

Scripture Passage: John 1:1-5

Memory Verse: John 1:4-5

Theme Song: In the Beginning

Big Idea: Jesus is the “light of the world,” and darkness cannot overcome his light.

ADVENT: WEEK 3

Advent, the celebration of Christ’s coming, begins four Sundays before Christmas and concludes on Christmas. The five-part Family Advent Kit consists of four weekly devotionals plus a fifth devotional to be used on Christmas. If you celebrate Advent as a family, consider creating an Advent wreath. An Advent wreath hold fours candles and a fifth candle, called the Christ Candle, is placed in the middle. One candle is lit each week, with the Christ Candle lit last of all, on Christmas Day. Before you begin each time of family worship, light the appropriate candle(s) on the Advent wreath to remind your family that you are celebrating the arrival of the Messiah, Jesus.

READ

Read John 1:1-5 aloud to your family. If your kids can read, consider having one of them read or letting them take turns reading.

John 1:1-5

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

SING

Play “In the Beginning” from the *Doorpost Songs: Unto Us* album and sing together. Think about how you can model worship for your family as you sing together. If needed, print copies of the lyric sheet for your family.

MEMORIZE

Pick a section of the verses to memorize as a family. Use the suggestions below or choose your own. Use the long version for older children and the short version for preschoolers.

Long Version (John 1:4-5)

In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Short Version (John 1:5)

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

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LEARN

Read the Big Idea and short devotional aloud to your family. If you have time, use the discussion questions at the end of the devotional.

What’s the Big Idea?

Jesus is the “light of the world,” and darkness cannot overcome his light.

Family Devotional

Have you ever experienced *real* darkness? I’m not just talking about night time. Even at night we can see a little bit of light, whether it’s from the moon or stars or street lights. I talking about *real* darkness. No light at all.

One of the places you can experience real darkness is underground in a cave. When there is no moon, no stars, no flash lights, no street lights – no light whatsoever! – then it is *completely* dark. You couldn’t see your hand even if you held it right in front of your face.

Darkness can be scary. There’s something about not being able to see clearly that makes us nervous. What might be out there that we can’t see? And being completely in the dark can be paralyzing. You don’t even want to move because you can’t see where you’re going.

But what would happen to the darkness if you struck a match and lit a candle? Can the darkness overcome your light? No, the light wins every time. The light goes everywhere it can, pushing back the darkness and allowing us to see, calming our fears and giving us courage.

When Jesus was in the world he called himself the “light of the world,” and our scripture passage today calls him “the light of all mankind.” (“Mankind” means “all people.”) During Advent, we celebrate Jesus’ arrival by lighting candles, reminding us that Jesus is the light. That means that he helps us to see clearly. He helps us to see God. He helps us to see our sin and how it separates us from God. And he helps us to see that he can forgive our sin so we can know God.

And the good news is that the things that hide in the darkness – the darkness of our paralyzing fear, the darkness of evil things in the world, the darkness of our bad choices that we wish no one would see – they don’t have any power over Jesus, the light. Darkness cannot overcome light. The light of Jesus shines and it cannot be defeated.

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TALK

Talk about what you have learned as a family. Use the questions below or ask some of your own.

1. Think about a time when you experienced *real* darkness. Can you remember how you felt? Were you afraid?
2. Why is Jesus the “light of the world”? What does he help us to see?
3. Can darkness overcome light?
4. How does it make you feel to know that the light of Jesus of Jesus cannot be defeated?

PRAY

Pray together. Here are some ideas:

- Thank God that he sent Jesus to be the light of the world.
- Thank God that darkness cannot overcome the light of Jesus.
- Pray that God will help us to see clearly the way we can know him.
- Pray that God will help us to be lights like Jesus, who shine the light of Jesus’ love into the dark world around us.