

Can People See Jesus Through You?

The following true story is an excellent example of how God can use each one of us to spread the Good News of His love.

Several years ago I heard of a man who, as a young boy, had lived in a war-torn country. Fighting went on in his hometown everyday. One day, while he was outside his house, he saw several pieces of a broken mirror on the side of the road. He picked up one of the smaller pieces, wrapped it in a handkerchief, and put it in his pocket. Time passed, and whenever he wasn't doing chores or playing with his friends, he would take the mirror from his pocket and rub the sides on a rough rock, trying to round off the sharp edges. At one point he noticed that the mirror was reflecting light into a darkened corner. Then he discovered that if he held the mirror at just the right angle it would reflect light into other areas that weren't getting any light. He began to make a game of it, to see if there were any area that he **couldn't** get light to. After many years, the man still carried the mirror (which was now round with smooth edges) in his wallet. Every once in a while he would take it out and "play" his game, but now he looked on the piece of mirror as a reminder: It had been found in a time of "war," gone through "rough" times, all the while reflecting a "light" that wasn't its own, and it had come through in better condition than when it had been found. The man knew that these were principles which he could apply to his own life.

As Christians, we can relate to the mirror. Jesus saved us, and though we may go through rough times we know that they will help to perfect us if we let them. Most important of all, we are the "mirrors" that God uses to reflect His Light, not our own, into this darkened world. Is there any area that God cannot reach through us if we are obeying Him?

Let's look at some of the ways a Christian can reflect God's Light of love and grace in this world. On the lines below list some of the places that you go to each week, some of the people you meet, the activities you take part in. Then write how you think God might use you to "reflect" His Light.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Matthew 5:16 says, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." That lets us know that God wants us to do what He has called us to do so that others will see Him through our efforts, and God will be glorified, not us.

LESSON PLAN

LESSON #:146

TITLE: A Shining Light

TEXT: Mathew 5: 14-16, Daniel 6: 1-28

MAIN IDEA: Christians have an influence on the world around them as they follow Christ every day. If we name the name of Christ, we are representing Him. We must be careful to make sure that our representation brings glory to Him. A Christian, who is wholly committed to following Christ, will make a difference in the lives of those with whom he comes into contact. This influence is a very important presence in this world.

MEMORY VERSE IDEA: Mathew 5: 16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven." Divide your class into three groups. Give each person in the first group a flashlight. Give the members of the second group equipment for doing good works. (Some ideas: Monopoly money to give away, tools to help someone fix a car or do work around the house, a calculator to help a friend with math homework, or cooking utensils to make food for a sick neighbor.) Pair the first group up with members of the second group, they represent Christians. The third group represents a world blind to the Gospel, give them sunglasses. Have each group say the part of the verse which pertains to their props, while acting out the phrase. The drill would go like this: Everyone together says, "Mathew 5:16." Then, person 1 turns on the flashlight and says, "Let your light so shine before men...." Immediately, person 2 acts out doing a good work for person three ("Here, let me help you fix your car....") and says, "...that they may see your good works....," and person 3 takes off his/her sunglasses, says "Wow, you Christians sure are helpful, you must serve a good God." then he/she says, "...and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." Have the groups trade parts until they know the whole verse. They may think it's a little corny, but I can guarantee that they will remember the verse.

OPENER: *A little light goes a long way:*

You will need:

- A way to block the light out of your class room.
- A candle for each person in your class
- Matches or a lighter
- An oil Lamp or a large candle (optional)

Before class, cover all of the windows in your classroom with dark paper, or pull down all of the shades. Make sure that as little light as possible gets into the room. After your class comes in, and everyone is seated, turn out the lights. Hopefully the room will be pitch dark. Talk about what it's like to be in the dark. How would it feel to be blind, in darkness like this all the time? That 's what it is like for people who don't know Jesus.

Can we find our way easily in the dark? (While it is still dark, you might want to give the students something to do, such as draw a picture, or throw a crumpled paper in


the trash can, to show them how difficult it can be to function in the dark.) The Bible says, in Proverbs chapter 4 that, "The way of the wicked is as darkness, they know not at what they stumble." but, "the path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." At this point, light a match. Ask the kids what happened in the room when the match was lit. Even a little match can make a big difference in a dark room. Next, light one candle for each of the kids. If your class can handle it, let them hold their candles and light them off of each other. Talk about how one little match was able to give so much light. After you have discussed the concept, have the kids blow out their candles. Light the large candle or oil lamp, and teach the rest of your class by candle/lamp light. Then do the work sheet ***Caution: Don't Hide This Light.***

LESSON: Read or tell the story of Daniel in the Lion's Den from Daniel chapter 6. Then do the worksheet. ***What Kind of Light?***

APPLICATION: Have someone come in and talk to the class about how he/she came to Christ because of the influence of another person, or how being a Christian has helped him/her to be trusted at work/school/home, etc.

You are a newspaper reporter who covers the palace for the Chaldean daily news. Write two articles that

highlight different parts of the story about Daniel. Be ready to share them with your class next Sunday.

Caution: Don't Hide This Light

Read Mathew 5: 14-16. What would have happened if your teacher had hidden the match under a basket, or in a metal bucket? It would have burned the basket, or been snuffed out due to lack of air. It would not have been able to give much light to others. That is how it is with the Gospel. If we hide our lights, it is easily snuffed out. If we hide our lights, we might get burned.

One way to get burned is if you don't tell your friends at school that you are saved. Soon, a situation will come up where you will be under pressure to do something that would be displeasing to God. If you tell your friends from the beginning that you have decided to follow Jesus, they will be expecting you to choose what is right. Their expectation alone might be the thing that will help you to stand strong, even if they are pressuring you to go the wrong way. If, when that situation comes up, your friends don't already know that you know Jesus, it will be much harder to tell them when you are under pressure. It will also be harder for them to believe you if you only claim to be a Christian when you are in a difficult situation. If a high pressure situation comes up, and you hide your light, you may choose to do the wrong thing. This can cause your light to be snuffed out. *So, Don't hide your light. Let it shine from the beginning!*

In the space below, right down some ideas of how you can let your light shine.



What Kind of Light?

In Mathew 5: 16, Jesus tells us to be a light. In today's lesson, Daniel is a good example of the kind of light we should be. Review the story about Daniel and the lions from the book of Daniel chapter 6. Jot down any thoughts you might have about the following questions, then be ready to talk about them with your class.

- 1.) How did Daniel show the King and the Princes that he loved God? (See verses 3 and 10.)

- 2.) When Daniel heard about the Kings decree, that no one should pray to any god, what did Daniel do? (verse 10)

- 3.) How was Daniel able to stand strong even when the whole country was against him? Where did he get his strength from?

- 4.) How does the story of Daniel apply to us today? What can we learn from his example?