

# Teach Me Your Way

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**FOCUS STATEMENT:**

**Because the believer operates in God's kingdom, he must submit his mind, heart, and will to learn the ways of God.**

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**KEY VERSE:**

Teach me Your way, O LORD, that I may walk in Your truth; unite my heart to fear Your name. PSALM 86:11

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**MAIN IDEAS:**

- > God's ways are not our ways; God's ways are higher than man's ways.
- > The Christian operates in God's kingdom.
- > Christ helps believers put off the old self and put on the new self.
- > We must learn the ways of God.
- > Teaching the soul involves an informed mind, a heart desire, and a surrendered will.
- > We should not be stubborn before the Lord, but teachable.

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**SCRIPTURE:**

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|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1) Numbers 11:21-23, 31 | 4) 2 Corinthians 5:17 | 7) Psalm 86:11    |
| 2) Isaiah 55:8-9        | 5) Ephesians 4:17-24  | 8) Psalm 143:10   |
| 3) John 18:36           | 6) Romans 7:18-19     | 9) (Psalm 32:8-9) |

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**WORSHIP SONGS:**

*Jesus, Lover of My Soul*—Paul Oakley  
*Step by Step*—Rich Mullins  
*Famous One*—Jesse Reeves/Chris Tomlin

*Wonderful, Merciful Savior*—Dawn Rogers/Eric Wyse  
*In Christ Alone*—Keith Getty/Stuart Townend

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**VISUALS:**

- > Bible
- > Chalkboard/chalk or whiteboard/marker
- > Softball and mitt
- > Focus visual (see Curriculum Resources)
- > 4 Swimming Strokes (see Curriculum Resources)

**PREPARATION:**

Study the Scripture passages carefully and prayerfully. Ask God to make them real in your own heart. Be open to what God may be teaching you in this lesson. Study the lesson well. Pray for the students in your class.

Choose two volunteers to help with the opening illustration—one a left-handed student and the other

a right-handed student. If a left-handed student is not available, either recruit someone else or ask one of the volunteers to use the left hand as though left-handed.

NOTE: Be sure to encourage your students to write in their journal in class and at home.

## Small Group Discussion

Choose among the follow-up activities:

(Note: the small group leader may need to come prepared to initiate the discussion.)

Discuss the take-home part of the journal from the last lesson.

Ask the students if God has used the previous lesson to work in their hearts.

Ask the students to share how they applied the last lesson during the week.

Ask the students to comment on something they have been thinking about that they read in *The Pursuit of God*.

Ask students if they learned any lessons from *Hinds' Feet on High Places* or *Kingdom's Dawn*.

## Introduction

### Illustration

SOFTBALL AND  
MITT

Ask for your two volunteers to come to the front (one left-handed and one right-handed). Go through a few exercises with each student that would require the students to use their dominant hands (e.g., eat something with a fork; catch a ball or throw a ball; write).

- *Did you observe a difference between the two students?*
  - The students respond differently—having different dominant hands—because they are different by nature.
  - We all act according to our nature unless we are trained otherwise. Some people write with their left hands because they are, by nature, left-handed; others write with their right hands because they are, by nature, right-handed.
  - The same thing is true about people's personalities. Some people are by nature more quiet; others are more boisterous and outgoing. A quiet person can make herself be louder or more outgoing, but that person is usually more comfortable acting according to her nature.
- ! The differences between a right-handed and a left-handed person, or between a quiet and a boisterous person are an example to help us see that just as our ways are different from each other's ways, so God's ways are different than ours.
- ! God's thoughts are different from ours; His methods, His means and His purposes are different by nature than ours are by nature.

## Large Group Lesson

*Israel's need for food in the wilderness is a good example of how God's ways are different than man's ways. When God brought Israel out of Egypt into the wilderness, there were 600,000 men—600,000 hungry men. Listen for Moses' response to this.*

*Numbers 11:21-22—But Moses said, “The people among whom I am number six hundred thousand on foot, and You have said, ‘I will give them meat, that they may eat a whole month!’<sup>22</sup> Shall flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, and be enough for them? Or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, and be enough for them?”*

*Moses is very concerned; in fact he seems quite anxious—how could so many people be fed? How many sheep and goats and cattle would it take to feed 600,000 men?!*

*God, of course, is not concerned. This is His response to Moses.*

*Numbers 11:23, 31—And the LORD said to Moses, “Is the LORD’s hand shortened? Now you shall see whether My word will come true for you or not.”...<sup>31</sup>Then a wind from the LORD sprang up, and it brought quail from the sea and let them fall beside the camp, about a day’s journey on this side and a day’s journey on the other side, around the camp, and about two cubits above the ground.*

**? What is the difference between Moses’ solution and God’s solution?**

*Moses is thinking flocks and herds—sheep, goats, cattle. God is thinking birds! Not that sheep, goats, and cattle would be a problem for Him at all. But God’s ways are different than Moses’ ways! He doesn’t need sheep to feed people. He is planning to bring in a wind to drop quail at their feet. Of course, Moses couldn’t do that. God’s ways are different than our ways. God’s thoughts are different than our thoughts. God’s means are different than our means.*

! God’s character is different than our character as well. God’s nature and His ways are better and higher than our ways.

Ask someone to read Isaiah 55:8-9:

*Isaiah 55:8-9—For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, declares the LORD.<sup>9</sup> For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.*

**Review**

Write the following chart on the board while you are sharing the points below.

<b>God</b>		<b>Man</b>
thoughts	≠	thoughts
ways	≠	ways

- God’s thoughts are not our thoughts.
- God’s ways are not our ways.

- God’s responses, nature, thoughts, and ways are different than ours and so too is His kingdom.

Ask someone to read Jesus' words to Pilate, a powerful earthly governor.

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*John 18:36—Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But My kingdom is not from the world.”*

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**? What is implied in this verse about the difference between Jesus’ kingdom and the kingdom of this world?** [God’s kingdom is better than the kingdom of man]

*If you had a choice between living in a shack with selfish peasants or in a palace with a good king, where would you live? We have the privilege through Christ Jesus of entering the palace—of living in the king’s world, of belonging to a different kingdom.*

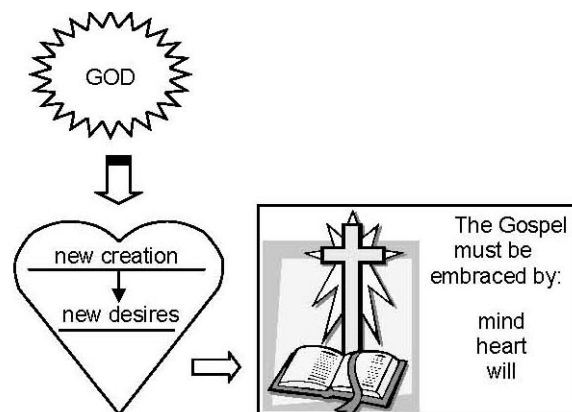
**Review**

**In what three areas of your life must you embrace the truth of the gospel of King Jesus?**

[mind, heart, will]

(As you teach through this section, encourage the students to fill out the diagram in the journal.)

