



COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

Bright Lights, Big City / Week 2

SERIES OVERVIEW

SERIES SUMMARY

A series about shining the light of Jesus with your life.

SERIES BOTTOM LINE

A series about shining the light of Jesus with your life.

WEEKLY BOTTOM LINES

WEEK 1: God made you to shine.

WEEK 2: God's light in you brings order to chaos.

WEEK 3: God's light in you brings light to others.

SCRIPTURE

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters (Genesis 1:1-2 NLT).

Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day" and the darkness "night" (Genesis 1:3-5a NLT).

...fulfill the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2b NIV).

NOTES FOR THIS WEEK

THINK ABOUT THIS

Middle school can be an incredibly chaotic and even hopeless time for students. That makes the need for a light that brings hope in the midst of chaos—a light like only Jesus carries—incredibly important. So, be sure to remind your middle schoolers that, even during what feels like never-ending chaos right now, Jesus' light can change the way they walk through it all. As you talk about the juxtaposition of light—peace and hope—and darkness—chaos and hopelessness—be aware of the way you use your words. While we're using figurative language from the Bible to talk about light and dark, in our context today those words "light" and "dark" can carry negative connotations. Be sure to distinguish for students that we don't mean, in that sense, that light is better or superior in any way. We're simply using these terms in a spiritual sense—terms that Jesus Himself used—to help us understand how Jesus brings hope and light to the places in our lives and the world that need it the most.

INTERACTIVE 1: WHO'S IN YOUR CIRCLE?

OVERVIEW

For this Interactive, you'll ask students to identify areas in their own and others' lives where they can shine their light to show God's order, clarity, and love.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- A piece of paper and pen for every student
- Depending on the size of your youth ministry, volunteers to help pass out the paper and pens
- Optional: Music to play in the background as students complete this Interactive

PREP

- Gather the papers and pens to pass out to your students.
- If needed for the size of your ministry, have your volunteers selected and ready to help.

TEACHING OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

- I'm the biggest Spider-Man fan, and those *Into the Spider-Verse* movies are my jam!
- In *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*, the main character, Miles Morales, must face a supervillain named King Pin.
- At the end of the movie, in one of the biggest scenes, Miles Morales (aka Spider-Man) decides to sacrifice himself for the good of everyone in the world.
- Spider-Man was a light in the darkness, leading terrified people threatened by chaos and danger to safety.

TENSION

- And that chaos is all over the place. *[Give relevant examples.]*
- While some of that can feel kind of exciting, some of it can feel pretty awful. *[Give relevant examples.]*
- For some of us, we're dealing with even more serious chaos and disorder. *[Give relevant examples.]*
- That chaos can feel like we're drowning in darkness.
- In the opening verses of Genesis, the Bible's account of how everything was created, it describes darkness covering the Earth.
 - *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters (Genesis 1:1-2 NLT).*
- In other words, before that, it was chaos.
- What if I told you that there's something that has the power to bring hope and purpose into whatever situation you're facing?

TRUTH

- In the very next verse in Genesis, God spoke into the darkness, chaos, and emptiness with four important words.
 - *Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day" and the darkness "night" (Genesis 1:3-5a NLT).*
- God simply said: *"Let there be light,"* and there was light across the whole Earth.

- At this point you may be wondering, *What do Spider-Man and Genesis have to do with me and my current situation?*
- When God declared *“Let there be light,”* God didn’t just shine a light into the darkness.
- God brought order to chaos. God made things clear, hopeful, and well... full of light!
- Have you ever woken up in the middle of the night and stumbled around trying to find your phone or a light switch?
- As soon as you turned a light on, suddenly you could see every step in front of you.
- Order was brought to your chaos.
- Remember, God is light, and you were created in the image of God. You were created to shine God’s light to the world.
- God uses you and me to bring light into the darkness and chaos of the world!
- God’s light in you brings order to chaos.

