

Light it Up!

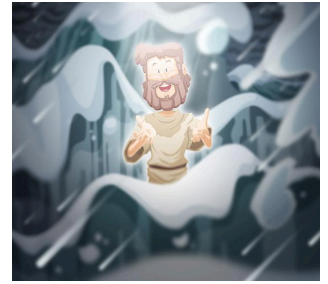
1 John 1:1-2:2 NIV

Bible Lesson & Activities for Children



THE SUNDAY SCHOOL STORE

Light it Up!



Light makes a difference! It guides our way, helps us see, and gives comfort in the midst of darkness. This lesson reminds kids that we have a light that is always with us: the light of Christ! 1 John tells us that God is light and “in Him is no darkness.” We can rejoice that we walk in the light with Him, and consider how we share His light with those around us, shining in the darkness!

On one hand, this passage seems to be a harsh reminder that we have all sinned, and denying that means “the truth is not in us.” However, the prominent message is that the blood of Jesus cleanses those sins. When we walk in His light, we have fellowship with Him. Jesus is our advocate, speaking on our behalf and even dying on our behalf so that we are considered blameless in God’s eyes. Yes, we do wrong, but that is why Christ died for us. That knowledge brings comfort and hope like a bright light in a dark room!

Passage: 1 John 1:1-2:2

Target Audience: Kindergarten–6th grade

Materials Needed: Construction paper; shakers; glue; markers or crayons; cups; tea lights; flashlights or headlamps; tape; scissors; paper plates; glow sticks; decorative supplies; Bibles.

More Resources Online

- Watch the [video demonstration of the object lesson](#).
- Watch the [video example for the craft projects](#).
- Watch the [video Bible story “John’s Letter of Love”](#) from Saddleback Kids Club
- Watch the [video Bible story “Jesus”](#) from Crossroads Kids
- For more free illustrations, visit [Christian Clip Arts](#) and [Ministry-To-Children](#)

Object Lesson (5 minutes)

Greet children and talk about light sources...

Hello, Children of God!

If possible, darken or dim some of the lights to start. Hmm, something seems strange here, don't you think? Just a minute... *Add more lights.* Ah, that's better! It's remarkable what a difference a little light makes, isn't it? In fact, light can make all the difference sometimes. Why is it so important? Light helps us to see! If it's dark, I can turn on the light in a room and see what's there. Or maybe you've used other light objects to help you see. *Display examples as you describe.* Maybe you have flashlights or headlamps for darkness outside. Or perhaps you use a night light in your room to give a little comfort and help you get to the bathroom in the middle of the night. Perhaps you've gotten a glow stick for a special night event. It helps you see and be seen, and it's just a lot of fun! Light helps us to find our way in the dark. It shines brightest in darkness, after all. We don't need flashlights in rooms that are already bright. Glow sticks don't show up as much in daytime.

Wouldn't it be nice to have light that's always with you, and never runs out of batteries? The good news is that you do! 1 John says that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness. He is our light, stronger and brighter than any lamp or flashlight could ever be. Now, of course, this type of light is a little different than what we think of when we flip a power switch. God's light shines in spiritual darkness, shining brightest when other things are dark. There is sin and evil in the world, sadly, but God's light is brighter than all of that. We know that we have sinned and done wrong, but God is with us, forgives us, and covers those sins.

The Bible tells us that we can have "fellowship with God." When you walk in the beam of a flashlight or street light, you can see from it. When we are in fellowship with God, we walk

in His light and know He is near. How do we do this? We can draw closer to the Lord and His light when we read His Word, the Bible. We can also go to church and experience fellowship with other followers. And, of course, we can pray, asking God to remind us of His presence and light.

When we remember that God is light, we can be comforted knowing that His light is always there and gets rid of our darkness. We can also know that His light guides our way. We can shine His light for others, too! When people around us see the way we live and the hope we have, they recognize that there's something special. As Christians, we share our light with those around us. Sharing a flashlight in the dark allows other people to see. Shining and sharing the light of Jesus does the same, and gives new life! We can share His light by loving others and telling them about Him. We can ask for God's help in identifying opportunities to walk in His light and shine it in the darkness.

Prayer: (Invite the children to repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for being our light.

You give us comfort and guide the way in darkness.

Help us to remember your light

And to shine it for others.

Thank you for your love.

We love you, God!

In Jesus name, Amen!

Game & Activities Suggestions (10 minutes)



This passage reminds us of how God is light, and we can live in and share His light. We also remember that, despite our sin, Jesus speaks on our behalf and gives us grace! Kick things off with a thought-provoking activity based on one of the themes. Some possible ideas include:

- Flashlight tag: If your learning area can get sufficiently dark, play “flashlight tag” or shine a flashlight beam on certain items one at a time in “I Spy” fashion.
- Lighting the way...have a fashion show of sorts with glow stick items. See who can make the longest chain, most decorative necklace, or best overall “outfit” using glow sticks or glow jewelry. Again, this could work better in a dark setting, but can still be done with light!
- Let it shine... Lead the group in a round of singing “This Little Light of Mine.”
- An advocate who speaks...as Jesus speaks on our behalf, we can speak for one another. Provide students with a cause or person who might need spoken for. Allow them to take turns making a lawyer-like argument on behalf of the cause.
- “Lite Brite”:: break out the old classic toy and have students work together to create a picture with the tiny bulbs. Note what a difference it makes to have the light turned on and shining through the colors!
- Shadow challenge: Have students use hands, puppets, or other implements to make shadows against a wall. Emphasize the contrast between darkness and light, and how God’s light shines in darkness. We can shine His light, as well!
- Light through the years...for historic interest (and appreciation of modern convenience), invite older students to explore some history of lights, light bulbs, and methods of illumination over time. Remind them that God’s light is different from physical light, but even more important!