*Trusting in Jesus as your Savior makes you a part of another kingdom—the kingdom of God, where the ways, means, purposes, and methods are far superior than in the kingdom of man.*



**Review**

**What action must God take before we ever have the desire or ability to embrace the gospel?**

- God must make us new men (new creations) with new desires for Christ and His ways. Paul calls this action of God “a new creation”: “if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away...the new has come” (2 Corinthians 5:17).
- This means that the Christian operates in a whole different kingdom with a whole different way of being and doing. Those who are in Christ should no longer walk according to the sinful patterns and practices of this world.

**Focus Statement**



(Show the Focus visual.)

**Because the believer operates in God's kingdom, he must submit his mind, heart, and will to learn the ways of God.**

*In your small groups, you are going to look at Ephesians 4:17-22 together to discover the contrast between the life submitted to the rule of sin and the life submitted to the rule of Jesus.*

**Small Group Discussion**

**DISCUSSION 10A**

Read the following verses and answer the questions:

(Instruct the students to circle in the journal those things that describe unbelievers who do not live for God, and underline those things that describe men who have been changed by God.)

*Ephesians 4:17-24—Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds.<sup>18</sup> They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.<sup>19</sup> They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.<sup>20</sup> But that is not the way you learned Christ!<sup>21</sup>—assuming that you have heard about Him and were taught in Him, as the truth is in Jesus,<sup>22</sup> to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires,<sup>23</sup> and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,<sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*

When Paul says Gentiles what does he mean? [those who are not trusting in Christ for salvation]

What actions of unbelievers did you circle in the journal? What is the cause of these actions? [unbeliever's alienation from God; hardness of heart; unwillingness to surrender to Christ]

The word "but" signals a contrast. What is the contrast Paul is making? [contrasting the believer with the unbeliever—the believer is not like the unbeliever]

What is Paul referring to when he says, "That is not the way you learned Christ"? [salvation] Does this seem like unusual terminology? Is this the way the Bible usually talks about salvation?

Unusual terminology is an indication that a writer is trying to say something specific, that he has something he wants to make sure the reader does not miss. What do you think Paul is saying in this phrase? [that salvation is not just a moment of experience but it includes daily learning who Christ is and daily learning from Him; in salvation, our understanding is enlightened and we embrace the truth we understand and the person of Christ who that truth points to—we continue learning about Christ and His ways and His truth]

What words and phrases did you underline in this passage that describe believers?

What is Paul saying to the Christian in verse 22 with the use of the words "old" and "former"? [the Christian is a new person with a new manner of life and new desires; there has been a change; verses 17-19 do not describe the Christian because that was the "old"—unregenerate—person, not the new person in Christ]

What two things does Paul encourage the Christian to do? [renew the mind and put on the new self] What does it mean to renew the mind? [change your way of thinking; seek truth and replace old thought patterns with new thought patterns]

What does it mean "to put on the new self"? [to assume the manner and attitude and heart of the new creature that you are in Christ; to be and act differently than before; to become Christlike—righteous and holy]

Does this mean that salvation is earned? [no—the person is able to renew the mind and put on the new self because he has “learned Christ”]

Then why does Paul tell us to DO these things? [man must respond to God’s work of salva-

tion and sanctification; doing is an evidence of believing]

If you have trusted in Christ, are there any areas of your life that belong to your “old” way of living that you need to put off?

## Large Group Lesson

### Illustration



Ask the class to raise their hands if they have ever taken swimming lessons. *Did you learn to do different strokes? How many of you can do the butterfly stroke? If you can't swim the butterfly stroke, it is not an easy stroke, but it can be learned.*

*Suppose you didn't know how to do the butterfly stroke and a good teacher was teaching it to you. He would first give you some instruction. (Demonstrate this using the 4 Swimming Strokes.)*

*But can you swim the butterfly stroke now? Has the instructor done all he can do to teach you the butterfly stroke? No. Next he would get in the water and demonstrate to you how to do the butterfly stroke. He would show you each step. He would be an example to you.*

*Could you do the butterfly stroke now? No. The instructor would then ask you to get in the water and he would help you. He would position your arms and legs, he would walk you through the steps, he would correct your mistakes, and if you started to sink, he would pull you out of the water!*

*But at this point could you do the butterfly stroke? What is needed? You have to DO it—you have to move your arms and legs. You have to make mistakes and start over. You have to ask for help when you need it—because a good instructor will be right there to help you.*

*With understanding of how to do the butterfly stroke and a desire to learn the butterfly stroke and the determination or will to do it and much practice, you will be able to do the butterfly stroke—not perfectly but little by little you will move toward perfection.*

### **? How does this illustration about learning the butterfly stroke help us understand how to learn and live the truth from God's Word?**

- Teaching the soul is much like teaching championship swimming. It involves instruction. The soul must know truth. God has given us a whole book to instruct the soul.

*When Jesus was alive on earth, He gave us many words of truth, some of which are in the Sermon on the Mount, which we will be studying.*

- Just like learning the butterfly stroke, learning to walk in God's ways involves more than just knowledge.

*! How do you put off the old and put on the new? How do we learn to walk in God's ways?*

*Paul makes it sound so simple—like we are just changing clothes. But if we read Romans 7, we see that it is not that easy. Paul knew what it was like to struggle to become more like Christ and walk in His ways. "For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing" (Romans 7:18-19). So what is the answer? Are we just stuck in our sin nature?*

*In your small groups, you will discover an answer to the Christian's struggle to walk in God's ways.*

## **Small Group Discussion**

### **DISCUSSION 10B**

Read the following verse and answer the questions:

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*Psalm 86:11—Teach me Your way, O LORD, that I may walk in Your truth; unite my heart to fear Your name.*

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What does the first phrase tell you about walking in God's way? [we must be taught, we don't learn it on our own; it is the result of mercy; we need to pray that God will teach us—plead with the Lord for His mercy on us]

Who does the teaching? [God]

What does LORD mean? [master] What does the name LORD in this context imply? [submission to God as our master or authority; recognizing that He is the LORD of our lives and being teachable]

How does God teach us His way? [through the Bible, experiences, communion with Him, our consciences, letting us make mistakes, disciplining us, consequences, other Christians, preaching]

What does it mean to "walk" in God's truth? [our behavior and our speech will be conformed to the Word of God; God's Word influences how we live daily]

What can you learn from the last phrase? [this teaching involves the heart as well as the mind; our hearts must be wholly given to God, not pulled toward competing loves which is idolatry; fearing God or respecting God's authority in our lives will incline us to be godly; the psalmist is praying for a heart change which only God can give]

## **Large Group Lesson**

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*Psalm 143:10—Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God! Let Your good Spirit lead me on level ground!*

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**? What can you learn from this verse?** [sanctification—walking on level ground—comes from a will that is bent in surrender to God, who is the object of the Christian's affection and worship]

! The soul must be taught the ways of God.

