# Shine your light

Matthew 5:13-16

> Our everyday goodness can help people notice and praise our Father.

## What children should be able to do by the end

Explain Jesus' light picture and choose a helpful action that gives people a reason to praise God.

## Read & gather

Read aloud: Matthew 5:13-16. Memory passage: Matthew 5:16.

Basic kit: Bible, paper, pencils or crayons, child-safe scissors, glue or tape. Optional battery flashlight; a drawn lamp is equally suitable.

Before class, read the full passage and the activity example. Practice unfamiliar names and choose an age adaptation.

## Words to explain

Disciple: a learner who follows Jesus. Light: Jesus' picture of a life that makes God's goodness visible. Glorify: honor and praise.

## Your 60-minute flow

**0-5 minutes | Welcome & wonder**

Use Welcome & wonder on page 2. Invite answers and allow children to listen quietly.

**5-10 minutes | Worship & prayer**

Offer thanks to God. Sing a familiar, church-approved song or speak a line of praise. Listening quietly is welcome.

**10-15 minutes | Bible & memory**

Find the reading together. Read the memory passage from your Bible. Repeat short phrases with simple gestures.

**15-27 minutes | Discover the story**

Read the named verses. Use the three retelling paragraphs and The Jesus connection on page 2.

**27-35 minutes | Talk it through**

Ask the three questions on page 2, one at a time. Give thinking time and use the answer guidance.

**35-50 minutes | Create & practice**

Use the purpose, example, and steps on page 3. Then use the separate Student Discovery Page on page 4. Unfinished drawing may go home.

**50-55 minutes | Respond & pray**

Connect the big idea with a choice this week. Offer voluntary prayer or quiet reflection.

**55-60 minutes | Remember & take home**

Use the learning check on page 3 and repeat the main teaching. Tidy supplies and give caregivers the Family Connection on page 5.

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Matthew 5:13-16

## Welcome & wonder

Use a small flashlight or draw a lamp. Point it at a paper picture, never at eyes. Briefly cover the beam with paper and ask what changes. A drawn covered and uncovered lamp works too.

## Tell the story

Read the passage in your preferred translation. NIV is our reference translation; this is an original retelling, not a Bible quotation.

1. After the Beatitudes, Jesus described his followers with two everyday pictures: salt and light. Salt has a useful purpose, and a lamp helps people see. His followers are meant to make a real difference where they live. He was speaking to a community learning his way, not choosing only the most impressive people.

2. Jesus described a town visible on a hill and a lamp placed where it could give light to the household. Covering the lamp would hide what it was there to do. In the same way, people can see the good that Jesus' followers do and give praise to the Father. The point is the Father's goodness, not building our own fan club.

3. Later, Jesus warns against doing good just to win applause. These teachings belong together: we should not hide love, but we should examine why we show it. Welcoming someone, telling the truth, and helping with a difficult task can shine light. Quiet acts matter too. God works through ordinary people in ordinary places.

## The Jesus connection

> Jesus brings God's light into the world. As we follow him, his Spirit helps our lives reflect the Father's goodness.

## Talk it through

**Why would someone put a lamp where it can be seen?**

So it can give light to the people in the house.

**Who should receive praise when people see our good actions?**

Our Father in heaven.

**How can visible kindness differ from showing off?**

We can help because people matter and God is good, rather than using people to gain attention.

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## A neighborhood of light

Why children are doing this: Children connect the picture of light with useful kindness in everyday places.

Teacher example: Under School, draw returning a lost pencil. Say: I am learning to care for people as Jesus teaches. The action is for the person's good, not a performance.

Teacher instructions: Explain one step at a time and help children try it. Children may draw or tell you their answers.

1. For 3 minutes, divide paper into HOME, SCHOOL, and CHURCH. Draw a simple lamp or sun in the center.

2. For 4 minutes, partners suggest a useful action in each place. Make each specific: invite a newcomer to join, return a lost pencil, or help tidy shared supplies.

3. For 4 minutes, add a beam from the central light to each action. Rehearse one response to praise: Thank you; I am learning to care for people as Jesus teaches.

4. For 4 minutes, use the Student Discovery Page and choose one action for this week. Children can describe it privately to an adult.

## Grades 1-2

Choose one setting and draw one action. Let an older partner read labels without taking over the drawing.

## Grades 3-5

Read Matthew 6:1 alongside 5:16. Explain how the purpose of an action helps resolve the apparent tension.

Offer movement breaks, a quiet space, picture choices, or an adult scribe. Adapt to the child, not only the grade.

## Teach with care

Use a flashlight or drawing, never an open flame. Do not pressure children to speak publicly about faith or judge their value by visible achievements.

## Prayer invitation

Father, let your goodness shine through our lives. Help us serve sincerely and make people feel welcome.

## Check what children learned

Name one place and one specific way you can shine there.

## Student Discovery Page: answer guide

1. Gives light. 2. Our Father's goodness. 3. Ordinary places.

Drawings and personal responses vary. Look for understanding rather than polished artwork.

# Shine your light

Matthew 5:13-16

Name: _____ Date: _____

Our everyday goodness can help people notice and praise our Father.

## Explore the story

Circle the answer that fits the story.

A lamp is useful when it gives light / stays covered

Good actions can point toward our superiority / our Father's goodness

Kindness can happen in ordinary places / only a church building

## Draw & discover

Draw three light beams reaching everyday places with kindness.

## Think about it

How could kindness point to God without becoming a performance?

You can write, draw, point, or tell someone your answer.

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Matthew 5:13-16

**A LITTLE FAITH, EVERY DAY**

Our everyday goodness can help people notice and praise our Father.

## Open the Bible together

Read Matthew 5:13-16. Let your child retell one part. Write down a question to ask a trusted church leader; you do not need to have all the answers.

## Start a conversation

Who does Jesus say should receive praise for the light we shine?

## Try this during the week

Notice a helpful action during the week and thank God for the person who did it. Choose a small act of service together without photographing or posting it.

## A prayer to share

Father, let your goodness shine through our lives. Help us serve sincerely and make people feel welcome.

## Remember together

Look up Matthew 5:16 in your family Bible. Read a short phrase, repeat it together, and ask what it means.

## Keep it simple and welcoming

A few unhurried minutes are enough. Children may respond with words, drawings, or gestures. Prayer is an invitation; quiet participation belongs too.

This curriculum serves mixed groups in grades 1-5 in an evangelical setting. Retellings and prayers are original. NIV is our reference translation; use your church's preferred Bible translation. No extended Bible text is reproduced.