

Living the Christmas Story

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BIG IDEA

The light that illuminates a believer is meant to be a source of light to everyone around them.

KEY SCRIPTURES

Genesis 1:1-5; John 1:1-5; John 8:12; Matthew 5:14-16; 1 John 1:5-7; Ephesians 5:8-10;

1. How do we see culture (in general, outside the church) carrying out the Christmas Story? Think of feel-good moments in Christmas movies, an uptick in charitable donations, random acts of kindness, etc. What have you seen?
2. How do these seasonal acts point to the power of the Christmas story, even in someone who carries them out without understanding or adherence to the Gospel?
3. Consider the rich imagery of Jesus as the "Light of the world." What does this tell us about God's character, power, and desire, and how does this intersect with the spiritual darkness of the world?
4. Do you find it odd that Jesus is clearly described, even self-referentially, as the Light of world yet says that you and I are the light? What emotion rises up when you hear Jesus describing you with the same terminology used to describe Him?
5. Talk about the process of becoming the "Light of the world" and what role this plays in God's gracious salvation and sanctification of believers. Consider the following passages: Psalm 18:28, Psalm 119:105, 1 Thessalonians 5:5, Romans 13:12.
6. Jesus says that "a city on a hill cannot be hidden," and "Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl." Why would He say this? Have there been times where you were tempted to hide or hoard the light of Christ in you?
7. The Apostle Paul says "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light... (Ephesians 5:8). Talk about the power of testimony as it relates to Jesus' call for us to be the light of the world, remembering that the star of our testimony is not ourselves but Christ in us, the hope of glory.
8. We don't want to get too selfish, right? It's tempting to consider the goodness of God's grace in what He's saved us from without asking what He's saved us for. Jesus speaks very plainly about the purpose of the light in our illuminated souls: it's not for our benefit alone. We are called to do good deeds -- actual, tangible, helpful, good deeds -- which benefit others and glorify God. Use some time to pray for one another as you not only hear the word but do what it says (James 1:22-25). How is God calling you to pay attention to the darkness around you and take a step while carrying His lantern?
9. What's the next action step God is calling you, the light of the world, to take in the name of Jesus?