! Teaching the soul involves knowledge (an informed mind), a heart desire, and a will surrendered to Christ.

! Knowledge alone does not deal with our sinful nature. Knowledge is important—but it should transform the heart and will.



### Conclusion/Summary

(Encourage the students to fill out the roles of the Godhead in the journal.)

- God is like the swimming instructor in our illustration. He has given us truth—He has instructed us in His ways.
- Jesus came to show us how to follow the ways of God—how to live as a Christian. He demonstrated a life of surrender to the Father’s will and submission to His ways—He is the perfect example.
- And the Holy Spirit is “in the water with you”—reminding you of Christ’s instructions, giving you understanding, pricking your conscience, picking you up when you fall, and coming to your aid when you ask for help.

*If you are a Christian and want to grow in God’s ways, God is an eager teacher.*

*But you have to ask God to teach you, daily. You must make a humble pleading with the Lord asking Him to change you daily. And you have to “jump in the water” and swim—not perfectly, but moving toward greater perfection.*

### Focus Statement

(Show the Focus visual again.)



**Because the believer operates in God’s kingdom, he must submit his mind, heart, and will to learn the ways of God.**

*If you are not a Christian, God invites you to come to Him and learn from Him through Jesus Christ. He will not turn away anyone who comes to Him (John 6:37b).*

End with prayer.

## Small Group Application

The following are suggestions.

*Have you ever taught someone something? Was there anything in the person’s attitude that made the job either easier or harder? Can you effectively teach a person who really does not want to learn?*

Read and discuss the following verse:

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*Psalm 32:8-9—I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you.<sup>9</sup> Be not like a horse or a mule, without understanding, which must be curbed with bit and bridle, or it will not stay near you.*

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*What are the marks of a teachable heart? Is your heart teachable before the Lord? How do you know this? In what areas are you not teachable?*

*Do you think God’s ways are easy for us? Is there any connection between learning to skate/swim and learning the ways of God? [at first it is really hard, but as you practice, it gets easier]*

*Do you think a Christian should make himself do what is right even if he doesn’t feel like it? How reliable are feelings for determining what you really should do?*

*Have you ever had the experience of doing what is right with a reluctant heart and after you did it, the feelings came along? [help the students understand that determined obedience will*

often train the heart; sometimes it may need to be repeated obedience before the heart will respond]

*If God gave me an envelope with your name on it with a note inside about an area of your life where He wants you to follow Him, what would it say?*

At the end of the Application Time, encourage each student to fill in the section labeled, "What application can I make of this lesson?" in the journal.

### At Home Activity

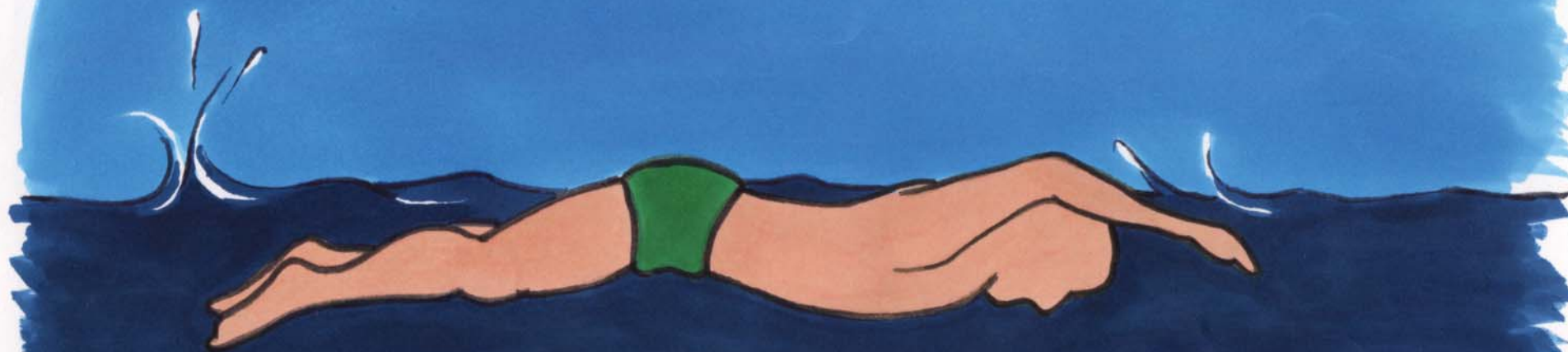
Encourage students to read a chapter or part of a chapter in one of the following two books each week:

- Girls: *Hinds' Feet on High Places* by Hannah Hurnard
- Boys: *Kingdom's Dawn* by Chuck Black



Because the believer operates  
in God's kingdom,  
he must submit his mind, heart, and  
will to learn the ways of God.

# Step 1



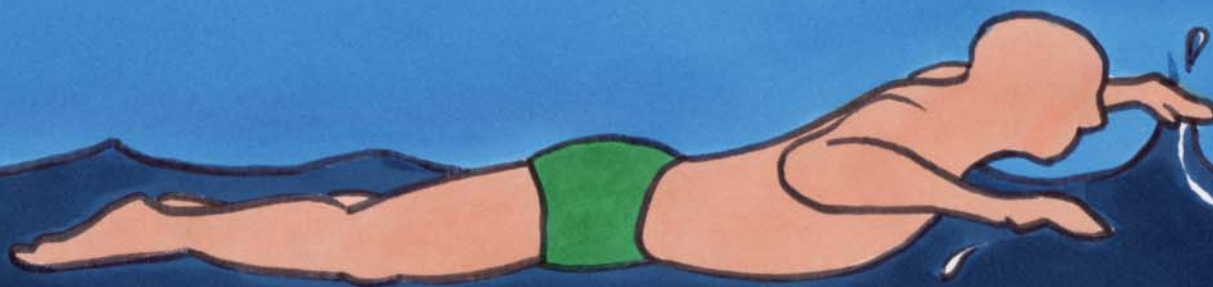
With your legs together, extend your arms beyond your head. Kick your legs up and down once.

# Step 2



When hands reach the thigh-mark, raise them out of the water; kick again.

# Step 3



Glide while executing a smaller kick.

# Step 4



Lift your head and breathe while returning arms to the starting position.

