

Walking in the Light



- Theme:** Jesus, brought light into the world. 4th Sunday in Lent Yr. B
- Object:** A night light and a flashlight or lantern
- Scripture:** Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God. John 3:20-21 (NIV)

Are you afraid of the dark? It is not unusual for children to be afraid of the dark. Some of you may have a night light in your bedroom. You shouldn't be embarrassed. In fact, it is probably a wise thing to do. Suppose you wake up in the night and need a drink of water. If you get up in the dark to go get a drink, you might stub your toe or bump your shin. Ouch! That hurts.

If you go for a walk at night, it is a good idea to carry a flashlight or lantern. Even if you are not afraid of the dark, you might step in a hole and sprain your ankle. A flashlight or lantern will help you avoid those things that could harm you. If you have the choice of walking in the dark or walking in the light, which would you choose? I know which one I would choose!

In our Bible readings today, Jesus talks about light and darkness. Jesus said, "Light has come into the world." Do you know what the Light is that Jesus was talking about? He was talking about himself. In another place, Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

You might be surprised to know that some people actually choose to walk in darkness rather than in the light. Can you imagine that? Why would they do that? Jesus tells us, "Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their evil deeds will be exposed."

Every day we make choices. If we live by truth, we walk in the light so that it may be plainly seen. As Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." What choice will you make? Will you walk in the light or in the darkness?

Dear Lord, help us to make the right choices and walk in the light. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

FLASHLIGHT SCAVENGER HUNT: The teacher will give each child a list of three items to find which the teacher has hidden around the room between shelves, under tables tops, under cabinets or chairs. The teacher will provide the children with a

flashlight to assist them in their search. Small items to hide might be coins, pencil, notebooks, gum, a piece of candy, or pictures. Several children can hunt at the same time if there are several flashlights.

FLASHLIGHT STEPPING: This activity can be done with one, several, or all the children at the same time. The teacher will shine a flashlight on the classroom floor moving the spot around the floor while the children try to step or jump over the flashlight's spot. This will help them to get all their wiggles out before class time and the children will learn what a LIGHT will do in their lives.

LIGHT SWITCH COVER: Give each child a piece of construction paper cut to the size of a standard light switch cover with a hole cut in it to go over the switch. The children can write JESUS IS THE LIGHT from today's Bible lesson about the light. Let the children decorate the light switch cover with bright colors and stickers. Encourage the children to tape this over the light switch in their bedroom at home.

FLASHLIGHT TAG: Darken the room as much as possible and let the children take turns trying to TAG someone else with the flashlight. If the light rays "catch" someone, it becomes the next person's turn to try to tag someone with the flashlight ray.

CANDLE FRAME: Give each child a piece of poster board about 5" x 10" and folded in half. Give the children supplies to decorate their Candle FRAME. On left side of the card the children can create a picture of a candle and flame using pieces of construction paper. On the right side can be the Bible verse "Whoever lives by the truth comes into the light" or some other quotation from today's Bible lesson. Encourage the children to set their Candle frame up in their homes to remind them that JESUS is the Light of the world and HIS Light shines in all of us.

The Greatest Gift of All



Theme: God's Grace - 4th Sunday in Lent

Object: A gift-wrapped package

Scripture: For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8 (NIV) For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16 (NIV)

Look at this beautifully wrapped package. As you can probably guess by the way it is wrapped, there is a gift inside. Do any of you like to receive gifts? Of course you do! I can't imagine anyone saying that they don't enjoy receiving a gift. If I were to give this package to you and ask you to give me five dollars, would it be a gift? No, if you have to pay for it or do something to receive it, it isn't a gift. When someone gives you a gift, it doesn't cost you anything. It doesn't come with any conditions. All you have to do is accept it. That's what makes it a gift.

What was the best gift you have ever received? Was it your first bicycle? Maybe it was an Xbox 360® or a Sony Playstation®. For some of you it may have been a battery-operated remote control car or, for others, it might have been a favorite stuffed toy. In a group like this, we might have a lot of different ideas about what makes a great gift, but today I want to tell you about a gift that is, without question, the greatest gift ever given.

What is that gift? It is the gift of eternal life. It is the gift of God and it was given to anyone who wants to receive it. The Bible says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." Whoever -- that's you and me. The greatest gift of all is for you and me.

When someone gives you a gift, it is never polite to ask, "How much did it cost?" But in this case, the Bible tells us how much God's gift cost -- and the cost was great. It cost God his only Son. Can you imagine how much God loved us to send his one and only Son to earth to die on a cross so that we could have eternal life? Can you imagine how much Jesus loved us to be willing to die on that cross so that we could have eternal life in heaven?

Eternal life -- what a gift! And all we have to do to receive it is believe and accept Jesus as our Savior.

Thank you, Father, for the greatest gift of all. Thank you for Jesus, who loved us so much that he paid the price for our sin to give us the gift of eternal life. Amen.

Scripture Reading: John 3:14-21

PACK A GIFT: Divide the children into 2 teams. Each team will be given the same size smaller box and many articles to be quickly PACKED into the box. If all the items don't fit - then the team has to continue to work on packing it more tightly so that everything fits. The first team with the box of items PACKED and the lid easily closes will be the winner. If time allows - the children can dump the articles out and try again, but to beat the time that they packed it the first time, or the teacher can add a few more smaller items to fit into the box as a bonus round.

GIFT RACING: The children will be in teams and will play a racing relay to see how quickly each team can run their gift to the box on the other side of the room. The first team to run all their gifts first is the winner. The teacher can have many gifts of all sizes to hand out to the children for the relay - one gift for each child.

GIFT WRAPPING: The children can be divided into teams. Each team will be given one large box and some wrapping paper, scissors and tape to see which team can wrap their box in the best way for the time allowed. The team can work together or choose 2 players from each team and then cheer them on for all that needs to be done by the team members in order to wrap the gift neatly.

GIFT OF GOD BOX: Provide each child with wrapping supplies and markers and stickers to decorate their box. Children will draw crosses and hearts and will write words from today's lesson such as JESUS IS THE GREATEST GIFT, THANK YOU JESUS FOR LOVING US SO MUCH, or GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE, etc.

CROSS ART: Give children supplies to trace and cut out a large cross to decorate with glitter and stickers, markers, etc and write JESUS PAID THE PRICE FOR MY SINS, etc. Children can hang the crosses around the room or add a magnet to the back to put on their refrigerator at home.

HEART ART: Let children trace and cut out a large red heart. Children can be encouraged

to write John 3:16 around the edge of the heart and add a foam or cut out cross to glue in the middle of the heart.

CREPE CROSSES: Children can be given construction paper to trace and cut out a cross. Then each child can be given various colors of crepe paper to tear into little pieces and glue onto the cross or to wad up each little piece and glue onto the cross to give the stained glass cross effect.

HEART SEWING: Children can be given two cut out hearts that are identical in size and hole punch around the edges of the two hearts. Children can use yarn to sew the 2 hearts together. Cut out pieces of colorful construction paper to glue onto the heart to form a cross. Children can write John 3:16 on their sewn heart or words today's lesson to remind them of Jesus's LOVE for them.

CROSS PAINTING: Provide the children with paper, aprons, paints and brushes to color a poster board size CROSS for the classroom. Each child can take their turn at painting within the cross tracing, and the cross can have as many colors as the children would like. Then children can take turns writing one word each around the cross for John 3:16 and place on the classroom wall or the door. The children can draw a small cross and write their own names on each little cross and write I BELIEVE IN JESUS.