

Worship

JESUS: LIGHT OF THE WORLD

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE
JANUARY 2011



CREATIVE LIGHT

Study by
Carol Reid
Nashville, Tennessee

Guide by
Carolyn Michael
Madison, Alabama

Creative LIGHT



FOCAL POINT: Jesus Light of the World is worthy of worship as our Creator and worthy of emulation as the pattern for creativity in our lives.

LIGHT FOR THE PATH: Genesis 1; John 1:1-13.

RAYS TO REMEMBER: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not” (John 1:1-5).

Christmas lights are so twinkly, bright, sparkly and beautiful. They inspire magical moments and put us all in the mood for the brightest season of the year. Christmas was *last* month, you’re thinking. That is true, but the special feeling the lights invoked remains with me and makes me think of the “Light of the World.”

Many of the songs we sang this Christmas made reference to Jesus as the true light. One of our choir specials, “Candles of Christmas” gave us a picture of how the Light came to this world to dispel the darkness and give us salvation. The children’s program at church featured children dressed as twinkling stars singing “This Little Light of Mine.” During the beautiful candlelight service on Christmas Eve, we remembered that Jesus is the Light. Everywhere this Christmas, I’ve been reminded of God’s power to divide the light from the darkness. How appropriate to work on this study at this point in time. God is good.

Brightness is so much better than darkness. Have you ever been in a large building, department store, maybe, when the power goes out? Did I hear you scream? When it’s absolutely dark and you can’t see your fingers in front of your face, it is really scary. Or maybe you’re lying in bed when it is pitch black, waiting for morning. Light a match, a candle, flip on a light switch or wake up at daybreak, and the light is a welcome sight.

We awoke Christmas morning 2010 to a winter wonderland with snow everywhere. It was an amazing sight, so bright and gorgeous, a wonderful reminder that God is in control. It seemed as if the brightness and glory of light were everywhere. He is the one and only “Light of the World.” He has the power to create something so pure and white—with the ability to cover everything—showing us that we can be washed “white as snow.” It’s all about Him!

Light and Creation

☀ Read the “Rays to Remember” together. *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness: and the darkness comprehended it not” (John 1:1-5).*

☀ By what is Jesus referred to in this passage? (1)*The Word*; (2)*The Life*; (3)*The Light*.

☀ Read Genesis 1.

☀ On which term does this chapter focus? (*The Light*)

☀ Go over all the questions and answers for Week One, pp. 15-16.

☀ Focus a minute on the last question on p. 16: “Why should creation praise the Lord?” (*Because He created it and made everything—Isaiah 44:23-24*)



- ✿ Read these other Scriptures that describe nature's praise: Psalm 69:34; 98:7-8; Isaiah 55:12.
- ✿ What is the most beautiful thing you've ever seen in creation? Take a minute and describe how you felt when you saw it.
- ✿ Did you think of God and praise Him?
- ✿ What does Scripture say will happen if we don't praise Him? (*The rocks will cry out. Luke 19:40*)
- ✿ In your journal, list the three elements of creativity mentioned in "Reflecting the Son" (p. 16). These are: (1) Order, (2) Design and (3) Beauty. Write about how these play a part in worship within your church.
- ✿ Close in prayer and praise to our Creator for everything He has created.

God's Image in His Creation

- ✿ Read John 1:1-5 together.
- ✿ Count all the times this passage refers to God. (*I counted 13.*)
- ✿ Read Genesis 2:7. What did God do to man? (*Breathed the breath of life into him.*)
- ✿ Does image mean the physical appearance? (*Image is the existence of man as a spirit. However, when Jesus came to earth, He was a man.*)
- ✿ What form did Adam have? (*A body with a spirit dwelling in him.*)
- ✿ Do any other creatures of God have a spirit? (*In his sermon, "The Glory and Misery of Man" Pastor and Bible teacher Ray Stedman says that they function much the same as humans to a lesser degree, but they do not have a spirit. That is unique to man. www.raystedman.org*)
- ✿ Is God a Spirit? (*Yes, God is a Spirit—John 4:24; 2 Corinthians 3:17; Acts 17:24.*)
- ✿ Does God require a physical form? (*No, a spirit can exist without a body, and God is spirit—Luke 24:39. Jesus was telling the disciples that, at that time, He was both spirit and human.*)
- ✿ What does man have the ability to do? (*To be creative, to communicate and to make moral choices.*)
- ✿ We know that the three persons of the Godhead worked together in the creation of man as indicated by the "our" in Genesis 1:26. Who is the Trinity? (God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ) and God the Holy Spirit—Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14.)
- ✿ How do we explain that God is three persons? (*God exists as three persons sharing the same divine essence, so there is one God, made up of three persons. Though no earthly analogy could ever adequately describe this mystery, several objects or elements in the created world represent the three-in-one concept. I like to think of an egg. It has three separate parts—the shell, the white, and the yolk, but it's only one egg. See if you can think of others.*)
- ✿ In the beginning, man was made to be Godlike—Genesis 5:1; Genesis 9:6. What happened? (*Sin entered in—Genesis 2:17; 3:6; Psalm 51:5; James 1:15.*)
- ✿ John declares without a doubt that Jesus is God. (*Read John 1:1 and then John 1:14.*)
- ✿ We know the Book of John was written by John the Disciple (*Matthew 17:1; Mark 5:37; Revelation 1:1*).
- ✿ Which John was the forerunner of Jesus? (*John the Baptist—John 1:6, 25-26*)
- ✿ Name two distinctions for which we remember these men. (1) *John, the beloved disciple was given the honor of caring for Jesus' mother at the cross of Jesus (John 19:26).* (2) *John, the Baptist, baptized Jesus and saw the Spirit descend on Him (Mark 1:9-11).*

