

Read: John 1:1-18

The Voice and Lights of Christmas

John 1:1-5, 9-12

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.

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

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

Imagine you're in the dark. It's scary and you're afraid. You can't see who or what is around you. But then, you hear a familiar, friendly voice. The voice tells you that you aren't alone, that you aren't in danger, that everything is going to be okay. That would be a comfort, wouldn't it?

And then imagine that a light starts to shine. And it helps you to see the room around you the right way. You see how to avoid bumping into furniture and see the door that would lead you out to safety. The light would take away your fear, wouldn't it?

All because of a voice and a light.

That's the way God describes Jesus. He calls him "the Word." He is how God speaks to us and tells us the most important things. And God calls Jesus "the light of all mankind." He shows us God's love that tells us that everything will be okay, that our sins are forgiven, and that heaven is our home. And not just ours: Jesus is the light that shines for everyone.

That's what happened on the first Christmas. God's Word and God's light came into the darkness of our world, gift-wrapped up as the baby Jesus—the greatest present God could ever give. You'd hope that present would be received with happiness by everyone! Sadly, he wasn't. A lot of his own people didn't believe in him. They were so opposed to him that they persecuted him, arrested him, nailed him to a cross, and killed him.

But they didn't overcome him. When Jesus died, he was doing exactly what he was born to do. He gave God the greatest gift: You! A child of God, washed free from every sin. And he gave you the right to call yourself God's child.

The world can still be dark, but you'll never be alone. Even if you feel like you're in the darkness, Jesus is God's Word, speaking to you. He's God's light, shining for you.

Now you know who God is, and you know the gift he's given you. Merry Christmas!

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

- Jesus is called "the light." What does light help us do?
- What does Jesus the "light" help us see about God?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- People opposed Jesus when he was on earth. How do people still fight against Jesus' message today?
- What are some things you see that help remind you that "the darkness" still hasn't "overcome" Jesus?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- If someone asked "What is God like?" you could start telling them stories about Jesus. Which stories would you tell first?
- Even though you haven't seen God, name something you see that tells you God exists. (Hint: verses 1-3)

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, of all the gifts we receive at Christmas, you are the best! Thank you for being God's Word, telling me everything God wants me to know. Thank you for being God's light, showing me everything God wants me to see. Thank you for teaching me to know God himself. Amen.