Explain that this lesson will take a look at how God is light and shines in the midst of darkness. We as Christians can take comfort and hope in that, and can shine His light for others to know His love!

Main Bible Teaching (15 minutes)



This passage includes some metaphoric elements that remind us of God’s comfort, guidance, and love. While the epistle lesson is not so much an easy one to act out, it is still great to read and discuss. You might have students take turns reading these verses, or read them out loud and pause to explain what is being said.

1 John 1:1-4 NIV *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. (2) The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. (3) We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. (4) We write this to make our joy complete.*

John (the author of the epistle) reminds us here of the blessing of the Trinity. Jesus was with God the Father from the beginning, and continues to be with us today. We have “fellowship” with others when we understand this truth and rejoice together in what God does for us. We have joy because we know that God is with us always and gives us opportunities to love and serve one another.

Ask: What brings you joy? How does Jesus give us “complete” joy?

1 John 1:5-7 NIV *This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. (6) If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. (7) But if*

we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

Light is essential to so many things. We need it to see where we are going or guide our way in dark places. It drives away darkness and shows up brightly for all to see. These verses remind us that God is light, and no darkness can dwell in Him. Even in a dark room, a light will shine brightly. God shines His light in our lives no matter what else is going on. God's light gives us the ability to fellowship and "shine" and share with others in our lives, too.

Ask: How can we be the light of Jesus? How can we share His love with others?

1 John 1:8-10 NIV *If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. (9) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (10) If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.*

It's tough to remember that we are sinners and consistently make mistakes. We do what we know we shouldn't do. The good news is that God promises to forgive us and cleanse our sins. No matter what we've done, it is not so bad that it can't be forgiven! We can't deny the fact that we do wrong. But we can rejoice in the fact that the blood of Jesus covers that. He will always be near to us and forgive us.

Ask: How can we know and be assured of forgiveness?

1 John 2:1-2 NIV *My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. (2) He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.*

Here we are reminded of the joy we have in Jesus. We make mistakes, but Jesus speaks on our behalf. Not only is He the light of the whole world, He forgives us, and He lived and died for us. We know it's impossible not to sin. But we have a redeemer who loves us and grants us grace. That is a comforting "light" in our lives and to all people!

God is our light. He shines the way in our darkness and He did all that we cannot. Jesus lived for us and loves us, and He wants us to live for Him and for others. He calls us to shine in the darkness and tell others about Him. We rely on Him for salvation, and out of gratitude for His love, we continue to light the way for others!

Craft Activities (15 minutes)

The “light” theme can lend itself to several crafts, and make for many fun possibilities. These ones focus on how God is our light, and we can shine that light to others. A “Candle in a Cup” pairs a battery-operated tealight with a decorated vessel to serve as a reminder of the Lord lighting our way. A “Hanging Light Bulb” uses a paper plate for a light backdrop that “illuminates” our way. Let’s get crafty!

Craft one: "Candle in a Cup"

You will need:

- Cup (clear plastic recommended)
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Tape or glue
- Construction paper or cardstock
- Battery/electric tealight
- Extra decorations (stickers, streamers, etc.)



Procedure:

1. Decorate the outside of the cup with stickers, Sharpie markers, glitter, etc.
2. Add streamers or paper "flames", if desired.
3. Attach verses or captions on paper or cardstock.
4. Place the tealight inside the cup to resemble a candle. Display as a reminder that God is our light!



Craft Two: "Hanging Light Bulb"

You will need:

- Paper plate
- Construction paper/cardstock (colorful)
- Markers or crayons
- Tape or glue
- String or pipe cleaner
- Scissors
- Extra decorations (stickers, glitter, etc.)



Procedure:

1. Trace and cut a light bulb shape out of the paper plate, adding a "fringe" at the bottom to resemble light emanating from it.
2. Add details to make the cut-out look more like a light bulb, completing with color.
3. Add verses and captions to remember that God is light.
4. Add extra decorations as desired.
5. Attach a string or pipe cleaner to hang the "light bulb."



1 John 1:9 NIV

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.





Word Search Puzzle

Beginning - Manifest - Testify - Proclaim - Eternal - Light

Father - Jesus - Christ - Confess - Advocate - Righteous

L P F B E G I N N I N G
V X B H B L Q F J G Y V
E J H T E S T I F Y L K
U O M A N I F E S T I O
Y F Q P C X K K S A G E
H Z F R X T F U S A H T
C T M O A D V O C A T E
W O S C J Z F G M J X R
V D C L W F A T H E R N
Q Z F A C O N F E S S A
V D R I G H T E O U S L
W R T M P C H R I S T X

Word Search Answers

L	P	F	B	E	G	I	N	N	I	N	G
V	X	B	H	B	L	Q	F	J	G	Y	V
E	J	H	T	E	S	T	I	F	Y	L	K
U	O	M	A	N	I	F	E	S	T	I	O
Y	F	Q	P	C	X	K	K	S	A	G	E
H	Z	F	R	X	T	F	U	S	A	H	T
C	T	M	O	A	D	V	O	C	A	T	E
W	O	S	C	J	Z	F	G	M	J	X	R
V	D	C	L	W	F	A	T	H	E	R	N
Q	Z	F	A	C	O	N	F	E	S	S	A
V	D	R	I	G	H	T	E	O	U	S	L
W	R	T	M	P	C	H	R	I	S	T	X