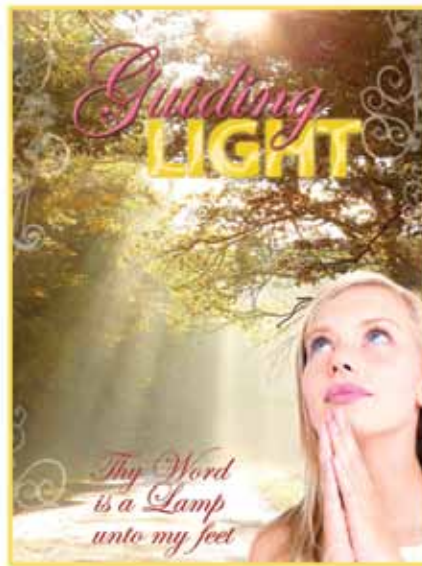


Worship

JESUS: LIGHT OF THE WORLD

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE
FEBRUARY 2011

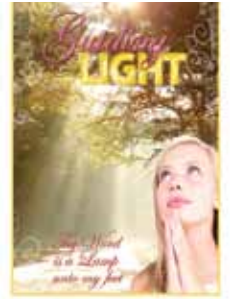


GUIDING LIGHT

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Guiding LIGHT



FOCAL POINT: Jesus Light of the World is our Guide, worthy to be worshiped and followed.

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

RAYS TO REMEMBER: “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105).

As the plane dipped below the clouds and prepared to land, I looked out the window to my right. There, in my vision, lay one of the most beautiful sight I had ever seen. The sun was just peeping over the horizon in a glorious blaze of reds, oranges, and yellows. The light was blinding but I couldn't turn my eyes away. I had chill bumps everywhere. It was absolutely gorgeous and awe inspiring. To think that God created the sun for us is beyond description.

While studying God's guidance for the children of Israel (through the fire and the cloud), I thought again of that sunrise. It was almost as if our plane was being guided by an unseen hand, yet with a very visible object. I had no control over whether or not the sun would rise and did not realize that, after a long night of flying, I would be able to see something so spectacular. Yet, there it was. God spoke to me in that moment, reaffirming He is God and He can do what He wants. God spoke to His people long ago in a very real way; He still speaks to us today. Are we listening?

Whenever I see a rainbow, I feel the same awe. This phenomenon, caused by light passing through water, remains a sign of God's promise that He would never again destroy the earth by flood as in Noah's day. God created light; He is Light. I find it so amazing how everything in God's word connects and intertwines. The words "light" and "good" usually denote the same connotations. On the other hand, "darkness" and "evil" are linked together. This may seem elementary to the seasoned Christian, but in preparing this guide, it struck me how often we forget this in our lives. We let the darkness overwhelm us when we need to be walking in the light.

As I write, I am praying you will let God's Guiding Light flood over you in a fresh and cleansing way. We all need to rejoice in God's redemption plan and remember that one day we will be with Him in Heaven, where there will be no need of any other light because He is the Light (Revelation 22:5). Praise His holy name.

The Pillar and the Cloud

✿ Write the "Rays to Remember" on a 3 x 5 card for memorization this month: *"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).*

✿ Go over all the questions and answers for this section on p. 20.

✿ Do any of you remember oil or kerosene lamps? What was their function? *(To provide light)*

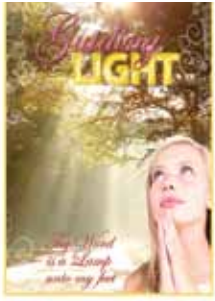
✿ What is our main source of light today? *(Electricity)*

✿ Can you think of another source? *(The sun/solar)*

✿ Where did the "pillar of fire" come from? *(God—Exodus 13:21)*

✿ What do you think it looked like? *(A burning tree, building, fireworks, rectangle shape, rounded shape, etc. We can only suppose what it actually looked like, but it was there lighting up their darkened sky as surely as we sit hear in a lighted room.)*

✿ There are three main categories of clouds based on Latin root words. *(Cirrus, Stratus, Cumulus)*



- ✿ Can you describe each? (*Cirrus—thin and wispy; Stratus—layers; Cumulus—puffy*)

LEADER'S NOTE: Clouds are formed when water evaporates from oceans, lakes, and ponds. Rain clouds are known as Nimbus. There are many more types of clouds listed in the cross-classification of clouds.

- ✿ How many of you have ever looked at the clouds to find shapes that look like something such as animals, faces, objects? (*This was a favorite past time in the lazy days of summer when I was growing up.*)

✿ Do you wonder if the clouds the Israelite children saw were shaped like arrows pointing the way or maybe words, indicating "This is the way to go"? (*No, I think they saw the same formation of clouds each day which would be a miracle. However these clouds looked, they provided the coverage needed for the Israelites' safety.*)

- ✿ How long had these people wandered? (*40 years—Numbers 14:33; Psalm 95:10*)

✿ What other provision did God make for the Israelite children? (*Just think—they never had to go shopping for new shoes or clothes—Nehemiah 9:21*)

✿ How did the Lord appear to Aaron and Miriam, Moses' brother and sister? (*In the pillar of the cloud—Numbers 12:4-6*)

- ✿ Does God appear to us in this way today? (*No, but that's not to say He couldn't; He is God.*)

✿ How do we hear from God? (*Through His Word—1 Corinthians 2:10; Ephesians 1:9; Romans 16:26*)

✿ Meditate on I Corinthians 2:9: "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

- ✿ Close in a prayer of thanksgiving for these things to come.

