

WEEK 2 LESSON GUIDE



BIG IDEA

Jesus is the light
in the darkness.

BIBLE

The Last Supper:
Mark 14:12–26; John 3:16–21

LARGE GROUP TIME

Welcome, everyone! It's great to see you all here shining God's light! As we continue the story of Jesus this Easter season, let's keep our focus on the light. Light is easier to spot the darker it is, and today's story is about some serious darkness.

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

ACTIVITY | Hide And Glow Seek

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *About an hour or less before kids arrive, crack and hide glow sticks of different colors around the room. Get creative with your placement. Then when it's time to play, split kids into several teams and designate a different color for each team. Give kids one minute to see how many glow sticks of their team's color they can find, while the lights are on. After a minute, turn the lights off so the glow sticks are easier to spot. For smaller groups, do this activity without teams and have kids locate any color glow stick.*
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** *For kids with limited mobility, put a bunch of glow sticks, bracelets, and necklaces in a bin and invite kids to crack them to reveal the colors.*
- Even though the glow sticks were glowing the whole time, we were able to see it better when the room was darker. Today we'll talk about how there can be different forms of darkness in this world, but there is a light that is brighter than all of that!

ACTIVITY | Blacklight Art Gallery

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Divide kids into groups of about five to eight, depending on the size of your group. Hand out 11"x14" or poster paper and invisible ink pens to each group. Encourage groups to fill the page with pictures and words that come to mind when they think about "light." Then give each group a chance to show off their art under a blacklight to everyone. You can also roll out a large piece of white butcher paper on the ground and have everyone fill in any blank space.*
 - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** *Pass out glow-in-the-dark stickers that kids can place on construction paper.*
- **What comes to mind when you hear the word "light?" What shines light? What reflects light? How does light make you feel?**
- Today's Bible story will talk about someone who should come to mind right away when we think about light!

QUESTION | “What is darkness?”

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have kids share about all the different kinds of physical darkness they’ve experienced. You might want to leave the lights on in case this subject matter is frightening to some kids.
- **Can you think of a time you were somewhere that was so dark that it was hard for you to see?** (Possible answers could include movie theaters, my room in the middle of the night, or during a power outage.)
- **What makes darkness scary?**
- A lot of people are uncomfortable in the dark. Every little sound and shadow on the wall makes us think that something frightening might be lurking . . . because we can’t see all too well.
- Sometimes darkness is necessary, like when it helps us sleep, but the darkness we are going to talk about today is not that kind. It’s the kind that happens when God’s light is nowhere to be found. Let’s find out more from our Bible story!

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | Mark 14:12–26 (The Last Supper)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Stand under a single spotlight (or have it pointed at you) as you read from the passage and tell the Bible story. Consider serving kids with a small beverage (in a neon cup) and a snack. Turn down the lights before you begin teaching.
- Now it’s time to turn the spotlight on the Bible story. Each time I say, “Scripture Spotlight!” raise your drink cup then take a sip. **Are you ready?** Let’s glow!
- **Scripture Spotlight: Mark 14:12–16.**
 - Let’s set the scene! Jesus, the son of God, and his disciples were in Jerusalem for the Passover, and it was time to celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread, which lasted a week. These events were meant to remind the Jewish people of how God protected their ancestors when they were in Egypt. God watched over them during the ten terrible plagues and eventually led them out of Egypt through Moses.
 - But this meal is extra special for a different reason. Jesus knew that he would die very soon. But that’s not all.
- **Scripture Spotlight: Mark 14:18–21.**
 - So imagine you are one of Jesus’ friends who are sitting at the table when he drops this news. All thirteen of you have spent so much time together in the last three years. Now one of you was going to turn your back on Jesus and get him killed? They were so shocked that each person wondered, “Is it me?”
 - And sadly, for one of them, the answer was yes. That person had darkness in their heart and hadn’t allowed the light of Jesus in all the way.
- **Scripture Spotlight: Mark 14:22–26.**
 - Jesus doesn’t spend any more time trying to expose who was going to betray him. It’s as though Jesus was merely stating a fact . . . this is going to happen. He showed the disciples that even spending all that time with him didn’t guarantee that they would always do the right thing. So he gives them a way to remember him when he’s no longer with them.
- We know now that when Jesus talked about his body and blood, he meant that we should remember that he died for the sins of the world. Right then and there, though, I’m sure his friends were so confused. Jesus had just said that one of them would turn Jesus in, but now they were singing a song together?
- What Jesus did then is what he continues to do for us today . . . he chose to focus on the light, even in the midst of very real darkness. Instead of mourning over the great sadness and pain that lay ahead, he reminded his disciples of why he came. Even on this very dark day, he shined God’s light.

BIG IDEA | Jesus is the light in the darkness.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have large poster boards with one word of the Big Idea painted on each using [invisible blacklight paint](#). You will need a [blacklight](#) to reveal the message. Use [neon tape](#) to create a frame around the poster board. Have kids read each word together as you show them one poster at a time.
- What Big Idea will glow in the dark? **Jesus is the light in the darkness.**

ACTIVITY | Jesus' Light Bright

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Create a giant Lite Brite board using a pegboard painted black or a large piece of black foam board drilled with holes. Provide [mini glow sticks](#) for kids to stick through the holes for this activity. Alternatively, provide [Lite Brite](#) boards to each group of four or five kids.
 - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Have preteens use this board to play a few rounds of Pictionary, where they have to create the word using the glow stick "pegs" on the peg board. You can use words related to this story (*bread, cup, cross, Jesus, light*) or use a [random word generator](#).
- There are so many ways that Jesus lights up our life. He gave us life and showed us how to live. Even in moments of real darkness in his life, he focused on being the light and reminded his friends and everyone what he came to earth to do.
- We started with a dark board, but as we continue to add lights, it glows brightly! Jesus' light never goes out, never dims, and we can trust that he will always be there for us. **Jesus is the light in the darkness.**

OBJECT LESSON | Catching Light

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [this video](#) (start at 6:37) as a simple object lesson that shows how light flows — it even bends and goes through water. Then have kids try "catching the light" using a similar setup to this video. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
- No matter how dark it seems, the light of Jesus shines. Nothing stops the light.
- **Can you stop the light?** Nope, you can't stop the light.
- **How does this remind you of the light of Jesus?**
- Let's all try to catch the light in our hands to remember to hold onto Jesus. **Jesus is the light in the darkness.**

SCRIPTURE | John 3:16–21

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the passage aloud. Prepare a flashlight that you will point in the direction of another leader in the room. (Avoid the eyes!)
- Here's the thing with light. We need it to help us find our way when it's dark. But sometimes, it can feel too bright. (Point the flashlight toward a leader and instinctively they should recoil or shield their eyes.)
- Jesus was — and is — such a bright light. The brightest. And like Jesus said in this passage, light exposes wrongdoings, so some people avoid the light. Or they try so hard to come close to the light but find it easier to stay in darkness.
- We've all been there. **For example, can you think of a time you tried to be kind toward someone but in an instant, you immediately said something you regretted later?** I know I have! (Share an example and encourage willing kids to share also.)
- But God loves us so much that Jesus didn't come to punish all of us but to save us and bring us into the light. We can see this in how Jesus didn't single out the disciple who would betray him. We can see this in how he comforted people and how he helped people know God. Jesus continued to shine God's light in all kinds of darkness and invited everyone to draw near to him.
- **Jesus is the light in the darkness.**

VIDEO | Glow in the Dark, Episode 2

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Press Play](#).