# Teach Me Your Way

**FOCUS STATEMENT:**

**Because the believer operates in God's kingdom, he must submit his mind, heart, and will to learn the ways of God.**

**KEY VERSE:**

Teach me Your way, O LORD, that I may walk in Your truth; unite my heart to fear Your name.  
PSALM 86:11

**MAIN IDEAS:**

- > God's ways are not our ways; God's ways are higher than man's ways.
- > The Christian operates in God's kingdom.
- > Christ helps believers put off the old self and put on the new self.
- > We must learn the ways of God.
- > Teaching the soul involves an informed mind, a heart desire, and a surrendered will.
- > We should not be stubborn before the Lord, but teachable.

**MORE SCRIPTURE:**

- |                         |                       |                 |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1) Numbers 11:21-23, 31 | 4) 2 Corinthians 5:17 | 7) Psalm 86:11  |
| 2) Isaiah 55:8-9        | 5) Ephesians 4:17-24  | 8) Psalm 143:10 |
| 3) John 18:36           | 6) Romans 7:18-19     | 9) Psalm 32:8-9 |







**What application can I make of this lesson?**

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How can I practice God's ways this week?

Prayer requests

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He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble His way. PSALM 25:9

# At Home

Read Psalm 25 three or four times. Then read it section by section, meditating on each section. List at least eight attitudes or qualities you see in David in this psalm. Then list at least eight qualities you can see about God in this psalm.

Qualities of David:	Qualities of God:
①	①
②	②
③	③
④	④
⑤	⑤
⑥	⑥
⑦	⑦
⑧	⑧

What in this psalm gives hope to the Christian who desires to walk in God's ways?

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**BUT GOD**

Read Ephesians 2:1-5. Fill out the chart below, describing what the Ephesians did before God saved them, the action of God, and the result.

You Were (Before Conversion)	BUT GOD	The Result (After Conversion)

What is the significance of the words BUT GOD?

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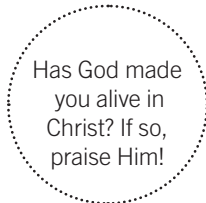
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What caused the change in the Ephesians? How did they pass from death to life? What does that tell you about a person’s ability to change?

If you have not been made alive by the grace of God, you will not be able to master the sin in your life. Sin will enslave you.

If God has given you new life and made you a citizen of His kingdom, then you will begin the struggle that will last your whole life to “put off” the sin in your life that distracts you from becoming more like Christ and walking in His ways.

## SAMPLE LESSONS

### Lesson 10

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Read Colossians 3:5-10. Why does Paul call what is “earthly” in man “idolatry”? To see the connection, read Romans 1:21-25 and 1:28-32 again (from Lesson 1).

On the lines below, make a list of things in your life that must be put off.

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### **Does this feel overwhelming to you? Read the encouragement below.**

Have you ever watched a baby learn to walk? What does a loving parent do when the baby falls down?

*"If only the will to walk is there, God is pleased with our stumbling."<sup>1</sup>*

—C.S. Lewis

With your parent/s or mentor, read the second half of Chapter 5 of *The Pursuit of God* by A.W. Tozer.



1. Lewis, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), 39.

**Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk  
in your truth; unite my heart to fear your  
name.** PSALM 86:11



### A Note to Parents

This year your youth will be using a curriculum called *Teach Me Your Way*. It is a study on surrendering to Jesus Christ in salvation and submitting to His will and way. Following is a brief summary:

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*Although created to worship God, man is prone by nature to worship the creation rather than the Creator. We are inclined to pursue the temporal benefits of this physical world over the eternal treasure of the spiritual world. Only God can open blind eyes to the surpassing worth of knowing Christ. Surrendering to Christ in salvation involves the mind, heart, and will of the person, and true saving faith results in submission to the will and ways of Jesus.*

*The evidence of a surrendered heart is obedience, and the mark of the obedient heart is reflected in the true righteousness of the person who has “put off the old self” and has “put on the new self.” Though perfect righteousness has been legally imputed to the believer through the cross, the life of righteous living, though imperfect till heaven, can be reflected in the believer here. The righteous heart attitude and actions taught in the Sermon on the Mount are a picture of the “already but not yet” perfected believer.*

*Because sin is subtle and man’s nature is sinful, Christians must encourage each other daily to submit to God and to resist sin until Jesus returns and we reflect the perfection of the character of Christ.*

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This curriculum is not intended to be an exhaustive study of the Sermon on the Mount, but rather a study of surrender to Christ in salvation and subsequent submission to His way using the Sermon on the Mount to demonstrate the character of the true believer.

Your son or daughter will be given a Student Journal to use for classroom note taking and use at home. The at-home exercises in the journal will be a means of reinforcing and applying the truths taught at church. Please encourage your young person to use the journal and to dialogue with you about what he/she is learning in class and in the journal activities.

In addition, we would like to encourage you to read with your son or daughter, the book *The Pursuit of God* by A.W. Tozer. This will give you a springboard for spiritual discussion with your son or daughter. Assigned portions are noted at the end of each week’s journal activities.

In addition, girls are encouraged each week to read a portion of the book *Hinds’ Feet on High Places*<sup>1</sup> by Hannah Hurnard, while boys are encouraged to read a portion of the book *Kingdom’s Dawn*, both of reinforce many of the teachings of this curriculum. You may even want to make these books an opportunity to spend time together with your child reading them aloud.

“Teach Me Your Way” (Psalm 86:11) is an expression of need, an acknowledgement of dependency, and a prayer for help. Please pray for your son or daughter as he/she is exposed to the great truths of God contained in this curriculum.

Please contact your student’s teacher or mentor with any questions or concerns you may have. Thank you for the privilege of ministering to your son/daughter this year.

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1. The choice of *Hinds’ Feet On High Places* should not be seen as an endorsement of other books written by Hannah Hurnard.



# The Light of the World

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## FOCUS STATEMENT:

**Those who follow Jesus, the True Light of the World, reflect His light to a dark world.**

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## KEY VERSE:

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. MATTHEW 5:14

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## MAIN IDEAS:

- > Jesus is the light of the world.
- > The followers of Jesus are also light because the light of Jesus is within them, and because they are called to reflect His light to the world.
- > The mission of Christians as light bearers is to expose darkness, warn of spiritual danger, and guide those in darkness to the True Light.
- > The true Christian will not hide his light.

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## SCRIPTURE:

- |                      |                   |                     |
|----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1) John 1:9          | 4) Colossians 1:3 | 7) Ephesians 5:11   |
| 2) John 8:12         | 5) Matthew 5:14a  | 8) Ephesians 5:8-14 |
| 3) 2 Corinthians 4:6 | 6) John 3:16-21   | 9) Matthew 5:14-16  |

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## WORSHIP SONGS:

<i>Before the Throne</i> —Vikki Cook/Charitie Lees Bancroft	<i>The Steadfast Love</i> —Robert Davidson
<i>We Will Glorify</i> —Twila Paris	<i>Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus</i> —Helen Lemmel
<i>Light of the World</i> —Matt Redman	

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## VISUALS:

- > Bible
- > 4 Focus visuals (see Curriculum Resources)
- > Optical Illusion (see Curriculum Resources)
- > Tape/tacks
- > Chalkboard/chalk or whiteboard/marker

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## PREPARATION:

Study the Scripture passages carefully and prayerfully. Ask God to make them real in your own heart. Be open to what God may be teaching you in this lesson. Study the lesson well. Pray for the students in your class.

