



SESSION 4 - MORE HOPE

MESSAGE BIG IDEA

Jesus offers us more hope so that we bring light to the darkness.

SCRIPTURE

John 8:12, Matthew 5:14-15

ICEBREAKER & OPENING THOUGHT

Share a time when you experienced what felt like total darkness; camping in the woods, an extended power outage, sitting at the north rim of the Grand Canyon, etc.... How did the darkness make you feel?

BIBLE DISCUSSION

1. Read John 8:12. What do you think Jesus means by never walking in darkness?
2. Read Matthew 5:14-15. For many this passage is hard to read without singing the song, "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine." Try reading the passage with fresh eyes, what stands out to you? What strikes you?

LIFE APPLICATION

3. What does Jesus being the light of the world mean to you? How do you see it displayed in your life? In the lives of others?
4. Because matches didn't exist in biblical times, lighting a lamp was not an easy task. When people left the house, they would take the burning lamp and put it under a clay bowl so the lamp could continue to burn without risk of burning the house down. It was in effect a way to "play it safe." In what ways do you think we "play it safe" and keep our light hidden? Why do we do that?
5. When you sit at the north rim of the Grand Canyon the closest artificial light source is 17 miles away. Because of the darkness, even the faintest star is visible in the sky. For someone without hope, even a flicker can seem like a beacon. What are small ways we can display the hope of Jesus? In what ways are you being nudged by the Holy Spirit to reflect the hope of Jesus?

CHALLENGE

When you travel through Europe, especially in the countryside, it is easy to pick out the oldest structures along the road. More often than not, they are built on the highest point in the landscape; the vantage point allows visitors to find their way in the dark and be seen upon approach. Jesus is calling us to be like the city on the hill. He is calling us to readily recognize those traveling along the way and provide hope and direction as they journey. Discuss with the group how you provide hope to those around you in your life. Spend some time this week recognizing and praying for those in your life who are far from God.