

2021

Everlasting Light Week 2

The power of the presence of Jesus Christ



Overview

Jesus, the Everlasting Light. Sent to right the wrongs of generations past and make eternal provision for generations to come. In humble obedience, Jesus became one of us forever defining the love of God for his children. The greatest rescue mission the world has ever seen was for us. And, with that rescue comes responsibility. Christmas not only freed us, it also commissioned us. This Christmas, we will see together the power of the presence of Jesus.

Week Two

As we observe Jesus coming as the Light on that first Christmas the question now becomes what this means for our stories. Each of us has a different past and our experiences result in our spiritual journey taking a unique route as well. By understanding the way that we process information about the world and God we can come to a better understanding of what living in the Light looks like for us.

Scripture: Ephesians 5:8-10 (NIV), John 4:39-42 (NIV), Genesis 39:2-5 (NIV), Genesis 39:19-21(NIV), Genesis 45:4-7(NIV), James 1:4-5(NIV)

Key Takeaways & Action Items

- **We as people know life through story.**
- **Self-authenticating stories.**
- **God loves to let light trickle into dark storylines.**
- **Rescue and relief have a complicated relationship.**
- **Living in the Light requires us to read the story entirely.**
- **Find joy in the journey.**
- **Remain unsatisfied but not unguarded.**
- **Understand that comparison only complicates your charge.**

Group Discussion Questions

1. A lot of what we think about ourselves is the story that we tell ourselves or the story that others tell us about ourselves. Today, what does your story say about you? Do you believe the story you tell yourself is true, or just going with what people say?
2. We understand that in our stories, there was darkness before there was light. This could be past family history, recent events, etc. What would you consider the “dark” in your story? Have you come out of that dark or still working towards the light?

3. Ephesians 5:8-10

In what ways does your life reflect light?

In what ways does your life still reflect darkness?

4. Read John 4:39-42

The people believed because of what someone else said at first, but then experienced Him themselves and believed because of experience. Describe what life was like when you just “heard” of Jesus. Describe what it was like to actually encounter Jesus and fully trusted he was the one you read about, prayed to, and followed?

5. Read Genesis 39:2-5 and Genesis 39:19-21

“Rescue and relief will always have a complicated story”

Sometimes, sharing or hearing life’s story feels like we’re sitting in a prison like Joseph. But we know Joseph was able to connect with people who would later help him get “favor” from the leader. You have to “earn” the right to hear someone’s story- they need to trust you. Likewise with your story- but also understand it can get complicated, but God can use it, still.

Describe a time where sharing your story or hearing others was complicated or messy? Was trust there, or was it broken? What was the resolve? Do you have a hard time trusting people with your story, still, today? How can you continue to take on the responsibility of telling your story to rescue others while knowing that trust *could* be broken?

6. Read Genesis 45:4-7

Joseph was able to restore broken relationships and broken trust by showing grace because of the favor God had given him. Like Joseph, **Living in the Light requires us to read the story entirely.** We can’t just camp out in our “prison cell”. We’re constantly maturing by dispersing the favor we’ve been given, even to those who caused darkness in our lives. What are some ways that you can show grace and favor to those who tried to keep you in darkness? This is a difficult task for even the most mature believers- so how can we hold each other accountable for what’s to come?

Resources

- ***“What makes us unique and human is our background, personal history, and lived experiences... As human beings, we have a natural curiosity to learn***

about ourselves and the world around us... And that curiosity about the deeper more mysterious aspects of existence is what stories are for.”-Jason Stellman

- For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord.
Ephesians 5:8-10 (NIV)
- Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I ever did.” So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, “We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.”
John 4:39-42 (NIV)
- The Lord was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the Lord blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the Lord was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field.
Genesis 39:2-5 (NIV)
- When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, “This is how your slave treated me,” he burned with anger. Joseph’s master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined. But while Joseph was there in the prison, the Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden.
Genesis 39:19-21(NIV)
- ...“Come close to me.”, “I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. But God sent me ahead of you to

preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

Genesis 45:4-7(NIV)

- Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

James 1:4-5(NIV)