

the ESSENTIALS

why truth matters

OPENING UP

Have you ever experienced an amazing light show—firework display, laser, meteor shower? Share about that experience and what made it so memorable.

TEXT**I Believe in Jesus Christ | John 1:1-4, 9-13, 14 & 18**

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁹ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁸ No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

MESSAGE OUTLINE

Big Idea: Jesus shines the light on God.

Key Question: How does Jesus shine the light on God?

Apostles' Creed Statement: *"I believe in Jesus Christ, his Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary."*

1. Through his relationship to God. (vv. 1-4)
2. Enlightening everyone who believes in him. (vv. 9-13)
3. Physically making God known. (vv. 14,18)

DISCUSSION



- This week's sermon addressed the statement in the Apostles' Creed about the person of Jesus. How do you view Jesus? Who is he to you? What have you heard others say about who Jesus is?
- John 1:1-4 reveals that Jesus has always existed with God and that he and God are one. Because of this close relationship, Jesus shines a light on God. To know Jesus, is to know God. How has getting to know Jesus more helped you understand what God is like or changed your perception of God? Do you think your view of God has been shaped by any influences outside of Jesus? Share some of the false ideas you've believed about God and how you came to know the truth.
- Jesus is the *True Light* of the world (John 1:9). He enlightens everyone who believes in him with the truth of the gospel, which is how we became a child of God (Johns 1:12). How have you experienced this? Share your story of conversion...the moment when your eyes were open to the gospel.
- Jesus was the physical manifestation of the invisible God (John 1:14;18). The best way to know God is by looking at Jesus, yet we often come up with our own ideas of God through society or experience. Do you have any views of God that were formed from something besides the life of Jesus? What are they and where do they come from?
- Read Matthew 5:14-16. Just like Jesus shines a light on God, we as Christians are called to do the same. How can you shine a light to the world around you this week?

LIFE CHALLENGE



Think about your world. Make a list of the people you interact with on a daily basis—friends, family members, co-workers, strangers. Pray and ask God which person he wants you to show his light to this week; circle that name.

Now brainstorm as a group: What are some ways that you can be a light to this person in your life? How can you show them who God is by the way you speak and act toward them?

Finally, write down one of the specific ideas from your group brainstorm about how you will be a light to the person God has placed on your heart this week. Consider reporting back to each other the next time your group meets about how this person was impacted by your intentional actions.

CLOSING PRAYER



Praise God for Jesus and the fact that He came down from heaven to reveal Himself to us! Pray for God to open your eyes to ways in which you can be a light to your world this week. Ask Him for opportunities to share the truth of the Gospel and live in a way that honors and glorifies Him.