

Discussion Questions

December 21, 2025



A Light
Shining *in the*
Darkness

Jesus Heals What Darkness Hides - John 8:1-12

In the second week of The Light Shines in the Darkness, we explored a tension we all feel: we love light when we are lost, but we hate light when we are hiding. Using the stories of Nicodemus (John 3) and the woman caught in adultery (John 8), we looked at how we often avoid God because we fear exposure. We think God is like a "Religious Police" officer looking for a reason to arrest us. However, Jesus reveals that He is not the Accuser who exposes to crush, but the Advocate who exposes to heal. Because Jesus took the judgment for our sin on the Cross, standing in His light is no longer dangerous - it is the path to freedom. The invitation is to stop "managing our image" in the dark and step into the light where we can be fully known and fully loved.

1. James shared a story about Tim Keller avoiding bright mirrors as a teenager because of his acne.

Do you have a "dim lighting" strategy in your life? Is there an area (your home, your car, closet, junk drawer) where you prefer to keep things "hidden" or messy?

2. John 3:1-21 (Nicodemus Coming at Night)

Why do you think Nicodemus came to Jesus at night? What was he afraid of?

In verse 19, Jesus says people "loved the darkness more than the light." What does it mean to "love" darkness? How is that different from just being trapped in it?

Nicodemus was a respected religious leader. How can religiosity or "looking good" become its own form of darkness?

What do you think changed for Nicodemus after this encounter? (Note: He later appears in John 7:50-51 and 19:39)

3. John 8:1-12 (Woman Caught in Adultery)

Put yourself in the woman's position. What would you be feeling as you were dragged into the temple courts?

Why do you think Jesus wrote in the dust? What might He have been communicating through that action?

The sermon pointed out that Jesus leveled the playing field with the woman's sexual sin, considered the worst kind of sin at that time, and the pharisees own more culturally acceptable sins. Discuss what "sin hierarchy" we have today, and does it line up with scripture?

Jesus tells the woman "go and sin no more" after saying He doesn't condemn her. How do both grace and the call to change work together in this story?

Right after this story, Jesus declares "I am the light of the world" (v. 12). How is this connected to what just happened?

4. Jesus' light brings "healing, not humiliation."

Discuss the difference between the accuser's light (leading to despair) and Jesus' light (leading to freedom).

How does James' personal story of therapy and visualizing Jesus' compassionate face illustrate this?

Are there areas you can share where you have experienced this kind of freedom?

5. The "Furniture" illustration described walking in darkness as like walking through a dark room full of furniture - you keep banging your shins on "tables" of bitterness or greed. How does turning on the light (confession/truth) change how we navigate those struggles?

6. James finished with a challenge to stay in the light long enough to be healed. What does that actually look like? How do we practically experience freedom in areas of darkness?

Jesus' Light brings HEALING, not HUMILIATION.

John 3:2 (NLT)

After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus.

John 3:19–20 (NLT)

God's light [Jesus] came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil... [and] fear their sins will be exposed.

John 8:1–5 (NLT)

Early the next morning [Jesus] was back again at the Temple... As he was speaking, the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. They put her in front of the crowd. "Teacher," they said to Jesus, "this woman was caught in the act of adultery. The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?"

Jesus is our Advocate, Not our Accuser.

The Accuser exposes to crush & humiliate, Jesus exposes to cleanse & heal.

John 8:7-8 (NLT)

"All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!" Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust.

John 8:10–11 (NLT)

Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, "Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?" "No, Lord," she said. And Jesus said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more."

John 8:12 (NLT)

"I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life [zoe]."

Tim Keller

"The Gospel is this: We are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe, yet at the very same time we are more loved and welcomed in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope."

John 8:12 (NLT)

"I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life."

Standing completely exposed in the presence of the Light of the World is actually the safest place in the universe to be.

The only thing that keeps you in the dark is refusing to step into the Light.

The Stone-Thrower is not on the throne, The Healer is.

1. Name the Darkness:

- Pick one area of "darkness" (sin/habit/fear/shame) you've been keeping in the dark.

2: Confess it to God.

The goal is not just forgiveness, but healing

3: Stay in the light long enough to be healed.

- Don't just confess and then sprint back into the shadows
- Don't settle for a moment of relief, stay for the healing."

How to stay in the Light Long enough to be healed

1. Daily Return

- Do it for a few minutes every day this week.

2. Replace the Lie

3. Disrupt the Pattern

- Darkness loves isolation, Healing loves company.
- Practical Barriers

Stop hiding and stay in the light long enough to be healed.