



Let There Be You | Ronnie Johnson | 9.30.18
LG WEEKLY

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

If you could pick up one new skill in an instant what would it be? (speaking a language, playing an instrument, etc.)

SHARE

And God said, “Let there be light” and there was light. – Genesis 1:3

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And then God spoke! Now, there are thousands of books filled with exhaustive research and biblical analysis from prestigious scholars about the creation of the world. There are many biblical views on how it all came to be. We love to debate about whether the author is referring to literal days or indefinite periods of time. And those are all interesting questions, but the problem is none of us were there to see it.

What we believe with certainty is that God spoke, and it came to be. Genesis tells us that “God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness.” What God creates is good! It is no wonder that throughout scripture, those who follow Jesus are likened to ‘light’ in the midst of darkness. When the people of Jesus are around, they should reflect the light of Jesus.

Most of us grew up being afraid of the dark, but now it’s time the darkness is afraid of us.

As a disciple of Jesus, we have Jesus with us. We have God's Spirit working in and through our lives. Because of that, we don't have to fear the dark; we are not alone.

Reflect on your week. Did you find yourself more aware and intentionally being a light in the world around you this week? Give yourself a letter grade. Explain your grade to the group.

G R O W

This series is all about learning how to be lights in the world. Genesis 1 is the starting point for learning to do that successfully.

Read Genesis 1:26-28

What sticks out to you about these three verses? What makes them different than the rest of the chapter?

What insight do these three verses give us for being lights to the world?

On the sixth day of the creation story, God creates human beings. This is the only part of the story where God creates something in his image (Gen. 1:27). There is something special about you and me; as human beings, we have a unique job to do. The next verse tells us what that job is. "God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen. 1:28).

What do you think it means to subdue the earth?

We call Genesis 1:28 the cultural mandate. As humans, our job is first to fill the earth (self-explanatory), and then subdue it! There are so many implications to this, but here's one thought for this week: what you do in your life matters!

One reason we meet together as a group every week is because we are all still a work in progress. We join together to encourage one another on our journey toward discovering who God created us to be. As Ronnie reminded us this weekend, "we cannot stay limited by our

beginning. We cannot stay limited by who we have been. We have to make a choice to be who we are created to be.”

If we want to be a light in the world, we have to continue to grow. This week is yet another opportunity to take some next steps forward!

Reflect on your week. Identify one moment where you experienced yourself being a light to those around you. Now, identify one moment where you found it difficult to be a light this week. If you feel comfortable, share both moments with the group. What was the major difference in your heart and mind-set between the moment you were the light and then the moment you were not?

MOVE

Being who we are created to be is easier said than done. How do we take steps this week in the right direction?

Read Ephesians 5:8-14

In his letter to the church in Ephesus, Paul gives the call to “walk as children of the light” (Ephesians 5:8). Sometimes that feels like an audacious and overwhelming task. Especially when you just read that verse by itself. But when you understand it in the context of the rest of the letter, it begins to feel way more achievable.

A simple way to think about Ephesians is to break it into two sections. Paul spends the first half of the letter (chapters 1-3) reminding us of our position in Christ, and then the second half (chapters 4-6) explaining the practical implications in our day to day lives.

The first half tells us who we are and what God has done for us:

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.
- Ephesians 1:4

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace - Ephesians 1:7

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast. - Ephesians 2:8-9

We are children of God, not because of anything we have done, but because of what God has done for us! As you read these verses in the second half of the letter, you have to remember that Paul has just spent an ample amount of time telling us who we are. Reminding us of our identity being in Christ and Christ alone. Only then does he go on to give us some practical things we can do as “children of the light.” When we try to be “children of the light” without the constant reminder that the light is a gift, we won’t succeed. We’ll end up trying to make it happen on our own, getting burnt out, and then experiencing shame each time we read Ephesians 5.

That’s the completely wrong approach. The very structure of Ephesians reminds us that if we truly desire to be lights in the world, we will need the constant reminders of how much God loves us and who He says we are. When we understand what Paul is saying in the first three chapters of his letter, we are empowered by Christ to carry out the call he gives us in the second half!

PRACTICE

One simple exercise is to pick a verse from Ephesians 1-3 that resonates with you and write it out on the front of a sticky note. Then write out Ephesians 5:8 on the back. Place the note somewhere you will see it this week. Every time you see it, remind yourself what God has done for you, and from there, live as a child of the light!

In what way are you going to practice living as a child of the light this week? Try to come up with one tangible way so then your group knows how to be praying for you.

PRAY

As a group, spend some time praying with and for each other. Share a prayer request and then spend some time praying for the person on your left!

TO GO

1 Thessalonians 5:5

"You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness."

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