

Facilitator:

1. Open with Prayer
2. Welcome any newcomers
3. Try to keep your discussion to an hour and a half at the most.

CONNECT Group study questions for March 5, 2017

Title: Light It Up— Matthew 5:14-16; 16:18

Review: A mature disciple of Jesus Christ does four things consistently:

Loves God

Loves Others

Loves Ministry

Loves the Lost

Children:

On Sunday in KidsConnect we learned about Ezra and how he read the law to the people of Jerusalem. The people had been in DARKNESS because they did not know the Word of God. When Ezra read the law to the people, what did it show them? (the law shined a light that showed the people their sin)

How can we share the light of God's Word like Ezra did?

Read Matt. 5:14-16 What are some different ways you can be a light in your home, classroom, neighborhood, sports team, that shows lost people what God is like? (Hint: What kinds of good works would cause someone to glorify God?)

Read: Matthew 16:18

And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Question: A spiritual battle plays out in our everyday life. Jesus promised that the gates of hell will not prevail against his Church, but somehow it feels like we're losing.

Do you see any evidence that the Church is losing the battle to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to Americans? What is it? Where is the evidence—if any—that the Church prevailing?

Question: Pastor Peppy cited statistics to show the Church is becoming insignificant in postmodern America.

What changed to make this happen? What can individual Christians do to make the Church relevant? What can local bodies of believers do? What role do large, para-church organizations (Samaritan's Purse, for example) play?

Read: Matthew 5:14-16

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Question: Why is darkness a good description of the world we live in? What properties of light apply to the Church?

Read:

Proverbs 4:19

The way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know over what they stumble.

Proverbs 119:105

Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.

Question: Can you give examples of how people "stumble" when they don't have the "light" of God's Word to guide them? Share with the group about a time when you stumbled before you had the light of God's Word to guide you, or when you ignored the light you had?

Question: Share with the group a time when you most likely would have stumbled, but didn't because you had light to show you the dangers in your path?

Question: How does your understanding the condition of those lost in darkness evoke compassion toward them and compel you to shine light into their world? Or does it?

Question: Examine the following passages about darkness and light. Share your thoughts about how they apply to you personally, how they apply to the world you live in, and what you can do to bring light to a lost and dying world.

John 3:19 *And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.*

John 1:5 *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

John 8:12 *Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*