

Sermon-Based Small Group Bible Study

The Light: The Light Renews (John 1:9–13)

Open

Select one of these “ice breakers” to get the conversation going toward the study.

- Tell about something you know to be true but you have trouble believing or putting into practice.
- Do you have a favorite movie or TV show in which characters in the story don’t like the story’s hero?
- Our text will use birth as a metaphor for spiritual renewal. Is there an interesting story about your birth or the birth of someone in your family?

Dig

After reading John 1:9–13 together, discuss these questions.

1. Verse nine refers to Jesus as the true or genuine light. What are some of the less-than-fully-genuine lights that people look to, either in biblical times or now.
2. Verses 10 and 11 remind us that the world and its people belong to its Creator, but when the Creator entered the world as a human, he was widely rejected. What factors do you think led to that rejection? How do you see those at work at times in your own life?
3. Pastor Bryan emphasized the way this text shows the divine Christ coming into the “messy mess” in which we actually live. Do you think that makes it easier to believe in Christ, harder, or both? Why?
4. Verses 12 and 13 emphasize that through Christ, God makes people his children. How do you react to that assertion? Wonder? Skepticism? Thankfulness?

Summary: The gospel is full of irony. It looks like God’s plan is defeated because Christ is rejected. But that’s only part of the story. When we put our trust in Christ despite all the rejection and opposition, God renews us, we become his people, his children, and we begin to experience the life that he intends for his people, even in the middle of the rejection that we then share with Christ.

Reflect

Use any of these prompts to encourage group members to apply the text to their own experiences.

- How are you doing living in the genuine light of Christ? What competes with that and pulls you into darkness? What steps can you take to live more in the light?
- Where in your own life do you feel the pressure of the world that rejects Christ? Where do you feel the blessing of God in being one of his children by faith?
- What makes it hard for you to believe and receive Christ? What do you experience that draws you to belief? How would you describe yourself on that journey?

Pray

Invite the group to pray together using any of these suggestions.

- What needs have you heard from others in the group that we can pray about?
- What can we thank God for that you've received as part of Christ's genuine light?
- What pressures or experiences of the rejection of Christ are you experiencing, and how can we pray about those?