

LIGHT TO LIFE



CHILDREN'S RESOURCE

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FOCUS: God has created all people to be free - moving from darkness to light.

'When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."' (John 8:12 NIV)

'Afterwards Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the wilderness.'" (Exodus 5:1 NIV)

'There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up.' (Exodus 3:2 NIV)

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever experienced severe thunder and lightning storms, or have you been part of a total blackout that left you without electricity, in darkness or lacking even a bit of warmth? Our natural reaction would be - if possible, and as fast as we can - to run to find something that would help to create some light, such as a candle, torch, match or our cell phone.

Ask the children to name things that give light. Talk with them about the benefits of light, like

helping plants to grow, allowing us to see and giving warmth.

When you are treated like you are someone's object or a piece of property, and it seems as if they own you, it leaves you feeling trapped, almost as if you are chained to the person with little or no option to move. You have no freedom at all. It is almost like being kept in the dark with no hope of light shining through. Let's listen to the story of Lian, a boy who was treated

like a piece of property and made to feel like someone else owned him.

A boy named Lian had a life of hardship, as he was bound to the service of a wealthy business owner who was known throughout the region for his riches and his cold behaviour, which made him both respected and feared.

Lian had been taken into the household of the wealthy businessman when he was just a toddler. His parents had fallen into debt, and in exchange for their son's service they were able to settle their debt. Lian's days were filled with demanding tasks. He cleaned, fetched water and did whatever was asked of him, always under the stern gaze of overseers. Despite the harshness of his circumstances, Lian harboured a quiet hope that one day he might escape his bondage. His spirit was unbroken, and his intelligence and kindness shone through while carrying out even the most difficult tasks.

When one human being treats another as though they owned them, like a possession or an object, the person in the position of feeling 'owned' is likely to experience a sense of being trapped. Alongside this, they may have a complete lack of freedom, stuck in darkness without any light at all. I'm sure that this is how the Israelites felt in Egypt in the Old Testament's Book of Exodus.

But God had not forgotten about them. In fact, the Israelites were God's people. He was their God.

God cared about the Israelites. He did not like them being in slavery. He wanted to rescue them from Egypt so that they could be free! Just like all of humankind, God had created the Israelites so that they could be free!

GAME

This is such a cool and fun activity to help you understand what Jesus means when he says 'whoever follows me will never walk in darkness'.

What you need:

- two blindfolds
- cardboard boxes of various shapes and sizes
- plastic buckets
- low chairs

How to play:

- Divide a group of children into two teams.
- Lay out all the boxes and chairs in two identical courses - these are known as traps.
- Blindfold a person from each team and have their team members navigate and guide their friend through and around the traps.
- If either player accidentally touches a trap, they have to stop for a count of ten.
- When a player finally reaches the end of the traps, they remove the blindfold and run back to the start, and another of their teammates takes their turn to be guided through.
- The winning team is the one to get all its members through the traps first.
- The kids help to guide their friends by calling out instructions to them.

In the same way when we walk with Jesus, we need not to be fearful of the darkness, for he, the light himself, is guiding and leading you and me in, and to safety.

OPTIONAL: PRAISE AND WORSHIP

- 'This Little Light of Mine'
YouTube - Listener Kids
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKkbIZtqhyQ>
- 'Let Your Light Shine'
YouTube - Hillsong Kids
https://youtu.be/ZDV_3FYwYdo?si=tKFBb0yyAKGRvw3u

ACTIVITY

What you need:

- glow sticks and flashlights/torches
- paper bags or cups

One at a time, have the children pick one of the light sources out of a bag and share about how we can be like a light shining bright for Jesus in a world filled with darkness. Whilst the children are sharing, they can crack the glow stick or turn on the flashlight/torch and make it shine. They can put it in a paper bag or cup till later, when all the glow sticks are ignited. Turn out the lights and emphasise how each of the ideas they have shared can make a big impact and chase away the darkness.

THINK AND TALK

WHAT IS MODERN SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Slavery is when a person is forced to work by another person and for another person. They get paid very little or nothing at all for their work, doing whatever that person tells them to do. People experiencing slavery and human trafficking do not have the freedom to leave. They are made to stay and work by people who aren't very kind.

Often, they are tricked and trapped by those who are making them work. They are made to feel like they are owned by that person, and are treated as if they are an object and a piece of property to be bought and sold and used in bad ways. Slavery is considered wrong by almost all societies around the world because it takes away a person's freedom, which is a basic human right.

Around the world, it's estimated that almost 50 million people are living in slavery and many of them are children your age. Some of these children who are treated as slaves could be the people who make the toys we play with, the shoes we wear, the phones we use or the chocolate we eat. The children don't get to go to school a lot of the time because they are made to work instead.

Question: How can we be a light to those around us, especially to men, women, boys and girls who are involved in situations of slavery and human trafficking?

ACTIVITY: TRUE OR FALSE?

Read each statement and decide if it is true or false:

STATEMENT	TRUE	FALSE
Jesus called himself the 'light of the world'.		
Children can be very vulnerable to MSHT.		
We should hide our light so no one can see it because they might not like it.		
We should shine our light by doing good deeds.		
By praying and also talking about slavery and human trafficking, this will help stop more children from becoming involved in these types of situations.		

*'True or false?' activity derived from: <https://joyinthejourneyteaching.com/freebies/>

CRAFT OPTIONS

LIGHT LANTERN

Create a cup lantern by making holes all around the outside of a paper cup and then putting a glow stick or battery candle inside.

PAPER CUP LANTERNS: DIY Luminaries For Winter Solstice – Little Bins for Little Hands

<https://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/quick-and-easy-paper-cup-luminaries/>

LANTERN LIGHTS:

<https://flamecreativekids.blogspot.com/2013/07/light-of-world-lantern-craft.html>

CONCLUSION

When reflecting on how Jesus is the light and how we want to point others from the darkness and into him and his light, we are like a beacon of hope. John 8:12 says: 'When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'"



BE THE LIGHT! John 8:12

We can shine God's light wherever we are.

OPTIONAL: PRAYER ACTIVITY

What you need:

- a world map or a picture of a world map
- a picture of a lamp, light or candle

Give each child a picture of a lamp, light or candle. While looking at the map, ask them to pray for a specific part of the world and place their lamp, light or candle on that specific country or part of the world.

Encourage them to pray for opportunities to shine their light, asking God to open their eyes to people and situations where they can be a witness for him, and for God to bring people experiencing slavery and human trafficking out of their situations of darkness and into his light.

Remind each child that sometimes people who are in slavery are not easy to see or find. But because God is all-knowing and all-seeing, he knows exactly where they are. As you put your candle, lantern or light over that part of the world, you can trust that God knows and cares about that person. And as you continue to pray, know that they will one day also be free from slavery and human trafficking.