APPLICATION

- Luke, who interviewed people who did life with Jesus, wrote that Jesus described it this way:
 - *“If you are filled with light, with no dark corners, then your whole life will be radiant, as though a floodlight were filling you with light” (Luke 11:36 NLT).*
- That means that you can shine brightly in a dark world and bring order to chaos.
- *[INTERACTIVE: Who’s in Your Circle?: This is where you’ll ask students to identify areas in their own and others’ lives where they can shine their light to show God’s order, clarity, and love.]*
- Think of the world around you. Think about your community, the state, and country we live in, and even the world.
- When you think about areas that could use some of God’s light to bring some order and clarity to the chaos, what comes to mind?
- In middle school, it can seem like there may not be a whole lot you can do to shine God’s light and bring order to this type of chaos.
- I do think you can take a small step to let God’s light in you shine, and that step is to care.
- Now, think about people who are closer to you, like your friends, teammates, family members, and neighbors.
- Who in your circle could use some of God’s light to bring them hope, order, and clarity?
- Keep those people in mind when I ask you this next question. How can you help lighten the burden of someone in your circle?
- In the Bible, we read in Galatians 6:2 that by carrying each other’s burdens, we *“...fulfill the law of Christ” (NIV).*
- When you carry someone’s burdens, you’re letting God’s light in you shine in the darkness.
- Finally, I want you to think about your own life, your own challenges, and your own areas that could use some light.
- Ask yourself this question: How do you need to bring order into *your own* chaos?
- If we want to bring order and peace to chaos, to shine a light into the darkness we see around us, we have first to bring order to our own situation.
- God’s light in you brings order to chaos.

LANDING

- How can you allow God’s light to shine and bring order into the chaotic and difficult areas of your own life?

TEACHING SLIDES

All bolded words and phrases in the Teaching Script are also provided as teaching slides for Premium Tier subscribers.



TEACHING SCRIPT

Bright Lights, Big City / Week 2

BOTTOM LINE

GOD'S LIGHT IN YOU BRINGS ORDER TO CHAOS.

INTRODUCTION

1 MINUTE

So, I'm the biggest Spider-Man fan, and those *Into the Spider-Verse* movies are my jam!

Whether you saw the newest Spider-Man movies or not, stick with me for the next few minutes.

In *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*, the main character, a teenager named Miles Morales, must face a supervillain named King Pin. Now, King Pin is a pretty awful guy who tried to create this alternate universe, but chaos pretty much took over everything! A bunch of new Spider-people appeared, the city started glitching, monsters showed up, and the world as they knew it was threatened to be destroyed.

Spoiler alert: At the end of the movie, in one of the biggest scenes, Miles Morales (aka Spider-Man) decides to sacrifice himself for the good of everyone in the world. He knew that he was the only one who could stop the chaos.

The symbolism is pretty clear. Spider-Man was a light in the darkness, leading terrified people threatened by chaos and danger to safety.

TENSION

1 1/2 MINUTES

Sometimes it feels like our world really does need Spider-Man, doesn't it? There's a lot of chaos and darkness in the world right now. It seems as if there's always something causing disruption and bringing disorder into people's lives.

And that chaos is all over the place. In our world, in our communities, in our schools, maybe even in our own homes. Let's be real: Middle school itself creates chaos. I can remember how chaotic it felt changing classes, finding friends at lunch, losing friends, having crushes, and trying out for new things. Middle school is hyper-speed chaos!

While some of that can feel kind of exciting (who doesn't love having a little more independence or new friends?), some of it can feel pretty awful. When rumors spread or best friends no longer talk? When social media gets hurtful or you fail your classes? That's not the type of chaos that we like to have around.

For some of us, we're dealing with even more serious chaos and disorder. Maybe something has happened at home that makes you worry about your safety, or you're concerned about the health of a loved one, or a parent or guardian lost their job and you aren't sure where your next meal is coming from. That chaos? That can feel like we're drowning in darkness.

In the opening verses of Genesis, the Bible's account of how everything was created, it describes darkness covering the earth.

Here's what it says:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters (Genesis 1:1-2 NLT).

Now, this verse describes the earth as "formless and empty." In other words, **it was chaos**. I think a lot of us either feel like our lives are chaotic or empty, or we know someone who's going through something that makes them feel that way, too.

What if I told you that there's something that has the power to bring hope and purpose into whatever situation you're facing?

TRUTH

2 1/2 MINUTES

In the very next verse in Genesis, God spoke into the darkness, chaos, and emptiness with four important words.

Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day" and the darkness "night" (Genesis 1:3-5a NLT).

God simply said: "*Let there be light,*" and there was light across the whole Earth. And in seeing the light that God had spoken into being, God determined that it was good. In the next part of the creation story in Genesis, God started the process of separating light from darkness.

At this point you may be wondering, *What do Spider-Man and Genesis have to do with me and my current situation?*

Let me explain.

When God declared "*Let there be light,*" God didn't just shine a light into the darkness. There was something else that happened that we need to pay attention to. God brought order to chaos. God made things less confusing and disorganized. God made things clear, hopeful, and well... full of light!

Have you ever woken up in the middle of the night and stumbled around trying to find your phone or a light switch? You take small, uncertain steps, reaching out to stop from bumping into things and hurting yourself. That's especially true if you've ever stubbed your toe on a bedpost or chair. But as soon as you turned the light on, suddenly you could see every step in front of you. You could walk around confidently because things were no longer dark. Your path was made clearer.

