

Discussion Guide

Use this guide by yourself, with a friend, or in a group to help you pursue a deeper relationship with Jesus this week!

Open

In this week's message, Pastor Don turns our attention to Christmas and Jesus' appearance as the "Light" who gives illumination and guidance to the entire world. The disciple John, who wrote the book of John in the New Testament, uses the idea of Jesus as the light of the world throughout his gospel, so today we'll be looking to see how that imagery helps us understand God's work in our lives and the larger world as well. To get your group started, let everyone share about their favorite vacation to a sunny destination...

BIG THOUGHT

Jesus, by claiming to be *the* Light of the World, let us know He is the source of truth and freedom who makes a way for us to become God's children when we follow Him.

1. To get started, read John 1:1-5, and note that when John uses the term "the Word" he's referencing a well-known philosophical understanding of that culture which believed the ultimate source behind everything in the cosmos could be summed up as the "logos" or "Word." What characteristics do we learn about the Word in v. 1-3? What does the Word give? (v. 4) What does that "life" do for humanity? (v. 4) On what basis could John make the claim of v. 5? (see John 20:19-22)
2. Now turn to John 8:12. What did Jesus say that He was? And what did He say would be the result of following Him? What do you think Jesus meant when He said that following Him means we will "never walk in darkness" - how are people walking in darkness today in our culture? And how does Jesus' claim echo the prophecy found in Isaiah 60:19?

3. Read John 12:35-36. Why does Jesus say His time with them is growing shorter? What is dangerous about walking in the dark? (v. 35) And what will happen to us when we choose to walk with Jesus? What does it mean to you to know that if you follow Jesus you can become God's own child? (see John 1:12-13)
4. Now read John 12:37-43 which explains the response of the people to Jesus' ministry up to this point (John places this explanation right before he begins writing about Jesus' last week before His crucifixion). John writes that the people are "blind" - what does Jesus say they will "see" if they'll look at Him? (v. 45) What does He want to do for them? (v. 46) Can you describe a "light bulb" moment in your life when you suddenly "saw" something you hadn't noticed before? Has that ever happened for you spiritually? Share with the group if you can.
5. To finish, read Ephesians 5:8-9. When we choose to trust and follow Jesus, what happens to us? What responsibility do we have? (v. 8) And what should be the result of Jesus' light in our lives? (v. 9)

Take it Further

Would you say you're walking with Jesus as your light or are you trying to make your way through the dark? Ask God to help you answer that question honestly, and ask Him to give you "light bulb" moments to see Jesus for who He really is!

Daily Verse Readings

Day 1: Isaiah 9:2
Day 2: John 3:19
Day 3: Psalm 43:3

Day 4: Isaiah 60:1
Day 5: Psalm 27:1
Day 6: 2 Corinthians 4:6

Memory Verse: John 8:12



1651 Dutch Fork Rd., Irmo, SC
www.gatewaybc.com