



In the Dark Streets Shineth: Week 2

December 10, 2023

**At Christmas, Jesus enters our world of darkness with us.**

**1** In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God... **4** The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. **5** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it. John 1:1,4-5

**God sends John the Baptist ahead to witness to the light.**

**6** God sent a man, John the Baptist, **7** to tell about the light so that everyone might believe because of his testimony. **8** John himself was not the light; he was simply a witness to tell about the light. **9** The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. John 1:6-9

**John's Witness #1: Offering forgiveness through baptism**

**4** This messenger was John the Baptist. He was in the wilderness and preached that people should be baptized to show that they had repented of their sins and turned to God to be forgiven. Mark 1:4

**John's Witness #2: Be radically generous**

**10** The crowds asked, "What should we do?" **11** John replied, "If you have two shirts, give one to the poor. If you have food, share it with those who are hungry." Luke 3:10-11

**John's Witness #3: Live with integrity**

**12** Even corrupt tax collectors came to be baptized and asked, "Teacher, what should we do?" **13** He replied, "Collect no more taxes than the government requires." **14** "What should we do?" asked some soldiers. John replied, "Don't extort money or make false accusations. And be content with your pay." Luke 3:12-14

### **John's Witness #4: Point people to Jesus**

**7** John announced: "Someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I'm not even worthy to stoop down like a slave and untie the straps of his sandals. **8** I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit!" Mark 1:7-8

**29** The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! **30** He is the one I was talking about when I said, 'A man is coming after me who is far greater than I am, for he existed long before me.' John 1:29-30

### **John's witness to Jesus:**

Offer forgiveness

Be radically generous

Live with integrity

Point people to Jesus

### **We are called to be a witness.**

We are called to witness to Jesus through both our actions and our words for the sake of those walking in darkness. We do not need to be the light, because we can't be the true light even if we wanted to! All we are called to do is to reflect the light Jesus gives us. We don't even need to have it all figured out before we start witnessing. Even John had doubts. All we need is to share what we've seen God do in our lives and in the lives of others.

**2** John the Baptist, who was in prison, heard about all the things the Messiah was doing. So he sent his disciples to ask Jesus, **3** "Are you the Messiah we've been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?"

**4** Jesus told them, "Go back to John and tell him what you have heard and seen— **5** the blind see, the lame walk, those with leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor." -Matthew 11:2-5

### **We are blessed to be a witness to the true light: Jesus**

# REFLECTIONS

1. Where do you see darkness in your own life or in the lives of people around you? Where do you see the need for the light of Jesus?
2. What people have been important witnesses in your own life? Which have pointed you to Jesus like John the Baptist did for so many others?
3. Out of the four models of witnessing that we get from John the Baptist - offering forgiveness, being radically generous, living with integrity, and pointing people to Jesus - which one of those ways of witnessing comes easy to you? Which one feels most difficult at times?
4. Which doubts still exist within you make it hard to declare and share with confidence that Jesus is the promised Messiah?
5. How might our attitude around witnessing change if we begin to see it not as a burden, but a blessing?