✿ In your journal, share ways you are creative, how you best communicate and how you decide upon the choices you make in life. *(I would love to be able to read these to see all the different type things that you put down. I wonder how many of you will list Facebook or cell phone as ways you best communicate. Can you imagine our grandmothers or great grandmothers doing these things?)*

✿ Dismiss in a prayer of gratitude to God for making man/woman in His image.



The Light and the Word

✿ Read John 1:5, “*And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*”

✿ Reflect upon the meaning of light. *(1)Physical light that illuminates; (2)Knowledge or truth (I see the light.); (3)Spiritual level—the very life of God.)*

✿ How did light come into being? *(God spoke and it was there—Genesis 1:3)*

✿ Read Colossians 1:16-17 and Hebrews 1:3. Who holds the world together? *(Jesus)*

✿ John 1:4 tells us Jesus gives us life. What else is associated with the life mentioned in this verse? *(Light of men)*

✿ What is light a symbol of here? *(Knowledge of understanding, truth. That “light” gives us an understanding of eternal life.)*

✿ Do you understand eternal life? *(John 3:16; John 5:24; John 11:26)*

✿ Out of all created beings, which is the only one able to really communicate with words? *(Man. The ability to communicate is part of God’s image in man.)*

✿ How do you use your voice for God? Is it to pray, praise, witness?

✿ What are believers' duties, performed in the Light? *(1)Worship—2 Chronicles 3:13-14; (2)Working—John 9:4; (3)Walking—Ephesians 5:8; (4)Witnessing—Philippians 2:15; (5) Watching—1 Thessalonians 5:5-6.*

✿ Why is it important for us to shine for God? *(We’re wise to turn others to righteousness—Daniel 12:3; Psalm 126:6; John 4:36.)*

✿ How is Jesus the Word? *(1 John 1:1-2; John 6:63; Matthew 4:4; Psalm 119:105)*

✿ Are you walking in the “lighted” path that God gives us?

✿ Make an entry in your journal describing how you could tell someone about Jesus and the way He saved you from the darkness of the world.

✿ Close in prayer. Praise God for sending His Son to this world as our Light and Salvation.

So What?

✿ Read John 1:9-13. Whose will is mentioned in verse 13?

✿ Read and go over each question and answer on p. 19.

✿ Read the bullet points aloud.

✿ Is there one that speaks to you more than the others? Which one and why?

✿ Who is the Light promised to? *(1)the obedient—Psalm 97:11, Job 22:28; (2)the upright—Psalm 112:4; (3)the just—Proverbs 4:18; (4)the benevolent—Isaiah 58:7-8; (5)the followers of Christ—John 8:12, 1 John 1:7.*



- ✿ Why should we try to walk in the Light? (*Romans 13:12*)
- ✿ Who provides us with armor? (*The Lord—Ephesians 6:10-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:8*)
- ✿ How does the armor protect against the darkness? (*The armor guards our hearts when we have faith, righteousness, peace, and salvation—2 Corinthians 6:7.*)
- ✿ How do we obtain this armor? (through the Word of God and through prayer—Ephesians 6:17-18)
- ✿ When we've been in darkness and we suddenly see a light, how does this make us feel? (*Much better, relieved, happy*)
- ✿ Light is bright. Look up Scriptures that refer to the brightness of God's light. (*Hebrews 1:3; Acts 26:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; Habakkuk 3:3-4*)
- ✿ Read this encouraging Scripture for help in the dark times: Micah 7:7-10.
- ✿ In your journal, list all the elements of the armor of God and what each piece does. Refer to Ephesians 6:13-17. (1)*Belt of Truth—verse 14; (2)Breastplate of Righteousness—verse 14; (3)Shoes of Peace—verse 15; (4)Shield of Faith—verse 16; (5)Helmet of Salvation—verse 17; (6)Sword of the Spirit—verse 17.*
- ✿ Close in prayer and thank God for being the Light of the World and providing us with His armor of protection.

In Closing...

The year 2010 has come and gone. Most likely, Christmas lights are packed away. The snow (for us) has melted. Yet we know that we still have Jesus in our hearts. That Light will never fade or go out, as long as we trust and obey Him. He didn't come to be a little flicker just when we need help, but a full burning bush to light our way and help us keep the darkness at bay. Temptations and evil lurk everywhere in our world. The only way we can overcome is by knowing the Light of the World. Ladies, shine for Jesus; He definitely shines for us. I want to be a light in our dark world. I pray you do, too. Let's join together in 2011 to make our corners of the world "Christmas" all the time—for everyone to see. Happy New Year!