



Northland Christian Church Group Discussion Guide For the Week of May 22, 2022

Use the questions below as a springboard for discussion. You do not have to answer every question. Pick the ones you think will be helpful. Remember, Ultimately we want God's answers, not man's opinions. Always land where God lands. (ex: Where do we see that in the Bible?) Give grace. Give time for growth. Don't force it. Growth takes time, love, good questions, & support.

Connect

- What is your most vivid memory of being in the dark (Blackout? Cave? Tunnel?). What feelings do you associate with darkness?
- What is it about darkness that frightens people? Are you afraid of the dark? What is your greatest fear?

Context

In today's passage, Jesus claims that He is the "light of the world." This is an extraordinary claim with amazing implications to life and our view of the world and purpose. Light is such a powerful symbol in Jewish culture. Every Jew knew that light was always associated with God. It's peppered all through the old test... Psalm 27 "The Lord is my light" or Isaiah 60:19 - "The Lord will be your everlasting light" - Job 29 - "By his light, I walk through darkness." - Psalm 119:105 "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path"

The Lord being and bringing light is continuously present in the Scriptures and the plans of God. Jesus came to shed light on every aspect of our lives - so, we keep going back to Jesus, we keep looking to Jesus. If we keep focusing on Jesus we can not only navigate life, Jesus can light up the darkness. Jesus comes along and takes all those meanings in Scripture, every aspect of them; Everything they ever taught about God or believed in God and redirects, instructs and enlightens them to know — It all represents Jesus. From the beginning of creation to the guidance in the wilderness, a temple filled with God's glory and every aspect of the Word. They all come together and find their fullness and fulfillment in Jesus. Jesus is declaring himself to be the Shekinah Glory...the Answer... the Way... the Divine Light... All that we need... when he says "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

Jesus is giving us an amazingly powerful and transforming invitation. Follow the light, be an apprentice and disciple of Jesus, and you become light. He is inviting all of us to step out of the darkness and into the light. It's an invitation to be liberated from the darkness, from the fears of darkness, and to be able to stand confidently in the light. Let's dive in together to discover more.

Engage the Bible

Read the passage and share Surprises, Takeaways, and Observations from:

John 8:12-30 NIV

"When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. 13 The Pharisees challenged him, "Here you are, appearing as your own witness; your testimony is not valid." 14 Jesus answered, "Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going. 15 You judge by human standards; I pass judgment on no one. 16 But if I do judge, my decisions are true, because I am not alone. I stand with the Father, who sent me. 17 In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two witnesses is true. 18 I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me." 19 Then they asked him, "Where is your father?" "You do not know me or my Father," Jesus replied. "If you knew me, you would know my Father also." 20 He spoke these words while teaching in the temple courts near the place where the offerings were put. Yet no one seized him, because his hour had not yet come. 21 Once more Jesus said to them, "I am going away, and you will look for me, and you will die in your sin. Where I go, you cannot come." 22 This made the Jews ask, "Will he kill himself? Is that why he says,

'Where I go, you cannot come'?" 23 But he continued, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am he, you will indeed die in your sins." 25 "Who are you?" they asked. "Just what I have been telling you from the beginning," Jesus replied. 26 "I have much to say in judgment of you. But he who sent me is trustworthy, and what I have heard from him I tell the world." 27 They did not understand that he was telling them about his Father. 28 So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. 29 The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him." 30 Even as he spoke, many believed in him."

Discuss

1. What is Jesus really claiming in verse 12? What is his promise?
2. What do you think it means that Jesus proclaimed "I am the light of the world" instead of "I came to give the light of the world"? What is the difference between Jesus being the light and giving the light?
3. How is Jesus the light in your world? How were you in darkness before you believed in Jesus?
4. Paul wrote in II Corinthians 4:6, "For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." What insight does this verse add to the idea of Jesus as the light of the world?
5. How has following Jesus been like following someone with light through a dark place in your life?
6. In what ways has Jesus made the truth clear to you?
7. How does the OT bear witness of Jesus being the Light of the World ([Read Isaiah 9:2, Ps 27:1, Malachi 4:2](#))?
8. Jesus says in verse 19 that if people know him they also know his Father. What is he trying to teach us here?
9. READ: [John 3:19-21](#). Where do you see people loving darkness? Why does this verse say they love darkness? Have you felt the fear of light before?
10. Theologian Rudolf Bultmann once said, "Without the revelation of Christ the world is in darkness." Do you agree with this statement? Without Christ, how would your life be in darkness?
11. If we do believe that what Jesus said is true, then why do we still experience darkness in our lives? What can you do about it?
12. How do you feel knowing that God is in the business of bringing light and life to the dark places in our lives and world? How is that intimidating or inviting? What is a tangible way you can let your light shine in the world this week?
13. READ: [Matthew 5:14-16](#). What does it mean that we are the light of the world? How does it work that Jesus is the light of the world and we are also the light of the world?

End Your Group Time in Prayer

The church is called to be the visible body of Christ in the world. The light of Christ is to shine through us in the world. Just the fact that you are meeting in a small group to gather in an authentic community, to pray, to study, to share your lives with one another—that itself is an act of choosing the light of Christ over the darkness of isolation, which many are inclined to do. May God shine the light of Christ upon you this week. Close in praying for one another.

