose is never found in this state is because the World of Darkness causes each inhabitant’s mind, body and soul to be out of sync. What allows us to function in the realm of the supernatural, to know what we do not see, to see what we cannot touch, and accomplish what seems to be impossible is one’s ability to maintain an interconnected state of mind, body and soul. When my mind and soul are connected, I am able to have revelations that do not require the process or the time needed for logic.

When the soul is out of sync, the person becomes dependent upon the mind. All things are understood through the conduit of logic, which within its own existence is flawed. With logic, the present and the past are the only two dimensions of time on which it can offer any insight. Logic’s only context is what is happening and what has already happened.

When the soul is in constant communion with the mind, it operates on a higher plane than simple logic. It doesn't need to analyze the present or past to be accurate. It gives insight and direction that transcend time and logic. The union can never exist within the World of Darkness. Only those who walk in the light can experience the soul connected in harmony with the mind.

Jesus told Nicodemus, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."³ The authentic process of "rebirth" is the deliverance from the World of Darkness. When a person is reborn, thoughts, actions and experiences are all different. In this transformation, the world of the light, as well as the manifestations of that world, become experience. Before, it simply was not possible.

No Sense of Direction

The dark world not only strips its inhabitants of a sense of purpose, but also convolutes any sense of direction. Lack of direction and no sense of purpose are often experienced in tandem. Where there is one, there will certainly be the other. The "next step" in life cannot be something that is discovered or understood by logic. Know the "next step" is a byproduct of the soul and not the mind.

The soul and the mind can at times disagree, because the mind is only able to understand the present and the past. The disagreement between the soul and the mind occurs because the mind is unable to possess any understanding as it relates to the future.

³ John 3:3 NIV Translation

The mind can only “predict” what the future holds. Predictions are always derived from the calculations and occurrences of the past. Predictions are consistent with statistical possibilities. The higher the instance of similar events that have occurred in the past, the more accurate a prediction can be. Statistics and possibilities are consistent of margins. The margins contain the possibility of error. When the mind attempts to understand the future, it is based on a certain occurrence with the possibility of that prediction being erroneous.

This method becomes a person’s only way to navigate through the dark world. The soul is unable to communicate with the mind, so the person is totally dependent upon the mind, logic and its erroneous sense of understanding to order their steps. Relationships, friendships, opportunities and the like are all investigated and decided from the vantage point of logic and understanding that the mind presents. People oftentimes find themselves in situations that they never would have chosen, but they were unable to see it coming because it had not happened to them before and they could not predict the events that led up to it.

I have been in the dark world, and for this reason I know what it feels like and what it looks like. When I lived in that place, I had no sense of direction. My only measure of if I was in the right place revolved around humanistic interpretations of success, such as the reception of money, acclaim or reward for something I had done. When the mind is used to navigate through life, man-made interpretations of success are the only systems of measurement available; however, they do not always prove that we have done the right thing or made the best decision.

I became addicted to man's approval of my actions and thoughts. If I was not rewarded or appreciated by others, I felt as if what I had done was incorrect. This can be the farthest thing from the truth. When a person is delivered from the dark world, the person is able to see that things that are not acknowledged or appreciated by others are sometimes exactly what needs to be done. When a person is delivered from the dark world, direction comes from the soul and not the mind.

The soul does not need calculations or possibilities. These things are only needed when there is the possibility of error. The soul gives direction because it knows, not because it thinks. The soul leads and guides us places that are optimal for our spiritual growth, not for our sense of belonging amongst people. If logic could see what the soul understands, it would never guide you in that direction, because the mind abides by the first law of nature, self-preservation.

How many times have you ever been in situations that were uncomfortable to go through; however, you became a better person as a result of that experience? How many times have you found yourself in relationships that caused you physical pain, but spiritual satisfaction?

The Mind's True Role

Human beings are more than the physical vessel called the human body. Human beings have souls, which are merged with the mind and the body. The only purpose of the mind is so that we as spiritual beings are

able to experience a physical reality—the mind allows that to occur. Each person is made to be governed by the soul, not the mind.

As stated earlier, when dwelling in the World of Darkness, the effects of that state remove all forms of light. When there is no light, there is no communion between the soul and the mind; the person becomes a slave to their mind instead of allowing the mind to be a worker of the soul. When this occurs, the soul becomes detached from the consciousness of the person. It is present; however, the person is neither aware of it nor the true nature of his reality.

