



Discussion Questions

Advent Week 1

Sermon: When God Goes Dark

- ❖ ***God is a Master at working in the dark.***
 - Darkness serves as a veil for God's glory. (2 Samuel 22:12a; Psalm 97:2; 18:11-12)
 - God's hiddenness can be an invitation into deeper intimacy. (Exod 20:21; 24:18)
 - **Question for Kids:** When have you felt like God is far away, and what helps you remember He is still with you?
 - Finish this sentence: Even when I don't see it or feel it, God is working by...
 - **Question for Adults:** How can you begin to grow more comfortable with the mystery of God?
- ❖ ***Darkness helps form and prepare us for the light.***
 - Trusting God's plan in the dark is not without purpose (Prov 3:4-5)
 - **Question for Kids:** Where is God asking you to wait while He does His quiet, unseen work?
 - Christ shatters the veil of darkness to reveal the hiddenness of God (John 1:4-5,14; Isa 9:2)
 - **Question for Adults:** How can the birth of Jesus remind you that God won't leave you in the dark?
- ❖ **Bottom Line: Jesus' birth shows that God works in hidden ways – and His work is always worth the wait.**

Understanding Scripture

1. Read the passage aloud.
 - **Question:** How would the original audience have understood this passage?
 - **Question:** What was God's desire for them?
2. Reread key verse(s) aloud.
 - **Question:** What does this teach us about the human soul, desires, or behavior?
 - **Question:** What does this teach us about the nature, desires, or behavior of God?
3. Ask if anything is difficult to understand in the passage, or simply point it out yourself.
 - i. Back up from the confusing verse and reread the whole section slowly—highlight the author's flow of thought.
 - ii. Ask everyone, "What are some possible interpretations?" Encourage curiosity!
 - iii. If needed, provide clarification, but admit if you don't have a satisfactory explanation, and volunteer to research answers. Share your findings over text or at the next meeting.
4. Summarize the passage in 1-3 sentences to refocus the group.
 - **Question:** What does this say about our relationship with God and/or each other?
 - **Question:** How do the teachings, actions, or person of Jesus shed light on this passage?

Applying Scripture

5. Allow free-flowing discussion, incorporating questions focused on heart and habit transformation.
 - **Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 139:11-13** | God speaks light into darkness and can see perfectly in the dark. What are your thoughts and reactions to God doing or even being able to do these things? How can these truths remove common doubts and fears in us today?
 - **2 Samuel 22:12; Psalm 92:2; Exodus 20:21; 24:18** | Why do you think scripture describes God dwelling in darkness? How can God's hiddenness be an invitation to deeper intimacy? How can our expectations of God and how He reveals himself to us limit our ability to draw close to Him?
 - **Proverbs 3:5-6** | How does trusting in the Lord differ from the world's approach to understanding and decision making? Where in your life do you constantly find yourself leaning on your own understanding, rather than God's? Who in your life points you to trusting in the Lord, even if it is a difficult thing to hear?
 - **John 1:4-5; 14; Isaiah 9:2** | Where do you personally need Jesus' light to shine into your current situation of waiting or uncertainty? If you are currently in a season of waiting, are you at peace?
 - **Application** | What is one way this week you can better wait for Jesus and His work to be done? If you feel filled with doubts, fears, and confusion, who are some people you can go to for encouragement and prayer?