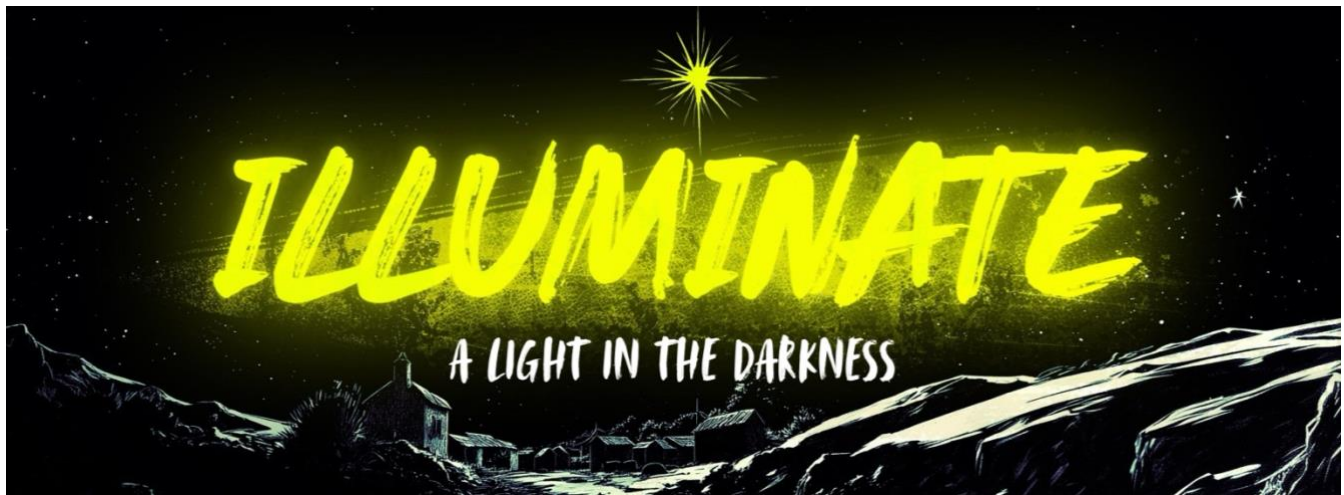




WEEK 2 – THE LIGHT BREAKS THROUGH
MIDDLE SCHOOL MINISTRY TEACHING GUIDE

BIG IDEA

Jesus is our light in the darkness.

BIBLE

*Luke 2:8–20; Matthew 2:1–12; Isaiah 9:2;
John 3:16*

ABOUT THIS WEEK

In a world often marked by darkness, fear, and confusion, *Illuminate* invites students to experience the light of Jesus — the light that was promised, revealed, and now shines through us. Across three weeks, this series walks through the story of God’s plan to bring light into our world, from prophecy to fulfillment to participation. Each session builds on the last, showing that the same light that broke into the world at Christmas still shines in and through us today.

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

HOOK – Lights On!

- Have you ever been in a totally dark room — like, can’t-see-your-hand dark — and someone suddenly flips all the lights on?
- It’s kind of shocking, right? You go from straining to see *anything* to seeing *everything* all at once.
- That’s what happened the night Jesus was born.
- The world had been waiting for the light that Isaiah talked about, and then suddenly — *it appeared*.
Not in a palace, not to kings or celebrities, but to ordinary, overlooked people.
- Let’s look at what happened.

THE WISE MEN – LIGHT GUIDES THE SEEKERS

- **READ MATTHEW 2:1-2 NIV**
 - *"After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, 'Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw His star when it rose and have come to worship Him.'"*
- The Wise Men (or Magi) were from far away – different country, culture, and religion.
 - They studied the stars, and God used one of those stars to lead them to Jesus.
- **READ Matthew 2:10–11 NIV**
 - *"¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.*
- Here's what's amazing:
 - The shepherds were nearby and poor.
 - The Magi were far away and wealthy.
 - Yet *both* found Jesus.
- The light of Jesus reaches across every difference – rich or poor, close or far, ordinary or powerful – because God's love is for *everyone*.

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

- This moment in history shows us something huge:
 - **God's light is not exclusive.**
- When the angels said, "I bring you good news of great joy for all people," they meant all people.
- That includes you.
 - It doesn't matter how broken, overlooked, or unworthy you might feel – Jesus came for you.
- **READ John 3:16 NIV**
 - *"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."*
- The light of Jesus brings hope to people who feel stuck in darkness – and it changes everything.
 - The shepherds went from terrified to *telling everyone* what they saw.
 - The Wise Men traveled hundreds of miles just to kneel and worship.
 - When people encounter the light of Jesus, they don't stay the same.
- So what about you?
 - Where do you need His light to break through this Christmas?

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

- **When light breaks through, it demands a response.**
 - The shepherds didn't just watch the sky glow – they *moved*.
 - The Wise Men didn't just notice the star – they *followed it*.
- **So how can we respond like they did?**

1. Move toward Jesus.

- Don't stay where it's comfortable.
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- For the shepherds, that meant leaving their fields; for us, it might mean opening Scripture, praying honestly, or showing up when it'd be easier to stay distant.
Ask yourself: *What step do I need to take closer to Jesus this week?*

2. Follow the light with consistency.

- The Wise Men traveled for months through uncertainty.
 - Faith often looks like steady steps in the same direction — even when it's dark.
 - Keep following through worship, community, and obedience.
 - The light you follow will shape who you become.

3. Reflect the light through presence.

- The light is meant to be seen.
 - Instead of talking about faith, *live it* in a way that others notice — your patience, integrity, and compassion.
 - Think: *Who in my world needs me to show up as light this week?*
- And as our church moves toward Christmas Eve, remember: we don't just tell people about the light — we *bring* them to it.
 - Invite someone who needs hope. Not out of pressure, but because you've seen what happens when light breaks through darkness.

Gospel Invitation

- Maybe you've heard about Jesus before, but you've never made the decision to follow Him.
 - The same light that shone for shepherds and guided the Wise Men is shining for you right now.
 - If you want to begin walking in that light, you can simply pray, "Jesus, I believe You came for me. Be my light. Forgive my sin and lead me."
- That's the first step in following the One who brings light into the darkness.

Prayer:

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