

Junior Soldiers

Unit 5 : Lesson 1



Let Your Light Shine

PURPOSE : For the children to explore and understand their responsibility to help others know and love God while they continue to grow as disciples. God calls us to share his love and good news with others and help them to know and understand God. Our children need to understand that living life for Jesus comes with both privileges and obligations.

'Let your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.'

Matthew 5:16

Consider & Prepare

Read:

Matthew 4:18–20

Matthew 28:16–20

Matthew 5:14–16

1 Samuel 10:6

2 Corinthians 3:17–18

This lesson centres on the part of the Junior Soldier promise that says: 'I will help others to follow Him'. It is about our responsibility not only as Junior Soldiers but also as followers of Christ.

All Christians have a responsibility to be 'disciplers' as well as disciples, and should understand the reasons for wanting to help others know and love God. God calls us to share his love and good news with others—we are to be 'salt' and 'light' in the world and show people what living a life for Jesus looks like.

William Booth once wrote about members of The Salvation Army claiming both the privileges and the obligations of being a member of God's family. It's not enough just to enjoy good worship and share in fellowship and look forward to a heavenly reward: we are also called to serve others, study Scripture, pray, tithe and...tell others about God.

What you will need:

For 'Connecting In'

- 2 lamps
- A range of torches and appropriate batteries
- Matthew 5:16 verse written out on pieces of paper (*different colours if you are wanting to make it more difficult*).

For 'The Main Thing'

- Lamp/light that uses a cord to be plugged in and that has a switch/button to be turned on
- Words and music for the song 'This little light of mine' or other choice to fit in with the theme.

For 'Tying In'

- Paper bags, flat bottom kind if possible
- Coloured felt pens
- Coloured paper
- Scissors
- Little torch or glow stick for each child
- Bright yellow paper
- Glue
- Card

For 'Home & Beyond'

- Print off the Home & Beyond cards for each child.



Connecting In

On and off relay...

For this relay you will need a lamp per team and you will need to divide the children into to at least two teams.

- The first child in the team will run up the other end of the room to turn the lamp on and then return to high five the next team member to begin their turn.
- The next team member will run to the other end of the room to turn the lamp off, return to the next team member and give them a high five.
- Continue through the team until all children have had an opportunity to run and turn the lamp either on or off.
- When all the children have had their turn they need to sit in a line with their hands on their heads.

Link: We have had a fun relay today turning a lamp on and off.

- What are the benefits of having a lamp?
- What would you use it for?
- When would you use it?



Torch race...

For this activity you will need a range of torches and the appropriate batteries needed to make them work. You will also need to have Matthew 5:16 printed onto pieces of paper and either hidden or stuck to items or under items. (*The batteries and the scripture verse will need to be hidden well around the room prior to the lesson. If you want to make this more difficult for the children then you might like to print the verse on certain coloured pieces of paper and tell each group which colour they need to find.*)

- Divide the children into as many groups as there are torches.
- Give each team a torch that has no batteries in it.
- When the leader says 'go', the children need to hunt for the batteries to fit their group's torch. It is a race to see which team can get the batteries into their torch and get it turned on the quickest.
- That is the first part of the race.
- When every group has their torch turned on you can begin the second part of the race.
- Turn the lights off in the room.

- Now that your torches are on, you need to use them to try to find pieces of paper that have the Bible verse on them and are either hidden or stuck to objects. (Tell each group which colour of paper they are looking for.)
- When the verse is found, each member in the group needs to read the verse out loud using the torch light and then sit down in a circle to show they have finished.

Link: We have had fun today with torches and searching for God's word.

- What is a torch used for?
- What are its benefits?
- When would you use it?
- When have you used a torch to help you?



Lights, lamps, torches, candles and matches provide us with light. Light shines in the darkness and can help us to navigate our way, see where we are going, give us guidance and show us the way. Today we are going to explore how we can be a 'light' for others, how we can be the light that shows how to live and who to follow for those who might not know about God. Let's have a look at how our lives can be like a light, showing others the way to Jesus.

The Main Thing

(Read Matthew 5:14–16 together.)

The Bible tells us in these verses that we need to let our light shine. What do you think that means? Surely God doesn't expect us to actually glow, like a star or a light. *(Encourage the children to give some feedback on this.)*

This little light of mine...

For this section you will need a clip or recording of 'This Little Light of Mine' or a similar song that the children will know that connects with the theme of being God's light in the world.

Some other options

- You're a star (*You're a Star*, SNACK Music)
- Let your light shine (*Superstrong God*, Hillsong Kids, 2005)
- Check YouTube for versions of 'This Little Light of Mine' that you might like to use.

