

MAGH
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23 April 2026

Light in the Wilderness

This week as I prayed and reflected on what to share today, I was impacted by two messages. First by Ps John's message on Monday on light and hope. Secondly by Ps Laker's message yesterday on true authority.

I recall that Ps John guided us on a prayer for God to help us to be transparent and for His light already in us to shine unhindered and undistorted.

It's funny and amazing how the Holy Spirit takes us to unexpected places when we pray.

On Monday when I prayed for God's light to shine, I was taken back to when I was 12 years old.

I have touched on this testimony before but let me tell you more about what happened to me at the age of 12 and about the "True Light" cult and the amulet.

[Juan testimony on the meaning of Mahikari; the training on giving light; the rules around an omitama; how it changed with levels etc]

At the time I thought I had found the true light of God and that it was channelling through me. I thought it was this "light" that cured me of my incurable illness.

So why did this reminder come to me? Why did I need to share this with you all today?

I prayed on this and was reminded that in Mahikari they preached about a true God that ruled over all but also that other lesser Gods existed and we would pray to them too. There was a shrine to bow and clap to and offerings made to ancestor altars. We venerated an amulet and would be in despair if it dropped thinking it connected us to God.

So I realised that what I thought was "true light" back then was not of God.

How could it be if we were praying to false Gods and false idols and venerated amulets.

In the NIV translation of 1 John 5:21 we hear Apostle John say, "Dear children, keep yourselves from idols."

The NLT translation expresses it like this, "Dear children, keep away from anything that might take God's place in your hearts."

So an idol does not have to be as dramatic or clear as a shrine or amulet. It can be anything that might take God's place in our hearts. Any distraction from our relationship with God.

Gentlemen, I was in that cult for 10 years, thinking all along that I was radiating God's light.

Yet it's clear I wasn't. How could it have been God's light when at the core were false idols?

What might be taking God's place in your hearts right now? What's the biggest distraction in your life taking the space where God rightfully belongs?

***** Let's Pray *****

I left Mahikari in my early 20s as I could see it for the cult it was. As I left and then later once I became a Christian, I started to wonder how I was cured of my disease and whether it has been a miracle and God's hand that saved me.

Yet, 2 years ago, I received a prophetic message from Ps Mike Maiden that turned my understanding around. I have shared this before and here it is again what Ps Maiden shared with me:

I saw from like the ages 12 to 14, the Lord had his hand was upon you in such an unusual way even early, even before kind of maybe the full recognition of what was going on. God preserved you from evil. God literally put a protection around you, says you can't have him, you can't kill him, you can't hurt him, you can't deceive him, and you can't discourage him. And so there were things that should have taken you out that the Lord wouldn't let. And when things collapsed around you, you survived it. So God's made you a miracle man. God's preserved you even in the testimony of your childhood or youth.

Yet despite me praying to false idols and allowing amulets to take God's place in my heart He still shone His true light through the cracks of my heart and he protected and saved me!

How good is our God!!

What I now know is that I don't need an amulet to shine God's light.

His light is already within me as I am a vessel for the Holy Spirit.

In 1 Corinthians 6:19, we hear, "Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself."

But the question again is what is getting in the way from that light shining and radiating out unhindered and undistorted?

What in my heart or in my habits and thoughts is getting in the way from being a clear vessel. Stopping the light shining through fully?

For me there's a number of things but one thing I can share is that it's the patterns of arguing I sometimes get into with my wife. They put into full display that I still have much to grow in my walk with Christ and living the Word of God and in particular in following what we hear from Apostle James in James 1:19-25 when he said:

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

In particular I need to remember to be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

When I get angry at home I need to remember that human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

Today I was reminded by a man of God that we are commanded to love our neighbour. Apostle Paul reminds us in Romans 13:9

The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

I was reminded that my first neighbour is my wife. I was asked to reflect on the following – how can I say I love a God who I may not be able to see with my human eyes, when I can't even fully love my wife who I eye ball every day?

I was also reminded that it is in my relationship with my wife that I can work out my salvation and truly grow as a disciple of Christ. It is the best gym for growing my spiritual muscles.

What is it for you? What is it in your heart or in your habits and thoughts that is getting in the way from you being a clear vessel. Stopping the light shining through fully?

*** Let's Pray ***

Yesterday, Ps Lakers shared with us on true authority and he reminded us that Jesus refused self promotion and self recognition. Also that if you have to announce yourself you are not ready to take that role.

With that came the revelation for me that I have a need to feel and be respected as the head of the home and to promote myself as a good father, husband and provider.

Yet I now realise I don't need to assert my authority. It is given by God and not for me to declare.

I loved it when Ps Lakers said - when authority is real, you don't need to shout it out or amplify anything. It carries a unique signal. One carried with God's presence.

In Romans 13:1, we hear Apostle Paul tell us:

Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God.

For me it is clear that my ego, need for self promotion and to assert my authority are actually a stain on the glass of my heart dimming God's light as it passes through.

I pray to the Holy Spirit to help clear these stains so I can be free of them and live a life that reflects fully God's light instead of diminishing it.

Yesterday it also dawned on me that I am currently in a wilderness period without realising it. A time when I am feeling forged and moulded as God works with me on my ego, in reducing my need to assert my authority and in growing my patience.

I was reminded yesterday that now finding myself in the wilderness it is time for me to get excited as God will hide us before he uses us. He builds us and forms us in the wilderness to be ready for new authority and responsibility.

How long I'll be in the wilderness I'm not sure.

All I know is that it will be at God's good timing and that when I come out the other end I will be a clearer vessel to reflect God's brilliant, warm and inviting light.

*** Let's Pray ***