

Read: Isaiah 49:1-6

A Light for the Whole World

Isaiah 49:6

The Lord said:

It is too small a thing that you should just be my servant
to raise up only the tribes of Jacob
and to restore the ones I have preserved in Israel,
so I will appoint you to be a light for the nations,
so that my salvation will be known to the end of the earth.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

What do you need if you're trying to find something in the dark? If you answer, "Light," you're correct! The amount of light you need depends on what you're searching for and where you're searching for it. If you're looking for a toy that rolled under the couch, a small flashlight will do the job. If you're looking for someone who has fallen overboard from a ship in the middle of the ocean in the middle of a moonless night, you're going to need lots of ships and lots of helicopters with lots of really bright spotlights.

In our reading for today, Jesus, the Servant of God, is sent on the biggest search and rescue mission in our very dark world.

Who was Jesus sent to find? We can answer that question with one word: everyone.

Some people thought that the Savior would be sent just to save the descendants of Jacob, people who came from the twelve tribes of Israel. But God the Father tells his Son, Jesus, that saving only the Israelites would be way too small a mission. Jesus was sent to rescue people from all nations, from one end of this dark world to the other.

Why is this world so dark? We can also answer that question with one word: sin. It may seem small, but it's our biggest problem. Sin doesn't make it hard for your eyes to see. It's a darkness inside us. It makes it impossible to see the truth with your heart and soul and mind. Because of sin, no one is able to figure out how to save themselves. Worse, it makes it impossible to find Jesus by ourselves.

That's why Jesus had to come to find us. He didn't use a big light—Jesus *is* the Light. Here's what the apostle John wrote about Jesus: "In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:4,5)

You have a Savior who loves you so much that he came into the darkness of this world to search for you, to find you, to rescue you, and to give you life.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Are you afraid of the dark? Why or why not? Why is it so good to know that Jesus is our light?
- What did Jesus do to rescue you from the darkness of sin?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- If Jesus came to save the world, how can you be sure that he came to save you?
- In what ways is sin like darkness? In what ways is Jesus like light?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- If you ever feel like hiding some dark part of your life from Jesus, what can you remind yourself of?
- It can be difficult to know how best to show support to someone who is experiencing the darkness of depression. What would you want them to know from today's devotion?

Closing Prayer:

Jesus, you are the light of the world. Shine in my heart and give me life and salvation. Amen.