

Discussion Questions

December 14, 2025

The Light That Shines In Darkness - John 1:1-5



In this sermon, we explored the opening verses of John's Gospel and the Christmas story as an invasion of light into darkness. Using the imagery of a sunrise on Mount Sinai, the sermon contrasted the fragile "flashlights" we rely on - career, health, plans, control - with Jesus, the eternal Word (Logos), who existed before creation and holds all things together. John presents Jesus as the source of true life (zoe), not just biological existence (bios), and declares that the light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. The promise of Christmas is not that darkness disappears, but that Jesus walks with us through it, illuminating the path and offering life, hope, and victory even in suffering. The invitation is to stop managing the darkness and instead invite the light of Christ to shine in the real places of fear, grief, anxiety, and doubt.

1. Read John 1:1-5 together as a group.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 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.

Verse 1 uses a continuous past tense for "was" suggesting Jesus "always was was-ing." Why is it significant that Jesus has no starting point while our darkness does have a beginning? How does this truth address anxiety or fear?

2. Read John 1:3

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

The verse says that all things were made through Jesus and nothing was made without Him. How does knowing Jesus created you affect how you approach areas of brokenness in your life?

3. James discussed the story of Henry Ford and the engineer Charles Steinmetz, emphasizing that the Creator knows "where to make the mark." Do you tend to treat Jesus more like a "consultant" you bring in when stuck, or the "Architect" who designed you? What's the difference?

4. Read John 1:4

In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.

Break down the distinction between "bios" (biological life) and "zoe" (eternal, full spiritual life). How does Jesus offer zoe here and now, not just after death? Connect this to Jesus's words in John 10:10 about abundant life - what does it look like to live with zoe amid darkness, and why do many settle for bios alone?

5. James described various "flashlights" we use to navigate darkness - career security, health routines, perfect plans, etc. What are the flashlights you tend to rely on? Share a time when one of these "batteries died" and how you responded.
6. The Mt. Sinai story illustrated how, like with the Apostle John and his experience of great pain, the light doesn't remove the mountain or cliffs but illuminates the path through them. How does this change your expectations of what Jesus promises to do with the darkness in your life?
7. Drawing from the sermon's analogy of a single match in a dark stadium, where in your life have you seen even a small glimpse of Christ's light push back overwhelming shadows, and what keeps the darkness from winning?
8. The sermon encouraged writing a "real Christmas list" of where we long to see God's light invade darkness or fear or brokenness in our own lives. If comfortable, share one or two items from your list with the group.
9. The sermon emphasized that we can't push darkness out - only light dispels it. What would it look like practically this week to "stop managing the darkness" and instead "invite more light" in one specific area?
10. Spend time praying for the specific areas of darkness that people shared. Pray that the light of Christ would shine clearly, that group members would experience His zoe life, and that they would have courage to keep inviting Him into the dark places rather than trying to manage them alone.

This Week's Challenge:

- Each morning before checking your phone, pray:

*Jesus, you are the rising sun, the uncreated light.
Before I face the world, I turn my face to you.
Shine your light and help me see more clearly.*
- Keep your "real Christmas list" somewhere visible and bring one item to Jesus in prayer each day this week.



Isaiah 9:2 (NLT)

The people who walk in darkness will **see a great light**. For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a **light will shine**.

Luke 1:78-79 (NIV)

...because of the tender mercy of our God, by which **the rising sun** will come to us from heaven to **shine** on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.

John 1:1 (NIV)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

"In the beginning was the Word."

Dr. Kent Hughes

"Jesus always was was-ing!"

John 1:3 (NIV)

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

John 1:4 (NIV)

In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.

Greek word for life = Zoe.

John 1:5 (NIV)

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

The promise of Christmas isn't immunity from the darkness. It is victory through the darkness.

1. Write down a real Christmas List:

- Where you want to invite The Light of Christ to shine in areas of your life that are dark

2. First thing when you wake up, invite Him to Shine in those places

- A sample prayer:

Jesus, you are the rising sun, The Uncreated Light.
before I face the world I turn my face to you.
Shine your light. Help me see more clearly.

John 1:12 (NIV)

Yet to all who did receive him [Jesus], to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God