Order was brought to your chaos.

If you were here last week, we discovered some important truths together. God is light, and you were created in the image of God. This means that God's light is in you! **You were created to shine God's light to the world.**

God uses you and me to bring light into the darkness and chaos of the world! Through God's love living in us, we can help bring order, peace, and light to the people around us. We can help and care for people who are in need or hurting. We can show God's character and display God's love for everything and everyone. And God's light isn't just for others! That light is in you, bringing clarity, order, hope, and peace to your own life.

God's light in you brings order to chaos.

God's light in you shines for all to see to bring order, and hope, and love into a dark world.

APPLICATION

5 MINUTES

Luke, who interviewed people who did life with Jesus, wrote that Jesus described it this way:

"If you are filled with light, with no dark corners, then your whole life will be radiant, as though a floodlight were filling you with light" (Luke 11:36 NLT).

You can be *"filled with light . . . no dark corners . . . a floodlight!"* That means that you can shine brightly in a dark world and bring order to chaos.

INTERACTIVE: Who's in Your Circle?

This is where you'll ask students to identify areas in their own and others' lives where they can shine their light to show God's order, clarity, and love.

I'm going to pass out a sheet of paper to each of you. On that paper, draw three concentric circles (which are just three circles inside of one another). Start with a small circle, then draw another around it, and then one more. Make sure each circle has enough room for you to write a few words.

Now, I want you to think of the world around you. Not your friends, or family members, or schoolmates. Think bigger. Think about your community, the state and country we live in, and even the world. **When you think about areas that could use some of God's light to bring some order and clarity to the chaos, what comes to mind?** Maybe you think of war, starvation, or inequality. Maybe you think about disease, violence, or cyberbullying. Write down some of your thoughts in that biggest circle.

I get that in middle school, it can seem like there may not be a whole lot you can do to shine God's light and bring order to this type of chaos. It can feel like they are too big or too overwhelming to even think about sometimes! You don't have to take on the responsibility of solving the world's problems, but I do think you can take a small step to let God's light in you shine. And that step is to **care**. When you hear about these things happening, don't turn away just because they don't directly affect you. Instead, lean in. Ask questions. Learn more. Find out who's already bringing order to that chaos. If you aren't open to having an awareness of what's going on in your world, you can't do anything about these big, chaotic dark things. So, listen, learn, and lean into what's going on in our world. Be aware and care about the chaos in our world that needs God's light and order.

In the next circle, I want you to do the same thing, except think about people who are closer to you. Now's the time to think about your friends, teammates, family members, and neighbors. **Who in your circle could use some of God's light to bring them hope, order, and clarity?** Does anyone seem distracted? Sad? Confused? Rushed? Full of stress? Do you know about something difficult they're going through in their lives?

Keep those people in mind when I ask you this next question. **How can you help lighten the burden of someone in your circle?** Maybe you feel God in your heart leading you to *do* something, not just say something. In the Bible, we read in Galatians 6:2 that by carrying each other's burdens, we **"...fulfill the law of Christ"** (NIV). Now, I know a lot of you are already dealing with burdens of your own, so this step might seem overwhelming at first. But God doesn't ask us to take on more than we can handle. And carrying someone's burden can be doing something as simple as showing compassion, writing an encouraging note, an act of service, or even a hug. That's what it means to carry someone's burdens. That's what it means when we talk about bringing order to chaos. You're letting God's light in you shine in the darkness. A light of hope for all to see! Bright lights, big city!

Now, let's move to the smallest, inner circle that you drew. That circle represents you! I want you to think about your own life, your own challenges, and your own areas that could use some light. Ask yourself this question: **How do you need to bring order into your own chaos?** How can you let God's light shine in the dark areas of your own life? Where can God bring you hope and order? Or maybe, there's something you're struggling with that you need to be honest about with yourself. Where can you allow God to shine in those areas to help you make wiser choices?

Sometimes we are our own worst enemy. We won't get out of our own way, and we make decisions that aren't God's best for us. Often times we first have to bring order to our *own* chaos, disorder, and poor choices.

Maybe you need to find time to simply rest and take a break from the disorder in your life. Maybe you need to spend time talking to God or with trusted adults. Maybe you need to really be honest about decisions you're making or words you're saying. God already knows what's bringing chaos into your life. Allow God to work in you and shine a light on those areas so you can have order, clarity, hope, and God's love. If we want to bring order and peace to chaos, to shine a light into the darkness we see around us, we have first to bring order to our own situation.

God's light in you brings order to chaos. Even your own chaos.

LANDING

1 MINUTE

When you head to Small Group, think about this:

How can you allow God's light to shine and bring order into the chaotic and difficult areas of your own life?



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS
