



SHADOW MOUNTAIN LEADER *Packet*

THE I AM STATEMENTS OF JESUS: "I AM the Light of the World" John 8:12

Getting Started

1. Share a story or memory you have in relation to darkness. Were you afraid of the dark as a child? Have you experienced an extended power outage or been stranded on a dark highway? What emotions did you go through? What was your feeling when the darkness was finally broken?

2. What words or feelings do you associate with light? **Here are some ideas to get you thinking:**
Consider how light removes mystery – when you flip a light switch you know what is or isn't in the room.
Think about how light helps in doing detailed work like sewing, mechanics, surgery, or even cleaning.
Compare how big a room feels when it is well lit versus underlit.
Reflect on the beauty of light – when the sun breaks through a storm, a sunrise, decorative lights around Christmas, candles on a mantle, or even lightning.
Contemplate the concepts of the light at the end of the tunnel, a lighthouse, or the brightness of an upcoming town on a dark highway.

Digging Deeper

1. Before we begin our study, write out a few of your thoughts and feelings as you consider Jesus' words from John 8:12: "I AM the Light of the world." **What does it mean for the world? What does it mean for you?**

2. Read Exodus 13:21-22, 2 Chronicles 7:1-3, and Ezekiel 10:4. Describe the visible presence of God in the Old Testament.

3. Later in Ezekiel 10 you can read Ezekiel's vision in which God leaves the temple – His light departs. We heard, "And from that day until Jesus' arrival, the glory of God was unseen in Israel." Read Isaiah 49:6. Given this promise, in those centuries of darkness, what should Israel have been doing? **Honestly, the same thing we should be doing now: anxiously watching the horizon, hopefully anticipating the arrival of Jesus. Why do you think they failed to recognize Him when He plainly revealed that He was the Messiah? The long wait? Distractions? Deepening idolatry? In what ways are we doing the same thing now?**

4. Pastor Jeremiah described darkness in four ways which are listed below. For each, read the scripture and describe how it shows up in our world today.

Personal – Ephesian 6:12

Power – Colossians 1:13

Preference – John 3:19-21

A Place – Matthew 8:12

5. We heard, “As long as Jesus was in the world, He was the light of the world.” Read Matthew 5:14-16. Who is the light of the world now? How is that made possible? How do you feel about this responsibility? **Pastor also said, “When it began to dawn upon my heart that what Jesus Christ was when He walked up this earth, He expects me to be in His absence, I was overwhelmed with the responsibility that God has placed upon me. The dark world in which I live cannot see the light of Jesus Christ unless they see that light through me . . . and through you. Jesus does not walk among us as He did during the first century. Instead, He has passed the mantle of being the light of the world from Himself to us, and He says to us, ‘You are now what I was when I was here.’ If Jesus is the sun, we are the moon, reflecting His light in a dark world.”** **BONUS:** 1) How much light does it take to break the darkness? 2) What does the moon need to do to reflect the sun?

Applying the Message

1. Do you ever *feel* overtaken by the darkness in our world? In a world with so much evil, it is easy to become discouraged, wondering if the light will ever shine through. This question shouldn't serve as a place to camp out and become overwhelmed by the state of things. But it is good to have a chance to acknowledge this struggle among safe people and be vulnerable about how tough it is. **Ask your group this after they're done sharing their answers:** But *ARE* we overtaken?
2. How do you see the Light of Christ in the world today, despite the darkness? What's more, how do you **be** the light?