At this point, the only experiences that are real to the person are those things that can be understood by the mind. The mind is so limited in its ability to process total consciousness that it causes the reality of the person to be flat and one-dimensional. Relations are topical, experiences are driven by humanistic reward (money, fame, credentials), life becomes worshipped and death is looked upon as the final end of all things.

This person does not truly understand his authentic nature, and therefore limits his ability to connect with all things through his soul. The human body is not a thing, “it is a process. At any instant in that process the constituent components of spirit, mind and body that comprise a human being bear a particular relationship to one another, a specific degree of interpretation each with the others. Our awareness of this interpretation constitutes the ‘event’

we perceive as ourselves.”⁴ When there is no interpretation of the soul for the observer, things within the realm of the spirit cannot be understood or clearly interpreted.

This concept fuels the foundation of the atheist. Atheists reject God or anything above and beyond the physical reality. When all things of the soul are rejected, nothing outside of the mind’s understanding is accepted as truth. For this reason, many scientists, physicists, mathematicians and doctors are atheists. Academia and atheism oftentimes go hand-in-hand because within science, math and other “exact studies,” human logic and research is praised as the ultimate empirical system of understanding. Anything that is outside of that system is rejected because it cannot be logically proven.

The mind was not designed to be or to know all things. It was only designed to help each soul on the journey of this physical reality. When a person lives in the dark world, they are often unable to escape it because they are unable to understand and know that there is a better life beyond the one that is seen. You cannot lead a person out of the dark world, because without the light he is unable to see that the world that he resides in is dark. Instead, you must show him the slightest form of light and point him in its direction, in order that he may find it for himself.

⁴ John Burns *Foundations of a Global Spiritual Awakening* (Bloomington: Self Published John Burns) 2003, 3.

Checking Out of the World of Darkness

The dark world is no place for any soul to reside. The dark world is full of anger, hate, lust, envy, depression, revenge and the like. If you are in the dark world, you must do all that you can to walk in the direction of the light. How can this be done? If you want to see the light, you must understand how the darkness has affected your present life.

This can be tricky, because when you are in the dark world you may feel as though you do see the light—but you don't. The light you are witnessing is artificial. It's not authentic. You must see for yourself how anger, lust, fear and depression have prevented you from communing with your soul and blocked you from the source that recharges your being. When you are able to make the connection between the two, you will desire to leave from where you are.

At the moment of this realization, the instinctive nature of the soul will take over like a mother caring for her young. She knows what to do and where to go. The soul functions in the same way. When you are able to see how the dark world has kept you from freedom, you will begin to seek new relationships, wisdom, friends and associates as well as thoughts. It is at this point that your walk begins. If you desire to take the first step of that journey, adhere to this challenge.

Challenge

Part 1: What negative emotional or spiritual state do you find yourself experiencing the most? Is it anger, impatience, lust, selfishness, greed etc.? Really take time to identify what this is, because it is key to your freedom. Once you have identified it, write it down in a book, journal or perhaps an electronic entry. When you begin to think about the question, you may have more than one emotion that comes to the forefront of your consciousness. If this is the case, write that down as well.

Part 2: Once you have made note of these various emotional states, take each state and write them down on a different piece of paper. Write the state at the top of the page (“Anger”), and underneath the title, write down every major occurrence you can remember whereby that emotional or spiritual state has caused negativity in your life. Do this with each emotion that is on your list. Take as much time needed, ensuring the fact that you compose each memory that you have and how that emotional or spiritual state has affected you.

What to Expect

If done correctly, you will begin to remember things, people, experiences and places that you thought you had forgotten. Pain, tears, fear and many times anger will be birthed from this exercise. You will begin to see how your time in the dark world has shaped your personality. You will see how it has

impacted relationships with family members and friends. You will begin to view yourself and the world differently. You will see many opportunities that you missed as a result of the dark world. You will understand why you are the way that you are.

If this occurs, you know you have spent ample time with this challenge. If you do not experience this, it is an indication that you have not spent enough time thinking about how the emotional and spiritual states have negatively impacted you.

When you experience the revelations of this challenge, you will still be in the dark world; however, you will then understand that it is not your home. Before reading the next chapter, be certain to spend time with this chapter until you received that revelation. When you receive it, you will be ready for the next step.