



SESSION

2

Light of the world



MEETING AIM

To discover what Jesus meant when he said: "I am the light of the world."



BIBLE PASSAGE

John 8:12-20



BACKGROUND

Jesus' statement about being the light of the world challenges us to think about how we live, and what our relationship with him is like. Before the session, make sure you spend time reflecting on this yourself. It might help to read John 9 in preparation, where Jesus heals a blind man and talks about spiritual blindness.

GATHERING TIME



You will need: refreshments; a comfortable place to sit and chat

As the young people arrive, serve them the refreshments you have provided. While you eat and drink together, chat about the young people's lives. Do they have anything to share? Any triumphs? Any disasters? Share stories from your own life too, if appropriate.

PICTURE QUIZ



You will need: pictures of various items; small prize (optional)

Before the session, find images of ten different objects. In an image editor, enlarge parts of the images to obscure what they are. You could also blur the image or hide it in some other way (eg invert the colours). Print these images out and place them around the room where you meet.

Invite the group to guess what the objects are. You could run this as a quiz, with no conferring. Go through the answers and award the winner with a small prize (if you have one).

BIBLE EXPLORATION



You will need: the script below; any costumes you can source

Use the following drama script to retell John 8:12-20. The script

is set in a court room and has three characters: a prosecution lawyer (the Pharisee), a judge and Jesus. Have three young people read through the script before performing it. The rest of the young people can be the jury and those watching the proceedings:

Pharisee / lawyer: M'Lord, we come before you today to look at the case of this Jesus. He claimed, that, and I quote: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." The case is this. How can someone make any claim without a witness to back it up? I could say that I am a millionaire, but that doesn't make it true. I could say that I am a world-famous sports star, but saying it won't make it true. And forgive me if I am being presumptuous here, but as I look at the accused I don't see any sign of a light. So, without any witness, how can this be true?

Judge: Yes, I see your point. I mean, you all know that I am the judge and can tell others that I am. I know that you are a Pharisee and I can confirm this fact to the members of the jury. But I don't know that this Jesus is the light of the world. I mean, who can testify to that? Who can bear witness to the fact that Jesus is this light? Do you have anything to say in your defence, Jesus?

Jesus: The problem is that you don't know who I am. If you knew who I was, and who my father is, you would believe what I say. My father is my witness. My father will testify for me. You have your human laws, and you judge me that way. You need a witness or you won't believe. But there is a witness: my father. The problem, I think, is that you don't know or believe either of us.

Judge: Well, that's cleared that up. Do we have this man's father here? Can he be our witness. Mr Pharisee, who is his father?

Pharisee / lawyer: Well, this is part of the very contention; the heart of the issue. Jesus, you claim that if we knew you we would also know your father. However, the records clearly show, and if it pleases the court, I would like to share exhibit A. This is the accused's birth certificate. It clearly shows that the defendant's father is a certain Joseph of Nazareth. Now, this Joseph appears to be deceased. A few people we have contacted do remember him, but we certainly don't. It would appear that we do not know this 'father' Jesus speaks of and, because of that, we don't know who this person is who stands before us. Now then, Jesus, what do you say to that?

Jesus: Exactly, you don't know me.

Give the young people time to practise. The jury and spectators can gasp, shout out or clap at appropriate places.

Finally, read John 8:12-20 to the group.

CHATTING TOGETHER



Chat about the story using these questions, encouraging everyone to join in if they want to:

- If you were in the crowd listening to Jesus, what would you think of him?
- What did Jesus mean when he said: "I am the light of the world"?
- Do you feel like you live in the light or the dark? Why?
- Do you know Jesus?

CREATIVE RESPONSE



You will need: large sheet of paper; marker pen

As a group, discuss how to walk in Jesus' light. Encourage different points of view, and allow the young people to be open and honest.

Brainstorm ways to walk in Jesus' light. Some examples would be reading the Bible and praying. Share practical ways that you and others in the group do this. Write them down on your sheet of paper.

What are the difficulties? Be open and honest here. Talk about the struggles you may or may not have, and how you could overcome them.

PRAYER



You will need: tea lights (real or battery-operated)

Explain that votive candles are used in many churches. A candle is lit and a prayer said for a specific person, but we don't often light a candle for ourselves. Invite each young person to come up and light a tea light. As they do, allow them a brief time of silent prayer.

Don't forget to light a tea light and pray for yourself!

Close with a short prayer of thanks for the fact that Jesus is the light of the world; a light for each one of us.

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tells stories at thecreativeminimalist.com.