



"Shine!!!"

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Illustration:

Tara: Story about the pitch black cave and the light of a single match.

DO: Black-Out lights and light one candle.

Explain:

We are in a cave of darkness. It is pitch black all around us, spiritual darkness so dim you can hardly see your hand in front of your face. The world is full of sin and hopelessness. People everywhere are hurting. Just look at how many people try to numb their pain with drugs and alcohol. We live in a time when evil is called good and good is called evil. For example "The 40 YR Old Virgin"; a movie implying that you are a loser if you don't have sex, giving no thought to marriage. Our world mocks the truth!!! People don't realize how precious their own bodies are and even worse no one seems to care that God weeps at the way they live. Many today live their lives as if there are no consequences. Truly our world is dark, and getting darker by the day. But there is HOPE!!!!

Matthew 5:14-16

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. [15] Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. [16] In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

We are the remedy for darkness! Our purpose is to shine the light of Christ. Jesus said, "You are the light of the world." We as Christians are called to OUTSHINE the darkness. The brighter we burn for God, the more the darkness will flee.

DO: Light Other's Candles.

We, Christians, have light in us. It is our calling to let that light SHINE. Some people try to hide their light. That's stupid!!! Why would you want to light a light, and then cover it up so no one could see?

Ask: What is the purpose of a light??? The purpose of a light is to brighten up its surroundings. If a light is not lighting anything, then it is USELESS. It is without purpose or meaning. A light that doesn't SHINE is no light at all.

You all have a candle in your hand, a light, when it is lit it shines and helps to brighten up this room. Notice how this room has gotten brighter and brighter as each person lit their candle. When we all shine our lights, the light overcomes the darkness. Now that each of us is shining our little candles, we can see each other, no problem. It is the same way with the Church of Jesus Christ. When we all SHINE the world will get brighter and brighter.

Ask: How do we SHINE in our world??? Matt. 5:16 implies that when we DO shine people will see our good works and praise God. These good works will show people that we are different, not that we are better in our own power, but better??? YES. There is only one way that we can SHINE in this world, and it is not through our own ability to do good things.

John 8:12

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Wait just a minute... didn't Jesus say, "You are the light of the world."? Now He says, "I am the light of the world." How can Jesus be the light of the world, and we be the light of the world too? It's simple. When Jesus lives in us, then HE will shine through us!!! If we follow Him, we will never walk in darkness, because He will shine in our lives. He is the true source of LIGHT. Without Jesus, we would be in total darkness. We have NO light in us, unless He is in us. We ourselves are sinners, we have done much wrong, and there is

no way we could be forgiven by God if not through Jesus Christ. We ourselves were full of darkness, but then Jesus turned on the light.

Ephes. 2:1-5

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, [2] in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. [3] All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. [4] But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, [5] made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved.

We were all by nature objects of wrath. That means that we were born into sin and we lived lives of sin. We were going to pay the price for our sin. God the Father would rain down his anger on us one day and there would be no mercy. But God sent Jesus Christ, His only Son, to live a perfect life on this earth, and then to die for us. Jesus paid the price so that His light could shine in us. Because of Christ we have the choice, as to whether we will remain in darkness, or whether we will turn on the LIGHT. When you receive Christ you receive His light in you. But it doesn't stop there...

Once you receive Christ in your life you have a responsibility to SHINE that light in the world around you. You are now a torch in the darkness of this world. Your purpose is to illuminate your surroundings. This is your challenge: **GO out and light your world ablaze!!!!**

Altar Call:

1. Salvation call.
2. Commitment to SHINE to others