NOW WHAT? *What does God want us to do about it?*

REFLECTION | How Is Jesus The Light In The Darkness?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *As kids reflect, you might want to switch off the lights or have them cover their eyes with their hands.*
- ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Preteens might resonate with feelings of betrayal much more keenly than the group's younger members. Help kids imagine what it might have felt like for Jesus at that Last Supper, sitting in a room with friends he would soon leave, because one of them turned him in. This will make the story feel more personal and make a greater impact, especially if this is a story most of them have heard before.*
- **What does light feel like? What is good about light?**
- Not only is light bright, it's also warm. When we have light, we feel seen and comforted. Jesus is this kind of light to everyone.
- Even though Jesus was following God's plans, there's no denying that Jesus was in a tough situation. One of his closest friends had betrayed him. Jesus probably felt hurt by his friend and sad that their relationship had changed. But Jesus brought light to a dark situation by openly talking about what was going on with his friends. By doing so, he gave everyone a chance to see things clearly.
- **What are some things that you need help seeing clearly?**
- Jesus lights up the darkness and can even give us a way to see things more clearly when we have questions.
- Remember, even when it seems dark, Jesus is always with you. There is always some light if you let it in.
Jesus is the light in the darkness.

RESPONSE | Stick With Jesus

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Provide one to two blank [3" fluorescent stickers](#) to each kid. Try to get assorted neon colors for variety. Have kids design different stickers using the Big Idea that they can keep or give out. Allow kids who feel comfortable sharing to give responses.*
- ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** *Remember kids with disabilities experience social interactions differently. While some will want to talk over you and tell you about their weekend, some will not want to talk at all. Follow their cues rather than trying to manufacture learning for them. It's enough that you are there with them, demonstrating your love and care for their needs.*
- **When are some times when it might feel dark in our lives?** We all experience times like this. We might get into an argument with friends and feel lonely or misunderstood, there might be trouble at home, you might be going through big life changes, or maybe you lost a pet or a loved one. There's a ton of darkness outside of our lives, too, like when people treat others unfairly or when disease or natural disasters persist.
- There are lots of sad things that happen every day, but let's always remember that God's love and care light up dark places. Jesus carries the same light because **Jesus is the light in the darkness.**
- **Who can you share that news with today?** Maybe it's someone going through a bit of darkness themselves. Let them know how much Jesus loves them and how we can be the light they desperately need!

MEMORY VERSE | Psalm 27:1a (NIV)

- **"The Lord is my light and my salvation — whom shall I fear?"**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Prepare glow cups with one or two words written on each cup. For younger kids, you can number the cups so it's easier for them to put them in order. Use a timer and challenge kids to line up the cups in the correct order as fast as they can.*

- ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Line up the cups in a row and prop each of them up on a box or another cup upside down. Provide a soft foam ball that kids can use to knock the cups over in order. You can also place the cups out of order, and they'll have to figure out what order to knock the cups down.

PRAYER

- Thank you, God, for sending Jesus. Thank you for his light shining in our lives and reminding each of us that your light is always with us. Even when things seem dark, your light shines bright! Amen.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

● SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS

- **What were Jesus and his disciples doing in today's Bible story?** *They were sharing a meal for Passover, the Festival of Unleavened Bread.*
- **What did Jesus say that was surprising to his disciples?** *Jesus said that one of the disciples at that table would betray him.*
- **What did the bread and the cup mean?** *They stood for Jesus' body and blood. It was meant as a way for them to remember Jesus after he died.*
- **Read John 3:16–17. How did God light up the darkness by sending Jesus?** *Instead of allowing the world to stay in darkness, God sent Jesus to save the world.*

● APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- **When things start to feel dark — when you feel frightened or lost — what do you normally do?**
- **What does it mean for Jesus to be your light in any kind of darkness?**
- **Who else in your life needs to know about the light of Jesus?**

ACTIVITY | Luminary Lights

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a neon paper bag, battery-powered tea light, neon markers, paper punchers (whatever fun designs you have like hearts, stars, or happy faces). Have kids punch holes and draw designs all around the bags, including writing out the Big Idea or memory verse. Once they are done, have them open the bag, and place the light inside to create a paper luminary. (See a worked example [here](#).)
- Place your new luminary creations somewhere where you can always see, especially on days that feel dark, to remember that **Jesus is the light in the darkness.**