

Walking in the Light



Teacher's Guide

Surveying the Source

John 3:17, 19; 8:12; Rom. 3:10–20; 1 Tim. 1:15; 1 John 1:5–2:2.

Plotting the Course

The students will:

- ▶ Compare darkness with light, blindness with sight, and sin with forgiveness.
- ▶ Discuss how Christ's life brought

- light, sight, and forgiveness to this world.
- ▶ Commit to spreading light, sight, and forgiveness to their world.

Preparing to Lead

The first chapter of Jean Vanier's book *Becoming Human* is worth reading. Vanier describes a blind, deaf, and mentally handicapped 16-year-old who moved to l'Arche, where abled and disabled lived communally.

"Whenever he felt someone close by, [Eric] would stretch out his arms and try to clutch that person and to climb up on

them. Once he had succeeded in getting someone to hold him, his actions would become wild: he would lose control, struggling to be held and at the same time, jumping up and down. . . .

"It took a long time in l'Arche before he found some inner peace. Little by little, as he learned to trust those around him, he discovered he was loved."¹

Getting Started

A. Read the quote from Jean Vanier in Preparing to Lead. Have your class discuss how Eric got from where he was emotionally when he arrived at l'Arche, to finding "inner peace." *Ask:* • "What would you do if you were Jean Vanier?" • "What do you think Jean Vanier and the other members of l'Arche did to teach Eric to trust them?" • "How we are like Eric?" • "How does Christ teach us to trust Him despite our blindness, deafness, and mental handicaps?"

B. Have class members describe indi-

viduals who have inspired them to become a better person. On a whiteboard, list the characteristics these individuals had. Underline the characteristics they had in common.

Ask: • "Do you feel condemned by these people's good examples?" • "What is the difference between inspiration and shame as a motivator?" • "Which motivator would be light and which would be darkness?" • "How does Christ motivate us?" • "Does He ever shame us?" • "Can we choose our reaction?"

Delving Into the Word

A. Distribute the activity on page 33, and draw the same table on a whiteboard. List the characteristics of Bad/Darkness

on one side of the table and the characteristics of Good/Light on the other side. Then have your class match the symptom

Materials

whiteboard/flipchart/
chalkboard and appropriate
markers; pencils; Bibles

on one side with the antidote on the other side.

Some characteristics of Good/Light are: children of light, good, right, true, righteousness, fellowship with God, truth, living according to the light, walking in the light, fellowship with one another, being cleansed by the blood of Jesus.

Some characteristics of Bad/Darkness are: no fellowship, selfishness, iniquity, lying, making Jesus a liar, not having His word in us. More negatives are listed in Romans 3:10–20.

Ask your class to share their own stories of darkness and light. What are some specific antidotes that helped them out of darkness?

B. Ask your class to call out the first

word they think of when you say the following words: *darkness, blindness, shame, light, sight, salvation.*

Analyse each of these texts with the following questions: John 3:17, 19; 8:12; Rom. 3:10–20; 1 Tim. 1:15; 1 John 1:5–2:2.

1. Is this text about: (a) darkness, (b) blindness, (c) shame, (d) light, (e) sight, (f) salvation?

2. What solution does this text offer as a solution to our darkness, blindness, or shame? If the solution is a metaphor, what are we asked to do in real terms? That is, how do we “walk in the light”?

Ask class members to share how Christ’s death became a solution to their own darkness, blindness, or shame.

Discussing the Ideas

1. Have you ever walked into a chair or a wall in a dark room? What would be the spiritual equivalent of walking into a wall in the dark?

2. Why is light painful in the middle of the night? Relate this to spiritual light shining in the darkness of sin.

3. Why is confession essential to healing?

4. If there are partially blind people,

can there also partially sinful people? Explain.

5. How is being justified by faith different from self-justification?

6. If you are spiritually blind, would you know it? How could you find out? (1 Pet. 2:9, 10).

7. Can we be both blind and sources of light in the world? Explain.

Closing the Activity

Read this quote from Jean Vanier’s book: “She was seven years old and had spent practically her whole life in a dismal, overcrowded asylum. Claudia was blind, fearful of relationships, filled with inner pain and anguish. . . .

“It was community, love, and friendship that finally brought her inner peace. This movement from chaos to inner

peace, from self-hate to self-trust, began when Claudia realized that she was loved.

“When we reveal to people our belief in them, their hidden beauty rises to the surface where it may be more clearly seen by all.”²

Ask your class members how they can bring light to the Claudias in their world.

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1. Jean Vanier, *Becoming Human* (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 2008), pp. 10, 11.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 20, 22, 23.