Leaving the Lights On in the Temple

- ✿ Review the Rays to Remember. Many of you may have leaned this verse as a child.

✿ Go over the questions and answers on p. 21.

✿ Why was Aaron the one to tend the lampstand? (*He was chosen as the first high priest—Exodus 28:1.*)

✿ Besides being Moses' brother, and maybe because of that, in what role did Aaron begin his ministry? (*Moses' spokesman—Exodus 4:14-16*)

✿ Why did the lamps in the Tabernacle have to burn continually? (*To show that the Light of God never goes out or fades away.*)

✿ Have you ever been in your church, alone, in the dark? How did you feel? (*I admit I have and it was kind of scary.*)

- ✿ Once the lights are on, we feel much more comfortable. How can Psalm 27:1 help?

✿ Read 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:21. According to these verses, if we've accepted Christ, what are we? (*the temple of God*)

✿ How do you keep the light burning in your temple? (*Obedience—1 John 3:24; Faith—Ephesians 3:17-19; Living a new life—Galatians 2:20*)

✿ How are the light and the life important? (*Knowing that God is the "Fountain of Life" keeps us living in the Light—Psalm 36:9; Proverbs 13:14.*)

✿ Make a list in your journal of ways to be a light in your home, church and community. (*Examples: Home—encourager, helper, supporter; Church—leader, faithful member, mentor; Community—good citizen, witness, leader. You will be able to think of many more.*)

☀ Close in prayer; pray that God will anoint you with His Holy Spirit so that you will keep your temple lit.

Thy Word is a Lamp



☀ Say the Ray to Remember without looking.

☀ Go over the questions and answers on p. 22.

☀ How do we keep our lamps burning?

(1) By obeying the Word of God.

(2) By praying.

(3) By seeking God's Will.

(4) By walking in the Spirit.

(5) By being a witness.

☀ Which of Jesus' parables involved lamps? (*Parable of the Ten Virgins—Matthew 25:1-13*)

☀ What did the wise virgins do? (*Took oil with them to meet the bridegroom—Matthew 25:4*)

☀ What is the significance of the oil? (*Oil typically represents the Holy Spirit—Luke 4:18; Acts 10:38*)

☀ How were the virgins benefited by having their lamps trimmed and burning? (*They were able to go in with the bridegroom—Matthew 25:10*)

☀ Look at the phrase "they that were ready" in the previous verse (Matthew 25:9) and discuss what this means. (*Prepared and anxiously awaiting—Matthew 24:44; Luke 12:35; Mark 13:35; Revelation 19:7*)

☀ How do we stay ready? (*By staying in the Word. God was giving us instructions when He said through the Psalmist, "The word is a lamp unto our feet."*)

☀ Read Micah 7:8. What does God do for us? (*Lights the darkness*)

☀ Write Psalm 119:105 in your journal. Draw a picture to represent this verse. Be creative.

☀ Close in prayer. Ask God to give you a love for His word and the discipline it takes to study it.

A Light to our Path

☀ Have two or three people say Psalm 119:105 from memory.

☀ Go over the questions and answers together on pp. 23-24,

☀ Have you ever had to walk down a dark path or road?

☀ Were you nervous or fearful?

☀ Is the same path or road less scary in the light?

☀ Who is the light for our path? (*Jesus—John 8:12*)

☀ Do you trust Jesus to be the light for your life?

☀ Describe Paul's encounter with the Light? (*Acts 9:3-6*)

☀ Could Paul physically see after his experience? (*Not for a while—Acts 9:8-9*)

☀ When did he regain his sight? (*After Ananias went to him—Acts 9:17-18*)

☀ As a result of this dramatic event, what did Paul become? (*A great missionary and evangelist—Acts 9:20, 26-27*)



✿ Was Paul truly converted? (*Yes, he was changed from the creature he had been—2 Corinthians 5:17.*)

✿ Paul saw, received and believed that Jesus was the true Light of God. How did he react to this revelation? (*It changed his world forever—Acts 22:9.*)

✿ Do you believe that some day we'll get to meet Paul in Heaven?

✿ Does seeing the Light change people's lives just as it did Paul's? (*Yes—John 8:12; Luke 1:77-79*)

✿ Who is able to draw near the Light? (*Those who have been saved through Jesus' blood—Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 9:12-14; Romans 5:8-10*)

✿ Make an entry in your journal and describe how knowing the Light of the World has changed your life. In what shape would your life be if you did not know Jesus as your Savior?

✿ Close in prayer and praise God for sending His Son to die for our sins so we might have this everlasting eternal Light in our lives.

In Closing...

I get excited thinking about future life in Heaven with the Light of the World. Can you imagine not having to turn on any light switches or burn any candles? Jesus will be the light. We will be able to see everything clearly and in perfect vision. We will live forever in a place where everything is bright and glorious with no darkness at all. I am really thankful for that. Darkness can bring on fear, and I don't want any more fear. We will live in harmony and peace for all eternity. I am looking forward to this more and more every day. Yet, while we're here on earth, God intends for us to shine and be a witness for Him. Do your best to light your world. "Brighten the corner where you are."