Because the verses in this lesson need to flow with the dialogue rather quickly, you may want to assign all the Scripture passages to various students at the beginning of the class.

For some really interesting optical illusions, check the following website: <http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/~akitaoka/index-e.html>

NOTE: Be sure to encourage your students to write in the journal in class and at home.

NOTE: Encourage students to memorize the Sermon on the Mount.

## Small Group Demonstration

Choose among the follow-up activities:

(Note: the small group leader may need to come prepared to initiate the discussion.)

Discuss the take-home part of the journal from the last lesson.

Ask the students if God has used the previous lesson to work in their hearts.

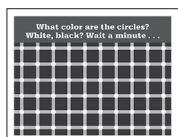
Ask the students to share how they applied the last lesson during the week.

Ask the students to comment on something they have been thinking about that they read in *The Pursuit of God*.

Ask students if they learned any lessons from *Hinds' Feet on High Places* or *Kingdom's Dawn*.

## Large Group Lesson

### Illustration



**Caution: This experiment could trigger an epileptic seizure in an epileptic.**

Call a student to the front and show him the Optical Illusion. Ask him the color of the circles. (The circles appear white, black, and some both white and black.)

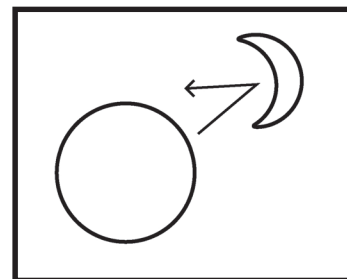
Tell the student that the circles are not changing in color and none of them are black. They are actually all white, but our minds and eyes play tricks on us, which is what makes the circles appear black or changing in color.

*Things are not always as they seem. Our minds can be fooled through trickery or lack of knowledge.*

### Illustration

*When you look at the moon at night, you could be fooled into thinking that it is a light source. But if you have studied science, you know that the moon does not generate light at all but rather, it reflects the light of the sun, much like a mirror can reflect the light of a light bulb. (Draw a diagram like the one at the right while you are explaining this.)*

(Assign the following four verses to students to have ready to read.)



*! This same phenomenon is seen in the spiritual world. John said this of Jesus:*

(Ask a student to read the verse.)

---

*John 1:9—The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.*

---

*! And Jesus said this of Himself:*

(Ask a student to read the verse.)

---

*John 8:12—Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”*

---

Write on the board:

JESUS: I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

! *Those who have surrendered their lives—mind, heart, and will—to Jesus can say with Paul:*

(Ask students to read the following verses.)

---

*2 Corinthians 4:6—For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

---

*Colossians 1:13—He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.*

---

! Coming to Jesus in salvation means coming out of the darkness and into the light. *Jesus says of His followers in the Sermon on the Mount:*

---

*Matthew 5:14a—You are the light of the world.*

---

Write on the board underneath your first statement:

JESUS: YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

? (Circle the word “I” in the first statement and the word “You” in the second statement.)  
***Which is it? Is Jesus the light of the world, or are His followers the light of the world? Did Jesus make a mistake?***

- Just as the moon and planets reflect the light of the sun (write SUN on the board), so we, those who are followers of Jesus, reflect the light of the Son (write SON on the board).
- Not only do we reflect the light of Christ, but since Christ is light, those who have trusted in Jesus as Savior, have Christ, the light, in us.

### **Focus Statement**

(Put Focus #1 on the board and read it.)

**Those who follow Jesus, the True Light of the World, reflect His light to a dark world.**

*In your small groups, you will explore the Christian’s response to the light and the non-Christian’s response to the light.*



## Small Group Discussion

### DISCUSSION 20A

(Instruct students to draw a circle around every reference to “light”; underline statements referring to the Christian’s response to the light; double underline statements referring to the non-Christian’s response to the light.)

Read the following verses and answer the questions:

---

*John 3:16-21—For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.<sup>17</sup> For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him.<sup>18</sup> Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.<sup>19</sup> And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil.<sup>20</sup> For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.<sup>21</sup> But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been carried out in God.*

---

What does this passage say about God’s reasons for sending Jesus? How does this relate to the lesson on peacemaking? [Jesus came to make peace between God and man—it was an active pursuing of peacemaking; we see that in sending His only Son to save believers, God is the ultimate peacemaker]

What was God’s first act of creation? [light, Genesis 1:3] What was the purpose of this light? [to drive out the darkness]

What does verse 19 say about the nature of man? [man loves sin; the light reveals that man loves the darkness of sin more than the light of God]

What does the fact that man loves the darkness because it hides sin tell you about the way that God has made man? [God has made man with an inborn knowledge of right and wrong; the conviction of conscience is a gift to all men]

Why do you think Jesus is called the “light” in verse 19? What qualities of light describe Jesus and His purpose on earth? [light represents life and truth; light chases away darkness; Jesus came to show men the way to God—to bring the knowledge of God (to reveal the Father)— 2 Corinthians 4:6; light is stronger than darkness—darkness cannot overcome the light—John 1:5; light is the opposite of darkness—it reveals darkness, it shows that darkness is darkness—Jesus came to expose the evil in man’s heart, to show man his own darkness by being the opposite, light]

Why do those who do wicked things hate the light? What does this tell you about the reason that the world persecutes true followers of Jesus? [the light makes them feel guilty; when their deeds are exposed, it is obvious that their hearts are darkened and the only choices they have are to address the darkness in order to destroy it, or cover it up and pretend that it is not there. The way that you cover exposed sin is to discredit the exposers or get rid of them.]

What is the source of good deeds according to verse 21? [they have their root “in God”; they come from God; they are the light of God shining out through the believer]

## Large Group Lesson

### Review

*Throughout the study on the Sermon on the Mount, we have talked about what it means to surrender our minds, hearts, and wills to Jesus Christ in salvation. Obedience and the transformed character of the Beatitudes comes progressively from a heart transformed by the gospel. The character of the kingdom of God is needed to carry out the mission of the kingdom of God—to be salt and light.*

*Let's see what Jesus means when He says that His followers are "the light of the world." What is the mission or the purpose of the Christian in this world?*

**? Look back at John 3:20. What happens to darkness when light encounters it?**

- Light EXPOSES or reveals the darkness for what it really is. This is the first characteristic of Jesus and His followers as the "light of the world"—they expose darkness.

