

## 12-14-25 Small Group Guide

### Small Group Guide: Light in the Darkness

Based on the Sermon from [Church Name]

#### Opening Prayer & Icebreaker (10 minutes)

**Icebreaker Question:** Share about a time when you experienced total darkness (power outage, cave tour, etc.). How did you feel, and what was your reaction when the lights came back on?

#### Sermon Overview (5 minutes)

This sermon explored the theme of light and darkness through the Christmas story, emphasizing that Jesus came as light into our dark world. The service was conducted largely in darkness to help us experience the profound need for light—both physical and spiritual—and to understand that we are blessed even in dark circumstances.

#### Key Takeaways

Blessing doesn't always mean comfort - Being blessed means God is working all things for good, even when circumstances are difficult

Jesus experienced real darkness - Christ entered our world, experienced suffering, and relates to every struggle we face

One light makes a difference - When we share Christ's light with others, it multiplies and transforms darkness

Faith means trusting despite circumstances - True faith believes God's promises even when our situation seems dark

#### Discussion Questions

##### Understanding Darkness (15 minutes)

The sermon stated that "darkness is the absence of light." How does this simple definition help you understand spiritual darkness differently?

The pastor mentioned that Mary's "blessing" didn't feel like one for months.

Can you share a time when God's blessing in your life didn't initially feel like a blessing? How did your perspective change over time?

Read Genesis 1:1-3. What does it mean that God's first creative act was to speak light into darkness? How does this relate to what He wants to do in our lives?

Experiencing Jesus (15 minutes)

The sermon emphasized that Jesus experienced loss, suffering, and hardship—including possibly losing his earthly father, Joseph. How does knowing that Jesus truly understands our pain change the way you approach Him in difficult times?

The pastor said, "The closer you get to the light, the more you see the sin stains on your life." Have you experienced this in your spiritual journey? How do you respond when you become more aware of your need for a Savior?

Jesus was born in a cave meant for sacrificial lambs and died as the ultimate sacrifice. What does this full-circle story teach us about God's intentional plan for redemption?

Living as Light (15 minutes)

During the candle-lighting, we saw how one light can spread to many. Who first "lit your candle" by sharing Christ with you? Who are you currently sharing His light with?

The sermon challenged: "If you've known Jesus for a while and you're not running any race, you really don't know Jesus very well." How would you honestly assess your spiritual race right now? Are you at the starting blocks, walking, running, or somewhere else?

The pastor asked, "Why do we only wait for Christmas to share?" What practical barriers keep you from sharing Christ's light year-round? How can

this group help you overcome them?

## Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge: Choose One

### Option 1 - Darkness to Light Exercise:

Spend 15 minutes in a completely dark room this week

Pray and ask God to reveal any "dark areas" in your life that need His light

Journal about what He shows you

### Option 2 - Light Someone's Darkness:

Identify one person in your life who is going through a "dark" season

Reach out to them this week with a practical act of kindness

Share encouragement (and if appropriate, share about Jesus)

### Option 3 - Evaluate Your Blessing:

Make two lists: 1) Current difficulties in your life, 2) Ways you are still blessed

Practice saying "I am blessed" even when looking at your difficulties

Share your perspective shift with someone

### Group Action Steps

Prayer Partners: Pair up and commit to praying for each other's "dark areas" this week

Accountability: Share one specific way you'll "share the light" before Christmas

Next Meeting Preview: Come prepared to share one story of how you saw God's light in someone's darkness

### Memory Verse

John 1:5 (NIV) "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

Closing Reflection (10 minutes)

## Silent Reflection Questions:

Where in my life am I most struggling to see God's light right now?

Who does God want me to share His light with this week?

What would change in my life if I truly believed "I am blessed" no matter what?

## Closing Prayer Focus:

Pray for those in the group walking through dark seasons

Pray for courage to be light-bearers in our communities

Thank God that He stepped into our darkness through Jesus

## Additional Resources

Scripture Reading Plan: John 1:1-18, Genesis 1:1-5, Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 2:1-20

Recommended Song: "Light of the World" by Lauren Daigle or "O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

For Further Study: Read Hebrews 4:14-16 on how Jesus relates to our weaknesses

## Leader Notes

Consider dimming lights during discussion to create a reflective atmosphere

Have candles available to recreate the sermon's candle-lighting experience

Be sensitive to those who may have anxiety about darkness

Create space for vulnerable sharing about personal "dark" seasons

Emphasize that being blessed doesn't minimize real pain—it coexists with it