

January 2, 2021

It was called “The Potato Cave.” A deep, dark, wet cavernous place filled with things that could not be seen, not far from a park and picnic area on the property of Southern Adventist University. Decades ago, it was used to store potatoes, so the heat and light would not cause the vegetable to sprout and lose its nourishing properties. A group of us, four to six students, decided to explore this cave one warm, August afternoon and armed with flashlights and high spirits, we penetrated the darkness.

At one point, a member of our group suggested we all turn off our flashlights. One by one, the lights flickered off. Nothing else changed. The air was the same. The humidity was the same. There weren't any more people suddenly in the cave. The moment the last light went out, the darkness seemed to grow. It seemed to take on about a dozen extra layers. I remember feeling as if something was wrapping itself around me. There was a sense of claustrophobia.

“Try to see your hand in front of your face,” someone said. Of course, it couldn't be done. Nothing, absolutely nothing, could penetrate that darkness.

Except the light.

I was never more grateful for the flashlight I held in my hand, because with it, I could penetrate the darkness. With it, I could find my way out of the cave. With it, I could ensure that I didn't brush up against a bat, or a centipede, or some guano as I walked along the passageways. Not a single one of us attempted to actually travel through the total darkness of the cave – we would have smashed our faces into the low hanging ceiling. Our flashlights were the secret weapons that prevented us from getting lost and trapped in the darkness.

This world where sin and evil are proliferating daily can seem as inescapable as a dark, deep cave with meandering passageways. We were never meant to navigate such a place on our own, without a light! The presence of Jesus, sometimes through the encouragement of others, has been promised to us during times of trouble. We have been promised by the Savior Himself that He will be with us always.

Jesus said, *“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12*

*Your Word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path. Psalms 119:105*