**Illustration**

Ask the class if they ever read the story of *The Emperor's New Clothes* when they were little. Ask them to quickly summarize the story<sup>20</sup>:

Two crooks saw an opportunity to make some easy money by preying on the vanity of a rich emperor. They told him that they had invented an extraordinarily light fabric that was invisible to those who were ignorant of the fine quality.

They proceeded to "weave" the fine material and then to "sew" it into garments for the emperor while pocketing the emperor's bag of gold. When the prime minister was sent to inspect the work, rather than admit his ignorance, he pretended he could see the cloth and brought back a favorable report to the emperor.

When the clothing was finished, the emperor donned the new clothing, also unwilling to admit that he could not see the fabric and thus appear ignorant to his subjects. The emperor paraded down through the town showing off his new "clothes," and everyone exclaimed on the beauty and fine quality of the extraordinary clothing lest they appear ignorant.

A little boy, however, upon seeing the emperor said, "The emperor is naked!"

**? In what way are Christians to be like the boy in the story?**

- We are not to ignore or approve evil in the world, we are to bring it out in the light. We are not to turn a blind eye to wrong; we are to say, "You know what? The emperor doesn't have any clothes on!" We are not to ignore or approve evil in the world; we are to expose it with the light.

(Ask a student to read the following verse.)

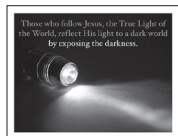
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*Ephesians 5:11—Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.*

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<sup>20</sup>Based on Anderson, Hans Christian. *The Emperor's New Clothes*.

**Focus Statement**



(Show Focus #2)

**Those who follow Jesus, the True Light of the World, reflect His light to a dark world by exposing the darkness.**

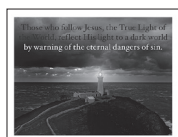
**? How might a lighthouse serve as a picture of another way that Christians live as the “light of the world”?**

- Just as lighthouses warn boats of danger that awaits them if they continue in the darkness toward the rocks, so also *Christians warn the world of the eternal dangers of continuing to live in the darkness.*
- The light of Christians illumines darkness by proclaiming truth. As such it WARNS of continuing in unbelief.

! Communities have signals that warn of danger—like tornadoes, severe storms, and hurricanes. Fire alarms warn that there is a fire and it is dangerous to stay in the building.

! Christians are the lighthouses, severe weather signals, and fire alarms to a lost and dark world. We are to warn them not only of the folly of the way they are living and the consequences of ignoring God’s laws, but we are also to warn the world of the coming judgment for sin and the inescapable consequence of rejecting God.

**Focus Statement**



(Show Focus #3.)

**Those who follow Jesus, the True Light of the World, reflect His light to a dark world by warning of the eternal dangers of sin.**

**? Picture yourself in a dark cave or in the woods at night. What would a light help you to do?**

- A light would be very necessary to show you the way out. The light not only shows you danger like holes in the ground or protruding branches and obstacles you may collide with, it also illumines the path so you know which way to go.

**? How do Christians as the “light of the world” function like a light in a dark cave?**

- *As the lights of the world, Christians are also GUIDES out of darkness into light. Christians show people in darkness the way to Christ, the True Light, and to what is good and right.*

**Focus Statement**



(Show Focus #4)

**Those who follow Jesus, the True Light of the World, reflect His light to a dark world by guiding people to Christ.**

*In your small groups you will see what it means for Christians to walk in the light.*

## Small Group Discussion

### DISCUSSION 20B

(Instruct the students to underline Paul's four commands to Christians.)

Read the following verses and answer the questions:

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*Ephesians 5:8-14—For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light<sup>9</sup> (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true),<sup>10</sup> and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.<sup>11</sup> Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.<sup>12</sup> For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.<sup>13</sup> But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible,<sup>14</sup> for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."*

---

What does it mean to "walk as children of light"? [Paul is encouraging Christians to live pure lives—to turn away from evil and to be characterized by a desire for that which is good and right and true]

What assertion does Paul make in verse 8? [you are light] What command is he giving in verse 8? [walk as children of light] How does his command relate to his statement about the believer's new identity? (What is the relationship between who Christians are and how Christians are called to live?) [We do not live as children of light so that God will accept us but the other way

around. Paul is telling Christians, "Become what you are in Christ."]

Paul does not allow the Christian to be passive. Where do you see this in the passage? [not only is the Christian not to participate in evil, but the Christian has a responsibility to expose evil]

To whom is Paul referring with the term "sleeper"? [those apart from Christ; those who are dead in their sins] What does he instruct the Christian in regards to sleepers? [to reveal the darkness, to warn of the danger of spiritual apathy, and to guide others to the light of the gospel]

What does this exposing the darkness mean when you see someone cheat on a test? Or when you know a friend has deceived his parents? Give an example of a time when you or someone you know exposed darkness.

Is there any darkness you are aware of that God might be calling you to expose?

The world is full of deception, untruth, and false thinking. (Give the students a current example of this in the news or in their community.) How can you be a mouthpiece for truth? Practically, what can you do?

How is the light of Christians extinguished by: our own apathy? the world? How can you avoid the danger of becoming so much like the world that you don't even see the danger of the darkness?

## Large Group Lesson

(Ask the class to read and explain the following verses.)

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*Matthew 5:14-16—You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.<sup>15</sup> Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.<sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*

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**? How it is that the world will see the good works of Christians and give glory to God?**

**The Light of the World**

(Make sure the class understands that good works alone don't constitute light. Those good works must be accompanied by a verbal witness to God. Encourage them to write these ideas in the journal.)

**? Jesus tells us to make our light unmistakably present—it is to be obvious, like a city on a hill. What would cause Christians to hide the light within us? Why is it so hard to give a verbal witness along with our works of gracious kindness?** [embarrassment—we are embarrassed to admit that we are Christians; lack of love—we don't care about the perishing world; fear—of ridicule or persecution]

*The true Christian has no desire to hide his light. We don't hide things we are excited or proud about or that are important to us.*

*It may be fearful or difficult at times to be salt and light, but the person truly surrendered to Jesus and submitted to His will desires what Jesus wants—for others to see our good works and bring glory to God.*

**Focus Statement**

**Followers of Jesus reflect His light to a dark world.**

End with prayer.

**Small Group Application**

The following are suggestions.

*Have you ever seen a luminous watch or another glow-in-the-dark item? How does it work? [the watch has a substance on it that absorbs light; when the watch is in the dark, that substance shines] What determines whether the luminous substance will glow in the dark? [exposure to the light] What does this say about us as Christians?*

*Has your life been characterized by hiding the light of Christ under a basket? If so, why? Does this reveal an area of sin or disobedience that you need to repent of before God this week?*

*What would you say to a person who claims to be a Christian but who is ashamed of Christ? [he may not be a true Christian]*

*Why is the character of Christ in the Beatitudes a prerequisite for fulfilling Matthew 5:14-16? Why is faith-produced surrender to Jesus the first step?*

*One of the obstacles to having good works that focus others on God is our own sinful, selfish, self-promoting nature. How can we fight the temptation of our own pride?*

*When have you seen someone whose good works give glory to God? What is it in them that focuses people on God?*

At the end of the Application Time, encourage each student to fill in the section labeled, "What application can I make of this lesson?" in the journal.

