

Message Discussion Guide THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

The Church at Brook Hills,

Jonathan B.

October 31, 2010

John 8

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

Connect . . .

Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.

Option 1

Explain to learners that there are over 6,000 people groups in the world that are completely unreached for Christ—they couldn't even hear about Him if they wanted to.

Ask the following questions:

What emotion does this statistic bring out in you?

What do those emotions reveal about our inclinations to God's mission?

Explain that today we will talk about the Light and our responsibility to take it to the nations.

Option 2

Invite learners to share a time when they were in desperate need of a source of light.

Encourage them to share their story and how important the light was to them. Explain that today we will discuss how the Light of Christ is a desperate need in everyone's life.

Review the Message . . .

The Coming Light

- **We are a part of a cosmic conflict between light and darkness.**
 - Our world is in darkness and under the judgment of God.
 - We are condemned for our rebellious love affair with darkness.
- **But God, chose to reveal the Light that was to come through the people of Israel.**
 - God's people experienced glimpses of the Light to come.
 - God's people anticipated the day when the Light would come.

Discussion

- Enlist a learner to read John 1:1-5.
- Who is John referring to when he wrote about the Light? How does he describe the Light?
- What is light's relationship with darkness?
- What is the Light's relationship to the world's darkness?

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- Enlist a learner to read John 3:19-20. Why has humanity chosen darkness over the Light? What does this propensity toward evil reveal about humanity?
- Read Genesis 12:1-3. What was God's plan to bring a blessing to the entire "dark" earth?
- Enlist a couple of learners to read Isaiah 9:2 and Zechariah 14:7. How did this promise of the Light bring hope to the people of Israel?

Application . . .

- Do you generally see the world as "basically good" or "inherently evil"? Do your actions support or contradict your way of thinking?
- How seriously do you consider the spiritual battle between light and darkness? Do you see yourself as a spectator of this battle or participant? Why?
- Why is it dangerous to think that people are basically "good at heart"?
- Even as believers, how do we sometimes struggle with choosing the Light over darkness? Why can it be easier to choose the darkness?
- What (or who) is at the heart of choosing darkness?
- How can our own selfishness and self-centeredness constantly pull us away from a relationship with God? How do we defeat that pull?

The Light Has Come

- **God sent the Light to a world in darkness.**
 - The Light Himself has come into the darkness to save the world.
 - The darkness rejects the Light of Life.
 - The world's judgment leaves us in darkness.
 - The world's wisdom leads us to our death.
 - The world's freedom ensures our bondage.
 - The world's glory ends in our dishonor.
 - The Light's response to the darkness is to shine.
 - Light is self-Evident: it attests to its own presence.

Discussion

- Invite two learners to read John 1:6-14 and 3:16-18. What was the purpose of Jesus coming to earth?
- How did His light reveal the reality of the darkness of the world?
- Read John 8:12-30. How did Jesus contrast the world's judgment and wisdom with spiritual wisdom?
- Enlist a learner to read John 8:31-47. How does the world's idea of freedom actually lead to spiritual slavery?
- Read John 8:48-59. How did their darkness close the eyes of the Jews from giving Christ the glory that He was due? How does Christ's Light give the proper glory to God?

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- How did Jesus' response to the darkness throughout John 8 illustrate His own identity as the Light? How did His interaction with them reveal their darkness?

Application . . .

- Why do we tend toward darkness even when we know that it leads to death?
- How can we reveal darkness around us by the way that we live and the words that we say?
- What are our fears concerning revealing darkness around us? What is the answer to those fears?
- How should we combat the world's fleeting wisdom and "freedom"?
- What characteristics of our culture illustrate that the world's way of living is in opposition to the Light?
- How is light self-evident? How should Christ's Light in us be self-evident?
- How can we encourage one another to continue to let the Light shine through us?

The Light Shines

- **We can follow the Light of Christ and become Sons of Light.**
 - Sons of Light dispel the Darkness.
 - Sons of Light shine His light to all nations.
- The light of the Lamb will illuminate His people in His presence for all eternity

Discussion

- Enlist two learners to read Matthew 5:14-16 and 1 Peter 2:9. What is the expectation of Christ-followers who have received the Light?
- How are they to carry out this mission?
- Read Isaiah 49:6. Where does Christ expect His followers to take His light? Why?
- Read Revelation 21:22-26. How will the Light look in eternity? What will life look like for His followers?

Application . . .

- Why do we consider missions as an option in the Christian life?
- What does our unwillingness to intentionally share the Light indicate about the priorities of our life? Our selfishness? Our lack of care for the world?
- How can we tell if we are trying to shine Christ's Light in our own power or through His power? Why is living through His power so important?
- Why do our actions show how seriously we take God's call to shine His Light with the world?
- Who will we see this week that is living in darkness? How can we let the Light shine into their darkness?