Shine your light

Grades 1–5 • 60 minutes • Matthew 5:13-16

What children are learning

Jesus said a lamp belongs on a stand so everyone in the house can see. He told his followers to let others see the good they do so people would praise their Father in heaven. Children will choose one way to show that kind of love this week.

Before class

For you. Mark Matthew 5:13-16 and the memory verse, Matthew 5:16, in your Bible. Keep the teacher pages and your copy of page 7 beside you.

Print before class. Keep teacher pages 1–4 in order. Print page 7 (the activity sheet) for each child and for yourself, page 5 (the Student Page) for each child, and page 6 (the Family Connection) for each household.

For the table. Have a Bible and the printed pages ready. For each child, one half-sheet of plain paper, a yellow crayon or pencil, and page 7. Fold one extra half-sheet into a sample card. On the inside draw a small oval flame and three lines for rays. Leave the outside blank for the opening.

Words children may ask about. A disciple is someone who follows Jesus and learns from him. To glorify God means to honor or praise him. Jesus uses light as a picture of the good his followers can do.

Teach with care. A flashlight or drawing makes an easy visual. Children can explore sharing faith at a comfortable pace, knowing that their worth goes beyond public speaking or visible achievements.

A note for the teacher. This outline is here to help you prepare and teach. As you teach, feel free to adjust the pace, change an activity, or spend more time on a child’s question as the Holy Spirit leads you.

When the children arrive, begin on page 2. Teach pages 2–4 in order.

Shine your light

0–5 min · Welcome the children

Begin. Hold up your closed sample card. Say, “Inside is a picture of a lamp. Can you see its light yet?” Open the card so the children see the rays. “A picture can help us imagine a house long ago. If the family lit a real lamp, where would they put it so everyone could see?”

5–10 min · Worship and opening prayer

Worship together. Sing a familiar song of praise. If you are leading without music, invite each child to finish “God, thank you for…” aloud or quietly.

Pray. God, thank you for bringing us together. Help us hear what you want to teach us today. Amen.

10–23 min · Open the Bible together

Lead into the reading. Jesus uses salt and light to tell his followers what their lives can do for other people. Listen for where the lamp goes and who gets the light.

Read aloud. Read Matthew 5:13-16 aloud. Give the children a moment before the first question.

Background for you. Use these notes if the class needs help with the reading.

Jesus was teaching his disciples on a hillside. He called them the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Salt is useful because of what it adds. Light is useful because it helps someone see.

Picture a family lighting a lamp in their house. Would they put it under a bowl? They set it on a stand so everyone can see. Jesus also pictured a town built on a hill where it could be seen from far away.

Now listen to where Jesus directs our attention. Someone sees a good thing his followers do, and that person can praise their Father in heaven. Imagine a child comes late and finds that you have saved them a seat. The important thing is that they found a welcome. Their thanks may go to God as well as to you.

Shine your light

23–31 min · Talk about what you heard

Ask. Jesus says people put a lamp on a stand. Who in the house can see by its light?

Listen for. They put it on a stand. It gives light to everyone in the house.

Keep talking. Jesus says people may see the good his followers do. Who does he hope they will thank or praise?

Connect to Jesus. Jesus shows us the Father’s goodness. As we follow him, the Holy Spirit helps us care for people in ways they can see.

31–47 min · Open the lamp card

Give out the materials. Give each child page 7. Read its printed headings together: Home, School, Church. Leave the sheet where children can point to it as they work.

Try it together. Show the folded lamp card from the welcome. Give each child a half-sheet and fold it like a greeting card. Open it. Draw a small oval flame with three lines for light, then close it. On page 7, point to Home, School or Church. Choose one and write or dictate a kind action inside the card, such as “Move my bag so you have a seat.” Open the card to show a partner and tell who would benefit. The card goes home with the child.

For younger children. Offer two actions: “Make a space at the table” or “Help pick up dropped pencils.” A child can choose and open their lamp card while you say or write the words.

For older children. Imagine a child filming the act of kindness to win praise. Ask what changes for the person receiving the help. How could you respect them and still do the good thing?

Tidy up. Give a one-minute warning. Put away shared supplies. Keep each child’s work and page 7 together for dismissal.

Shine your light

47–51 min · Give children a moment to respond

Offer the student page. Hand out page 5, the Student Page. Read “Try this” aloud. Children may speak, write or draw, or choose the “My reminder” box. Use one box. Let an unfinished page go home.

51–55 min · Remember a verse

Read and echo. Read Matthew 5:16 from your Bible. Pause at the words about good deeds and the words about the Father. Ask who sees the good and whom Jesus wants people to praise. Read it again in short phrases the children can echo.

55–60 min · Take it into the week

Ask. Think of someone whose kindness helped you. What would you like to thank your Father in heaven for when you remember them?

Pray together. Lead the children in a prayer about what they learned today.

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

At the door. Send home each child’s activity and page 7. Give page 6, the Family Connection, to each household.