

“Light from the Height”

John 8:12-30

8/15/21

Discussion Guide

Put yourself in the crowd that night. The candles are ablaze. You’ve been experiencing an amazing week of worship, camping, fellowshiping with others, cooking out, meeting and conversing with new people. Suddenly the speaker that night shouts: *“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”* (John 8:12)

As a Jew you know the light he is referring to, the light that appeared to Israel in the wilderness as a cloud by day and as a pillar of fire at night. You know what the light provided your ancestors. Jesus is saying that what they experienced in the wilderness you will experience in Him if you follow him.

React to his statement. How does it hit you? How would you have understood it? What questions arise?

1. Share one thought, line, saying or point that stuck out for you from the sermon and share your thoughts, reflections, or questions about it.
2. Before you met Jesus, what was your impression of Christianity?
3. Of the two benefits of having the light of the world in you, guidance for living and protection from life, including from the evil within, which one has had the greatest influence in your life? Share the difference knowing Jesus has made on your life?
4. Read this passage...*“When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these.”* Galatians 5:19-21

Of the list of the “works of the flesh” (NIV)/ “desires of the sinful nature” which one(s) did God address in your life immediately after you placed your faith in him? After you finish sharing the first thing God changed in your life share which one(s) took you awhile to change?

5. Read...*“So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won’t be doing what your sinful nature craves.(see list above) The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires...the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”* Galatians 5:16-17, 22-23.

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Each person in the group will be in the “hot seat” (Actually it’ll be the “love seat”) during this exercise. Someone volunteer to go first. Then take turns being in the “hot seat.” Have each member of your small group share one fruit of the Spirit they see in that person’s life. Make sure everyone has had time to share before the next person takes his/her turn.

This may be hard if you are a relatively new group. It’s easier if you’ve known the people in your group for a while. For some this may become uncomfortable because they aren’t used to hearing positive things about themselves. If you are on the receiving side receive everything without comment other than to say after everyone is done: “Thank you!” Let what they say in your heart. Don’t be surprised if you tear up.

DON’T SKIP THIS ONE. OF ALL THE QUESTIONS AND EXERCIZES PLEASE DO THIS ONE! THE EXPERIENCE IS POWERFUL!

6. Share what you appreciate about the working of God in your life. How have you changed for the good? At the end, after all have shared, stop and pray and give God thanks for all the wonderful things he has done in all of your lives.
7. Do you see Christ crucified for you? Share a time when that truth really hit you and moved you.
“And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself.” He said this to indicate how he was going to die.” John 12:32-33
8. Have you seen Jesus for who he is: the “*light of the world?*” (vs. 12) Share when it dawned on you Jesus was truly the light of your life.
9. Read the passage and respond to it: *“This is the message we heard from Jesus and now declare to you: God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all. So we are lying if we say we have fellowship with God but go on living in spiritual darkness; we are not practicing the truth. But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.”* I John 1:5-7.
10. Have you experienced what Pastor Richard referred to as the “Christian Self-Image?”
11. What once drove your life but has now lost its attraction for you?

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12. Share a habit that had a grip on your life and how you were able to get loose from it.

End in prayer and then finish reciting the verse below.

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.” Ephesians 3:20-21