

2021

Everlasting Light Week 3

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 Three

Not only is Jesus the light, he says that we are too. But, how? What does our relationship with darkness look like? Contrary to the tenor of the day, Jesus teaches that we defeat it by illuminating it. In the last week of this series, we will be taking a closer look at the unexpectedly blessed and confusingly difficult life of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Through observing her life, we will gain a template for our own. A template that, in the end, will make us a brighter people.

Scripture: 1 Peter 2:9-10, Matthew 5:14-16, 2 Corinthians 5:14

Key Takeaways & Action Items

- Being in the light is not always light work.
- Our identity illuminates our God, a God full of mercy and grace to match every day's need for such things.
- How we shine our light has been the source of great debate, especially over the last two years in our country and, sadly to say, especially in our churches.

Group Discussion Questions

1. How can we live in the light, when we're surrounded by such darkness? Dig deeper here, what are practical ways that you can make a habit?
2. Some choose to "submit" to the darkness- what does that look like? (living in it, knowingly or unknowingly)
3. Some choose to "shame" the darkness (easily forgetting they were once a part of the darkness- we judge others.) Name some examples of this:
4. The choice we are called to make when it comes to darkness is to "serve it"... how does that strike you initially?
5. Read 1 Peter 2:9-10
We're called to "Serve" the light by showing the Goodness of God- by sharing how he called us from our darkness and brought us into light. This challenge is telling us to tell our stories, no matter how much shame tries to creep in.

Have you written your story yet? Have you shared your story? If so, how often?

6. Read 2 Corinthians 5:14

The difference between living in the light and darkness is fully understanding that God saved ALL, not just one. This is where our gift of compassion and connection to others comes in. How can we lovingly, non forcefully and non judgmentally, show people who don't believe He came for them?

7. The big idea of living in the light, or christianity, is accepting that this life is not about "me". Honestly, this can be challenging when facing opposition, and that's what this group is for. What are some things that currently make you question God and His calling on your life?

8. Read 1 Peter 2:9-10 again

Mary, the mother of Jesus, was called "Highly Favored" by the angel God spoke to her through. Later, an angel told her that her baby was going to be "Great, Holy, and the Son of God".. but as we know they both lived in great opposition and trials. People hated them, mocked them, and didn't see the calling God placed on them. Yet, both of them remembered that they were CHOSEN, and we have to remember that, too.

It's easy to see other people as "chosen" from what their life looks like, so let's go around the room and share qualities we've seen in each other: Let's remind each other daily that we are a chosen people, and we are the Light.

Resources

- "But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light." 1 Peter 2:9-10 (ESV)
- The same drink that gets me out the door, is the same drink that puts me on the floor. That new thing I want to try some more is the same mistake I used to make before. *Helpless, 2017*
- For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all 2 Corinthians 5:14 (ESV)
- My life is not about me. It is about God. It is about a willing participation in a larger mystery. At this time, we do this by not rejecting or running from what is happening but by accepting our current situation and asking God to be with us in it. Our lives

are about allowing life to “be done unto us,” which is Mary’s prayer at the beginning and Jesus’ prayer at the end. Richard Rohr, *Adam’s Return* 2004