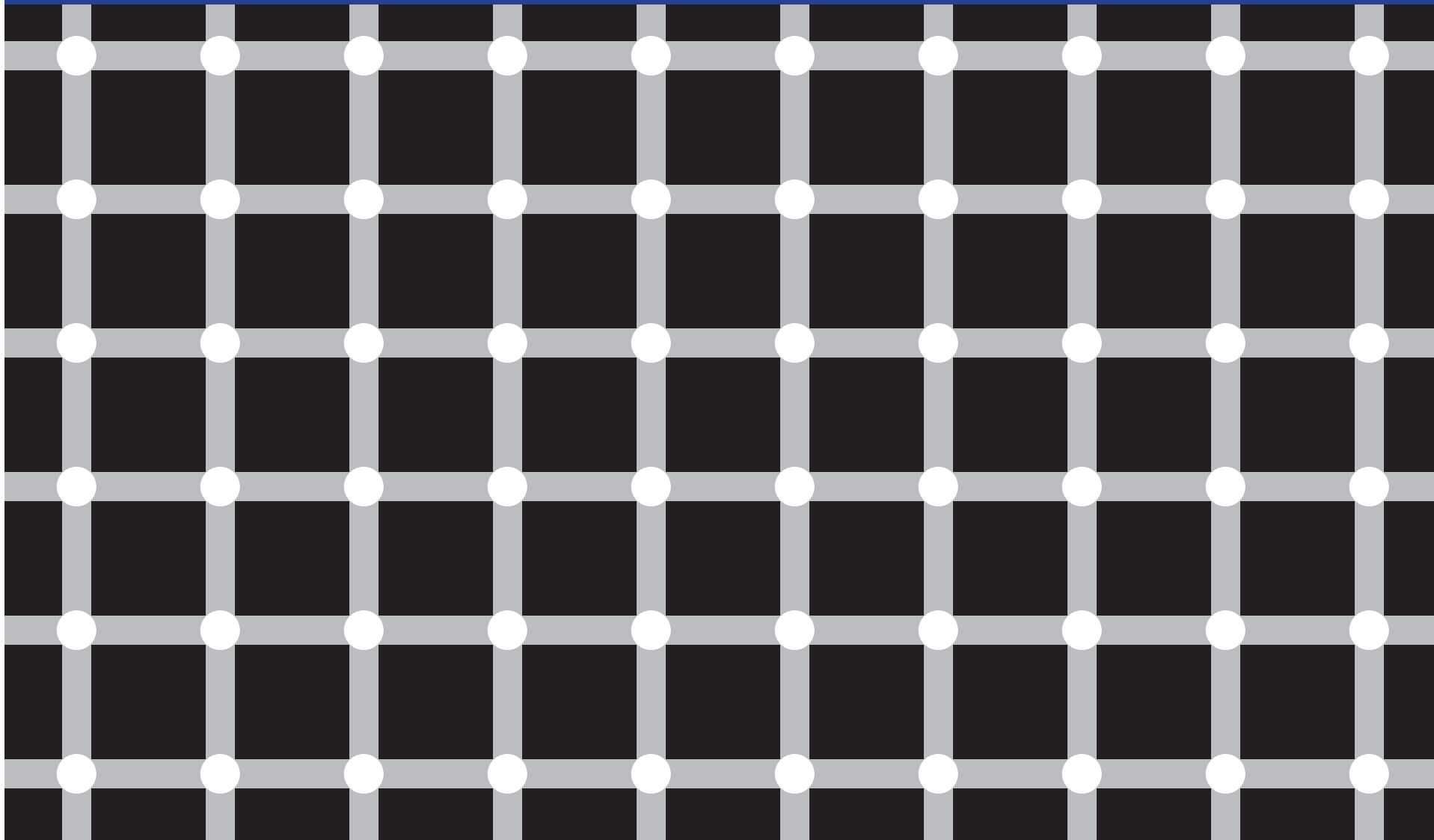
**At Home Activity**

Encourage students to read a chapter or part of a chapter in one of the following two books each week:

- Girls: *Hinds' Feet on High Places* by Hannah Hurnard
- Boys: *Kingdom's Dawn* by Chuck Black



**What color are the circles?  
White, black? Wait a minute...**



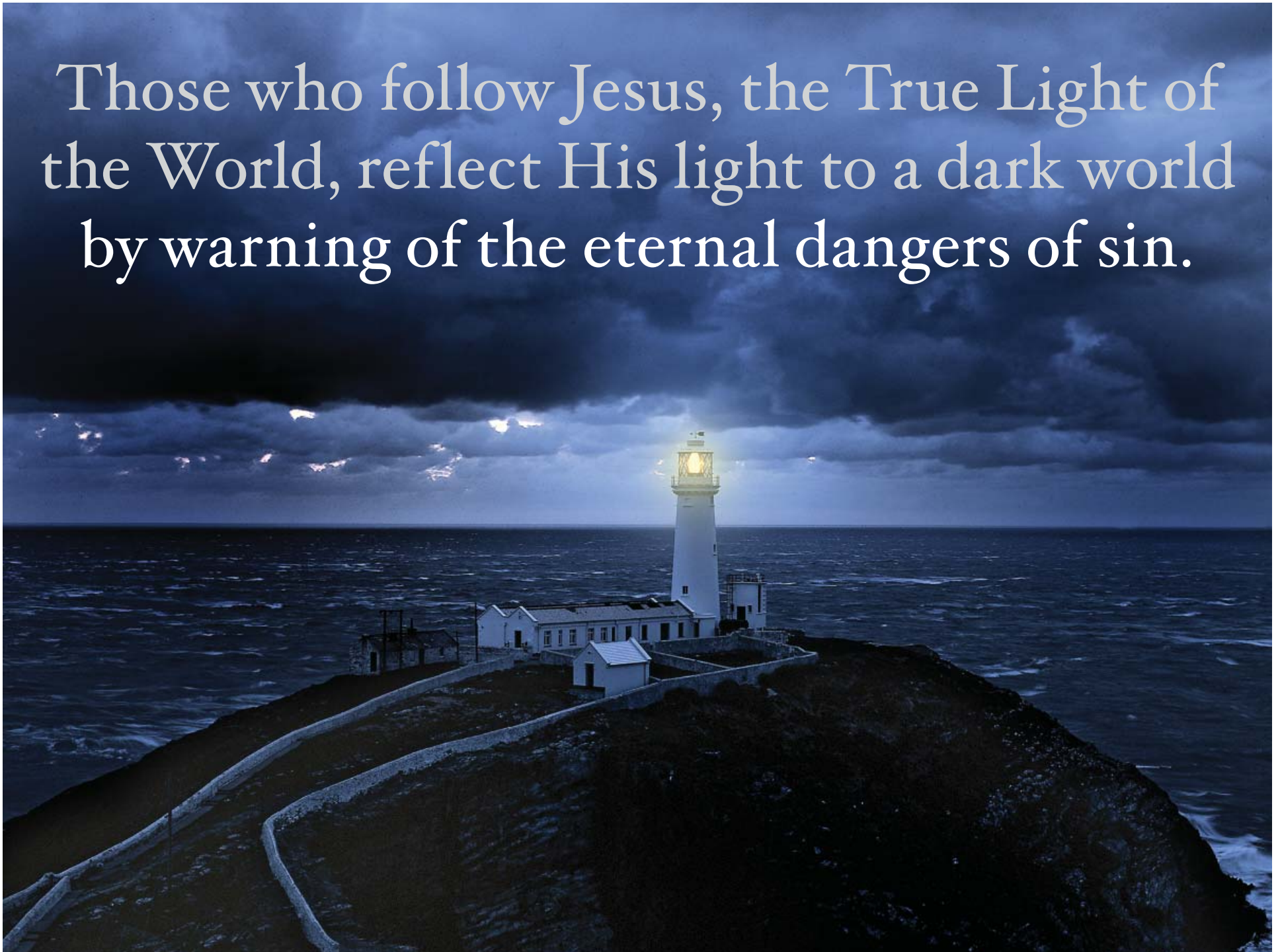
Those who follow Jesus, the True Light of the World, reflect His light to a dark world.



