



SESSION **2**

Light of the world



MEETING AIM

To encourage the children to apply this verse to their own lives and to the world around them.



BIBLE PASSAGE

John 8:12



BACKGROUND

Our world is often a dark place and children feel this just as much as adults. This session aims to give them the opportunity to think about the 'darkness' against the background of the hope and light of Jesus. Sometimes we have no 'right' answers to the difficulties we see, but this session is designed to provide the children (and us!) with the foundational truth that Jesus is the light of the world, despite how overwhelming the darkness can feel around us.

+ CIRCLE TIME



You will need: paper and pens

As the children arrive, invite them to join you in a circle. Give each child a piece of paper and pen. Ask them to write down two true facts and one false 'fact' about themselves. When everyone has written them down, read them out and ask the group to guess which one is false.

+ GAME IN THE DARK



You will need: equipment for your game

Before the session, make the room as dark as possible. Put newspaper or black paper over the windows if necessary.

Arrange chairs into a circle with one in the middle. Choose one person to sit in the middle, blindfold them, give them a torch and place a bunch of keys under their chair. Quietly walk around the circle and tap someone on the head to be the 'thief'. The thief must creep quietly to try and grab the keys without being caught. The person in the middle must shine their torch wherever they hear a noise. If the torch is shone on the thief, the person in the middle gets another go. If they manage to grab the keys without being caught, the thief can go in the middle.

+ BIBLE STORY



You will need: obstacles, such as pop-up tunnels, hoops, tables, chairs, clothes dryers;

one torch per child (these could be brought from home); John 8:12 printed out on slips of paper

Before the session, set out your obstacles and risk assess the course so that no children get hurt during this activity.

Keep the room as dark as possible. Give out a piece of paper with today's verse on: "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).

Ask the children to read the verse together by torchlight.

Tell the children you are going to take them on a dark journey. Turn the torches off. Navigate the obstacle course together, stopping at different points. When you stop, ask them to tell you:

- One thing that is dark about the world. (Be careful only to use their answers and don't add any of your own which might go over their heads, but be sensitive to those who may have tough lives, anxieties or who talk about terrorism and other world events.)
- How Jesus is the light in this situation. Encourage them to think about the light that Jesus brings, such as healing, hope, kindness, sending the right people and giving us the right words to say to someone. Each time they add a 'light' answer, turn on a torch and continue to navigate your way, enjoying being able to see more clearly.

By the end of the course, you should have all the torches lit up and the room will be filled with light. Say the verse aloud together again.

+ CHATTING TOGETHER



Divide the children into smaller groups (or stay together if your group is small). Discuss these questions:

- How did it feel when the room was dark?
- Why do you think Jesus said the person who follows him will never live in darkness when there is still darkness in the world?
- Which part of Jesus' light do you need to shine on you right now?

+ CREATIVE RESPONSE



You will need: potatoes; copper coins; zinc-plated nails; copper wires; LED bulbs; marker pens

Split into groups of three or four. Provide each group with a potato, a coin, a nail, two wires and a bulb.

Ask the children to think about the words that were used to describe the kind of light Jesus brings, for example hope, goodness and joy, healing. They can choose a word and write it on their potato. If they wish, they can also write a situation they are finding 'dark' or hard at the moment on the other side of the potato.

Take it in turns to carry out the following experiment:

Wrap one end of one wire around the coin and push the coin into the potato. Wrap one end of the other wire around the nail and push this into the potato, ensuring that it doesn't touch the coin. Wrap the other ends of the wires around the bulb and it should light up!

You may wish to try this at home beforehand! You can also find instruction videos on youthandchildrens.work/links.

As you light up the bulbs, chat about whether you thought this would work. What surprised them about the experiment? What surprises them about Jesus?

+ PRAYER



You will need: potato lights from 'Creative response'; a few torches

Using the potato lights as a focus (provide a torch as backup in case one group can't get theirs to work), invite the children to pray and thank Jesus for being the light, or ask him to bring his light into a particular situation that is causing them concern.