



DIGGING DEEPER



LIGHT OF THE WORLD

DECEMBER 4

No matter where Christmas is celebrated in the world, lights are an essential element. Whether it's hanging them on your house the day after Thanksgiving, lighting candles on December 24, or decorating streets with luminaries, Christmas is the embodiment of God bringing light into the darkness.

Work through the following questions and scriptures on your own, and get together with your running partner, life group, or friends and family to talk through what you are learning.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What traditions does your family have around Christmas? Does light play a role in these traditions? If so, how?
2. How do you see light and darkness portrayed in the world (through art, literature, film, media, etc.)?
3. Read **John 1:1-9**.
 - What do we learn about Jesus from this passage?
 - What thoughts or feelings arise from the fact that Jesus has always existed and He has always been God's plan A for the world? Is this a new concept for you?
4. Read **John 3:16-21**.
 - Make some observations about this passage (What does the text say):
 - Who is talking?
 - What is the circumstance?
 - Any repeated phrases?
 - What surprised you?
 - What stood out to you?
 - Make some interpretations (What does the passage mean)
 - What questions do you have?
 - Summarize the passage in 1-3 sentences - what are the main points?
 - What do you learn about the nature and character of God as you read this?
 - What do you learn about yourself and your choices?
 - Now make some applications (what's my response)
 - How do you respond to what you are reading?
 - How does this apply to your life?
 - What is the central truth that you could put into practice from this?
 - Who could you share this with for the sake of encouragement?



5. What is your relationship with the Light? Have you stepped into Jesus' light or are you hiding in the darkness?
 - If you are still in darkness, what holds you back from stepping into the light?
6. Read **Matthew 9:10-13** and **1 John 1:5-9**.
 - How does acknowledging the depth of our sin (instead of hiding from it) help us know the love and grace of Jesus?
7. What is one way you can move into the light of Jesus this week? What is an area of your life where you are not reflecting the light of Jesus and how can you begin to do that today?

KEY SCRIPTURE

John 1:1-9 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.

John 3:16-21 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

Matthew 9:10-13 While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

1 John 1:5-9 This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

TAKE A NEXT STEP

1. For further study on John 1, watch this Bible Project video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XgslCbXOOIE>

2. If you are struggling to come into Jesus' light because you love the darkness, spend time meditating on John 1. You will only come to love Jesus as you as you come in contact with who He is and all He has done for you. Ask Him to show you why He is better than anything in this world that you could seek. Ask Him to show you how much you need Him.
3. If you know Jesus, spending time inviting Him to search your heart for any areas that need to be transformed by His light? What are you trying to hide from Him?

FOR THE PARENTS

Hey, families! Here's a look at what we're covering with your kids so you can help them continue to grow at home during the week.

THIS WEEK

This week, kids hear about how an angel appeared to Mary and gave her wonderful and impossible news.

ASK THIS

Because sometimes you and your kid need a conversation-starter that isn't,

"So . . . how was church?"

- **Why do you think Mary stopped being afraid about the message the angel brought her?**
- **What is one way you normally handle fear?**
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REMEMBER THIS

This month, your kids are memorizing the Bible verse

Luke 2:10 (NIV), in case you want to work on them together.

EC: "I will bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people." Luke 2:10

Elem: "But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good new that will cause great joy for all the people.'" Luke 2:10 (NIV)

NEXT WEEK

Next week, the kids hear about how an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him about who Mary's baby was.