

Lesson 8 – Victory Over Dark Places - Leader Guide

Opening Discussion:

Leader - Open by following one or more of the following prompts

- Were you more aware of your surroundings since the last lesson and did you recognize when you were in the Orthodox Triangle or the Other Side?
- Did anyone have an opportunity to go to the 'other side'? Share!
- Does anyone have any updates on the situation/person that we prayed for last lesson?

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Post Video Discussion

Leader – In the last lesson Jesus began to introduce His disciples to the other side. In this lesson He asks more of them. He takes them farther into darkness and into environments that are strictly forbidden in their culture. He takes them to an overwhelming and scary place where they are outnumbered. BUT Jesus is with them and HE promises that even in these places, He has guaranteed them victory over darkness.

Discussion:

- Describe a time when you were in a space that felt spiritually dead, or when you encountered darkness.
 - What brought you to this space?
 - How did you feel in that space?
- Give some examples of where the level of darkness that the disciples experienced at Caesarea Philippi exists in our world today.
- Why are we uncomfortable labeling elements of our culture as evil or dark?
- Some places are obviously dark in an extreme way, but everyday we are surrounded with people and places that need the light of Christ; in our workplaces, grocery stores, family dynamics, etc. Our natural instinct is to surround ourselves with safe, like-minded people. How can we be in the world but not of the world? (John 17)
- As we engage with the statement from the teaching, "we can't look at that and think we're better than it," how do you respond to darkness? Do you avoid? Are you afraid? Do you feel invincible? Do you engage?
- What does Jesus mean when he says, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it [the church]" ?
- Encourage each other with Jesus' promises to have victory over darkness. Ask your group members to read these verses aloud:

Psalm 23:4

John 16:32-33

1 John 5:4

1 Corinthians 15:55-58

Ephesians 6:11-12

Deuteronomy 20:4

- In light of the verses that we've read. Would you be willing to recommit yourself to going into the dark places that the Lord has called you?

Leader - Encourage your group to listen for God's call into dark places and to step into them this week with the boldness that comes with the assured victory that Jesus promises. Conclude by reading Revelation 21:1-4 and 22:1-5 as a blessing and benediction over your group.

Recommended reading prior to the next lesson: Hebrews 11:1 - 12:2