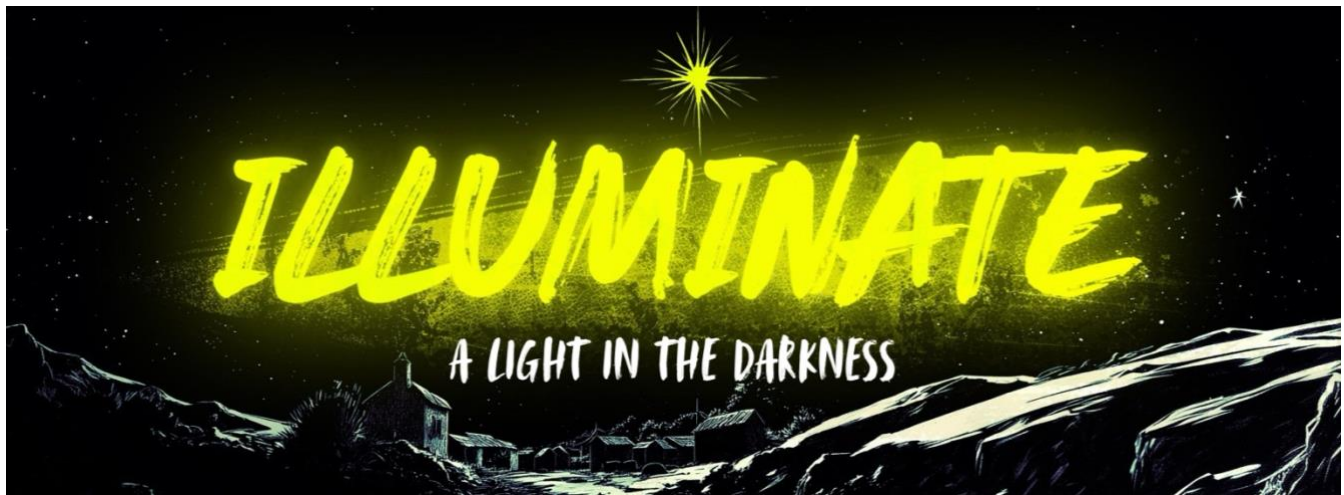




WEEK 3 – THE LIGHT WITHIN US
MIDDLE SCHOOL MINISTRY TEACHING GUIDE

BIG IDEA

We must carry the light of Jesus within us

BIBLE

*Matthew 5:14–16; Isaiah 9:2; 1 John 1:5;
John 8:12; John 1:5, 9*

ABOUT THIS WEEK

Jesus not only came as the light of the world — He calls His followers to be that light too. This final week challenges students to live out their faith through visible actions that reflect the love and goodness of God. When we let our light shine, people see Jesus through us and are drawn to praise the Father.

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

HOOK – The Flashlight Moment

- (hold up a flashlight or use your phone's flashlight)
- Have you ever been somewhere super dark — like outside at night, or during a power outage — and the moment someone turns on a light, everyone — or at least the bugs - *flocks* to it?
 - That's because light stands out most in the darkness.
 - It gets people's attention.
 - It shows the way.
- Jesus used that exact picture when He talked about what it means to follow Him.
- **READ Matthew 5:14–16 NIV**
 - ¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

CONTEXT – A SHARED LIGHT

- Over the last two weeks, we learned that:
 - God promised light would come (Isaiah 9).
 - That light broke through when Jesus was born (Luke 2 and Matthew 2).
- But now, something new happens.
 - Jesus – who once said, *"I am the light of the world"* (John 8:12) – turns to His followers and says, *"You are the light of the world."*
- Wait... how can that be?
- Here's the answer: **We don't create the light – we reflect it.**
 - Think of it like the moon. The moon doesn't make light; it just reflects the sun.
 - That's what we do with Jesus. His light shines *in us* so we can shine *to others*.
- When you've experienced the light of Jesus – His love, forgiveness, and peace – you carry that light everywhere you go: at school, at home, on your teams, with your friends.

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

- Jesus didn't give you His light just to keep it to yourself.
 - When you live with kindness, honesty, forgiveness, and compassion, people notice something different.
 - They may not always know it's Jesus at first – but that's the goal: to help them see *Him* through you.
- **READ1 John 1:5 NIV**
 - "God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all."
- That means wherever God's people are, light is supposed to be there too.
- Here's what's amazing:
 - When Jesus gave this teaching, He didn't say, *"Try to be the light."*
 - He said, *"You are the light."*
- That's your identity as a follower of Jesus.
 - It's not about being perfect – it's about being present.
 - It's about showing up in dark places with love and truth that reflect who Jesus is.
- You might not think of yourself as someone who can make a big difference. But every time you show kindness, forgive someone, or pray for someone who's hurting, you're helping push back darkness with light.

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

- If we want to carry the light of Jesus, here's what that can look like now and beyond the Christmas season:

1. Keep your light visible.

- Don't hide your faith just because it's uncomfortable.
 - You don't have to preach sermons – but you can start by simply choosing to live in a way that honors and reflects Jesus.
 - Let people see joy, peace, and grace in how you act and talk.
- Ask yourself: *If someone watched how I live, would they see Jesus through me?*

2. Be a light in someone's darkness.

- Everyone around you is walking through something – pressure, fear, loneliness.
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- You can be the person who helps them see hope again.
 - Send an encouraging text.
 - Sit with someone who's left out.
 - Forgive someone who hurt you.
- The smallest light can make a huge difference in the dark.

3. Shine together.

- When one light shines, it's powerful. When a group shines together, it's unstoppable.
 - That's what the church is meant to be — a community of people reflecting Jesus together.
 - And one way we can do that is by inviting others into that light — especially as our church gathers for Christmas Eve services next week.
- Think of one friend, classmate, or neighbor who needs to experience Jesus' light — and invite them to come with you.

Gospel Invitation

- Maybe you've been learning about Jesus for a while, but you've never actually said yes to Him. The good news is — the same light that came into the world at Christmas is still shining for you today.
- If you want to receive that light and follow Him, you can simply say:
- "Jesus, I believe You are the light of the world. Be my Savior and guide my life."

Prayer:

- Lead students in a prayer before dismissing them to Small Groups.
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