Those who follow Jesus, the True Light of the World, reflect His light to a dark world by exposing the darkness.



Those who follow Jesus, the True Light of the World, reflect His light to a dark world by warning of the eternal dangers of sin.



Those who follow Jesus, the True Light of the World, reflect His light to a dark world by guiding people to Christ.



# The Light of the World

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**FOCUS STATEMENT:**

**Those who follow Jesus, the True Light of the World, reflect His light to a dark world.**

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**KEY VERSE:**

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. MATTHEW 5:14-16

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**MAIN IDEAS:**

- > Jesus is the light of the world.
- > The followers of Jesus are also light because the light of Jesus is within them and because they are called to reflect His light to the world.
- > The mission of Christians as light bearers is to reveal darkness, warn of spiritual danger, and guide those in darkness to the True Light.
- > The true Christian will not hide his light.

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**MORE SCRIPTURE:**

- |                      |                   |                     |
|----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1) John 1:9          | 4) Colossians 1:3 | 7) Ephesians 5:11   |
| 2) John 8:12         | 5) Matthew 5:14a  | 8) Ephesians 5:8-14 |
| 3) 2 Corinthians 4:6 | 6) John 3:16-21   | 9) Matthew 5:14-16  |

## In Class

### Discussion 20a

Read John 3:16-21. Draw a circle around every reference to “light”; underline statements referring to the Christian’s response to the light; double underline statements referring to the non-Christian’s response to the light.

*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.<sup>17</sup> For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him.<sup>18</sup> Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.<sup>19</sup> And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil.<sup>20</sup> For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.<sup>21</sup> But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been carried out in God.*

### Discussion 20b

Read Ephesians 5:8-14. Underline Paul's four commands to Christians.

*For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light<sup>9</sup> (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true),<sup>10</sup> and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.<sup>11</sup> Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.<sup>12</sup> For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.<sup>13</sup> But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible,<sup>14</sup> for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."*

## Main Ideas

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# At Home

Read Titus 2:11-15. List the commands in this passage.

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What does the word "training" imply? How is God training you? How can you cooperate with His training?

Read Philippians 2:14-16. What things do you tend to grumble or complain about? If you are a Christian, what does that do to your witness? How can you joyfully follow God's command to be light?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:58 and Romans 12:21. What can you DO in response to these passages? Be practical about how you can apply these verses in your everyday life.

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How can I overcome evil with good?

## SAMPLE LESSONS

Lesson 20

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Read John 9:1-7. What is Jesus saying in verse 4? What does the urgency expressed by Jesus in verse 4 mean for you?

In the frame below, list some of the good works that Jesus did. Did they bring glory to His Father? If so, how did they?

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Read the following verse:

*Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable,  
so that when they speak against you as evildoers,  
they may see your good deeds  
and glorify God on the day of visitation.*

*1 PETER 2:12*

What does this verse presume?

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What is “the day of visitation”?

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What encouragement to persevere does this verse give the Christian?

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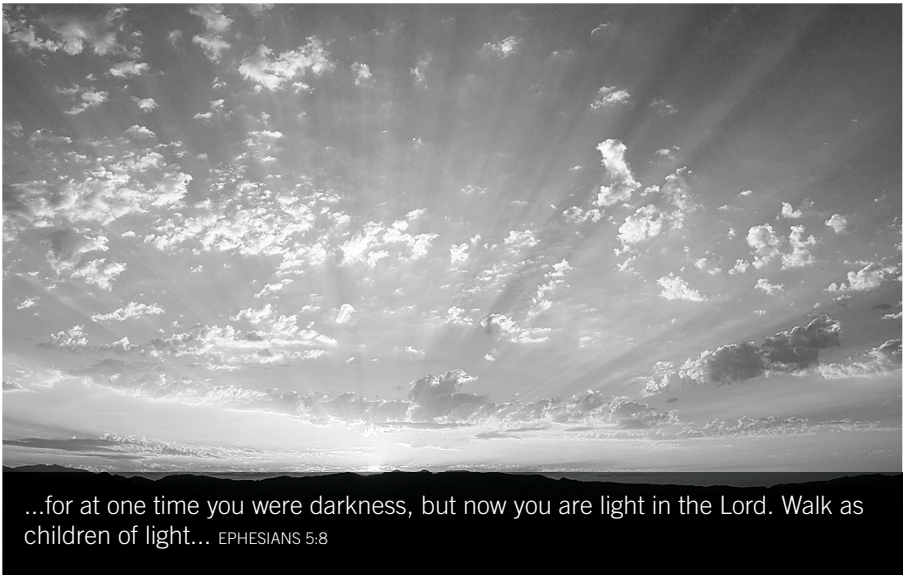
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**Prayer Focus:**

Pray for the courage to show your light by your good deeds and by your words of testimony.



...for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light... EPHESIANS 5:8

**As the light of the world, Christians are called to:**

**WARN**



**EXPOSE**



**GUIDE**



What does this mean for you?

With your parent/s or mentor, read the second half of Chapter 10 of *The Pursuit of God* by A.W. Tozer.

Jesus,  
thank You for  
Your light!



**"While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." When Jesus had said these things, He departed and hid Himself from them. JOHN 12:36**