



# THIS LITTLE LIGHT OF MINE

APRIL 9 - MAY 24

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## HIGHLIGHT: *John 1:1-14; John 8:12*

*Below are excerpts from the overall passage for use with the APPLICATION and RESPOND. It will be beneficial for the group to read the whole passage to understand the entire context.*

### **John 1:1-14 NLT**

**1** In the beginning the Word already existed.

The Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.

**2** He existed in the beginning with God.

**3** God created everything through him,  
and nothing was created except through him.

**4** The Word gave life to everything that was created,  
and his life brought light to everyone.

**5** The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness can never extinguish it.

**6** God sent a man, John the Baptist, **7** to tell about the light so that everyone might believe because of his testimony. **8** John himself was not the light; he was simply a witness to tell about the light. **9** The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

**10** He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. **11** He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. **12** But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. **13** They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.

**14** So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

## John 8:12 NLT

12 Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, "I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life."

## EXPLAIN

*The purpose of this section is to deepen everyone's understanding of the Word.*

The first five verses of the Gospel of John, along with Paul (Philippians 2:6-11; Colossians 1:15-20), sing with the majesty and supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hardly anything matches the glory and power and love of Christ as does the Gospel of John.

### John 1:1-14

**vv.1-2** In the beginning the Word [Jesus Christ] already existed. We must not put Jesus into the box of "space and time." He is exponentially more than the Man from Galilee whose worth can be summed up by Christmas and Easter. The Word is the One who inhabits eternity. Before time began He was **with God; He was God.**

**vv.3-4** The planet God invaded 2,000 years ago belongs to the Word. This little speck of dust tucked away in a rather insignificant galaxy in a far-away corner of the universe is His by right of creation. **God created everything through Him.** "Christ is the visible image of the invisible God...Everything was created through Him and for Him. He existed before anything else, and He holds all creation together" (Colossians 1:15-17). This great God—the Word—who put the universe together on a workbench in His own backyard **gave life to everything that was created, and His life brought light to everyone.** Two of the great characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ are *life and light*. Without them there is nothing but "emptiness and darkness" (see Genesis 1:1-3).

**v.5** Psalm 2:1-4 speaks to the futility of those of us who raise our fists to God, who "want to free ourselves from slavery to God." (see John 3:19). **The darkness can never extinguish the light.** Years ago I went through Mammoth Cave—the longest known cave in the world. At one point in the tour the guide turned off the lights. It was my first experience of, in my mind, total darkness. I could not see my hand in front of my face. Then the guide struck a match—a great demonstration of how a small light can bring illumination. The darkness could not put out the light of the match. No matter how hard the darkness of this world fights back against the light it cannot overcome the light (see Matthew 16:15-18). One day, the Lord will be the light of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:23). At that time there will be an eternal darkness for those who have spurned the Lord; it will be a total absence of God (Jude 6, 13).

**vv.6-8** These verses simply state that **God sent a man to give testimony about the light. His name was John the Baptist.** Notice the difference between John and Jesus. John was sent; Jesus was from the beginning. The Baptist always stands in the shadow of Jesus. We must always guard against confusing the "witness" and the "Light." It's not about us; it's about the glory of God and His Christ.

**v.9** Here is John's first mention of the Incarnation. **This One who is the true light was coming into the world.** All other lights flicker and created shadows. But Jesus is the TRUE light. Authentic light. "There is

no darkness at all in Him" (1 John 1:5); "He never casts a shifting shadow" (James 1:17). God was making Himself known through the living, personal Word. And He didn't stutter. We need a clear word in our lives that are so often filled with clamor and noise. Jesus is Word, Life, and Light!

**vv.10-11** The verb tense in this verse indicates that when **[Jesus] came into the very world He created**, it was not just a drop-in visit and He goes back to Heaven. It was not a photo op. He came to stay **with His own people who didn't recognize Him**—and even more, **they rejected Him**. These people who had been schooled and taught all their lives about the Messiah—"Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6)—would have nothing to do with Him. How often we frustrate the plans of God because we are not on His wavelength (see Matthew 16:23). It's not necessarily that we want to do bad things; it's just that we are not doing God's thing. We are not on the same page with Him; we are too intent on writing our own story!

**vv.11-14** But Jesus is committed to us 100% (see Philippians 2:6-8). He didn't come to toss band-aids to us with the hope that it would make some difference. He didn't give us some cosmetics to cover the bruises. He came to take away the wounds and the bruises. For those who believe in Him **He gave the right to become children of God**. It was not just another name—it was another **birth that comes from God**. He's **making His home with us**. **He's full of unfailing love and faithfulness**. He will not bail out at the first sign of trouble.

**John 8:12** The impact of this verse is made the stronger because it follows Jesus' dealings with a woman caught in the act of adultery, and a bunch of religious do-gooders who were willing to kill her to make a point. Augustine has written, "Two persons were left, the unhappy woman and Compassion Incarnate" (see 1-11). This woman certainly found Jesus to be the true **light of the world that leads to life**. And we **won't have to walk in darkness if [we] follow [Him]**. The fires of opposition began to blaze hotter (read the rest of chapter 8). But Jesus' commitment to giving us life (see John 10:10) is unwavering. He would even die to get it done. The great news of Easter is that Jesus was put in the tomb as the sacrificial Lamb of God. But He stepped out of that tomb as the roaring Lion of Judah. He is the Light that cannot be extinguished!

**A****APPLY**

*Be comfortable with some silence as people think back to the sermon or reread the text. Answer honestly. You don't have to answer every question.*

1. What stuck out to you in what you heard in the sermon or read in the text?
2. Why can't darkness extinguish light?
3. Why is it important to know "God created everything through [Jesus]" (v. 3) and "[Jesus] gave life to everything that was created"(v. 4)?
4. In verses 12-13, John makes the point that only those who believe in Jesus Christ are God's children. And those children do not do anything on their own to make themselves His children, but instead it is a "birth that comes from God" (or "of the will of God" ESV). How are those verses comforting to you?
5. John loves the motif of darkness and light. How does this passage remind you of Genesis 1 and 1 John?

**R****RESPOND**

*The purpose of this section is to take action with the truths you're learning. Answer honestly. Find someone who will hold you accountable to living out your response to Scripture.*

1. Are there areas of darkness in your life where you need to let the light of Jesus shine? Bring those to Jesus. Let his light shine in your darkness. He came not to judge you, but to save you. Don't let the fear of him knowing your sin keep you from coming to him. He came to replace your sin with his righteousness. (See John3:16-21.) Write a prayer to God asking him to replace your darkness with his light. Be specific, name what the darkness is. When you are done, take it to a trusted brother or sister in Christ so they can pray with you and encourage you.
2. Verse 14 says that Jesus was "full of unfailing love and faithfulness" ("grace and truth", ESV). When we imitate Jesus (by the Spirit) we can grow to be like Him in these ways. Do you struggle more with being full of grace or full of truth? Spend time as a group talking about where you tend to be weak. What are some practical steps you can take this week to grow?