Today we are going to sing a song together 'This Little Light of Mine' *(or another song you have chosen)*. You might know this song or, if you don't, it's very easy to learn; have a go and join in with us as we sing about how we can shine for God. While we sing together, I'm going to hold this light up and let it shine all around. *(Sing the song, but the light doesn't shine because you have not plugged it in or turned it on.)*

- I wonder what is wrong; my light isn't shining. *(Someone will probably notice that it isn't plugged in.)*
- Oh, here's the problem, my light wasn't plugged in.
- Let's try it again. *(Sing the song, but the light still doesn't shine because it is not switched on.)*
- Well, I wonder what the problem is now. *(Someone may suggest that the light wasn't switched on.)*
- Oh, here's the problem, my light wasn't turned on. Let's try it one more time. *(Sing the song again and this time the light will shine. You may like to ask one of the children to come and hold the light and move it around as they sing.)*

Before our light can shine effectively, it must be plugged in and switched on. It is important for us to be plugged in to God and it is important to be switched on to Jesus' way of living. When we choose to be connected with God and be His friend, then we are connected to the main power source of life. When we choose to follow Jesus' way of living and we join others in church to worship him and study the Bible, we are switched on to the right way of living. When we are 'plugged in' to God and 'switched on' to Jesus, our light will shine. *(During this explanation it is important to make reference to the cord and the switch on the light that you have been using for this illustration.)*

God wants every Christian to live a life that reflects who he is. Because we have chosen to follow Jesus, the way we live should look a bit different from those who do not know or love God. Just like a shining torch or lamp that gives us light to navigate our way, living our lives in a way that shines God's love and Jesus' example can help others to navigate or find their way. We can help them to come to know about

God's love and we can also help them to come to know and be connected with God too.

We can show others how God wants us to live by being a good example of how to think, behave, speak and treat others. People can see from the choices that we make that we are somehow different, we stand out—we 'shine' like a light in a dark place.

Doing God's will...

(Split into two groups. One group to talk about Romans 10: 9–15 and the other Acts 8: 26–35. Take five minutes and then report back to the other group on the key points that stand out in the passage you discussed. Encourage the children to think about what the passage might be saying about their responsibility to others.)

These passages highlight that for someone to learn about God—someone has to tell them, and that God may want you to talk to someone. Note that Philip was quick to obey when God prompted him to talk to someone.

Remember, though, that you don't have to do it all yourself. Maybe you can invite your friends to come to an activity at your church, or you could give them a Christian book to read, or you can lend them a Christian CD or DVD that you like, or give them a copy of *Kidzone* each week. There's lots of ways to introduce someone to Jesus. However you choose to do it—shine a light for Jesus!

Remember, it's great to know Jesus ourselves, but why keep such good news a secret? We have a responsibility to let others know about him.



Tying In

For the Tying In section you might like to do either of the activities below before connecting together for a time of prayer.

Paper bag lights...

For this activity you will need a paper bag (*flat-bottomed sort if possible*), a small cheap flashlight or glow stick for each of the children, as well as some textas, coloured paper, scissors and glue.

Give each child a paper bag to decorate with words and verses from today's lesson. They can cut out a few small holes in their paper bag as eyes, nose and mouth etc. Children might also like to colour the bag or use pieces of cut out coloured paper to make it look like themselves. When the bags are completed, turn off the lights and let the children shine a flashlight into the bag to see the light showing through.

(If inexpensive mini torches can be purchased, each child could be given a torch to remember today's lesson, or perhaps you could use some glow sticks that they could snap and have shine at home.)

Or

Light turned on display...

Give children bright yellow construction paper to cut out a large light bulb. Children will glue the light bulb onto a piece of card and write today's Bible verse on the light bulb, or 'This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine'. Hang the light bulbs on the classroom wall.

Prayer...

Have a prayer time in small groups. It would be good to sit in a circle with the light off and use a torch that is passed around the circle for the person who is praying to hold. Encourage the children to pray for each other as they seek to shine for God in the things that they do and say and think. It would also be good to pray for the things that they might find difficult in relation to sharing Jesus with others.

Home & Beyond

Print off the 'Home & Beyond' cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journals or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.



'Let your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.'
Matthew 5:16

Reflect on the verse above.

- How will others know about God because of the way that you live?
- How will others know about God because of the words that you say?
- How will others know about God because of the way that you treat them?

Share some of these things with your Big Bud, family or Junior Soldier leader through the week.



I will help others to follow Him...


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