

SESSION 1: LET THERE BE LIGHT

1 In the beginning when God created[a] the heavens and the earth, 2 the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God[b] swept over the face of the waters. 3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. *Genesis 1:1-5*

Introductions and warm up task

- Introduce yourselves to your group.
- Light is a regular theme throughout the bible. Use a sheet of paper to write down any part of the Bible that talk about light. Discuss the images with each other.

Let us pray:

*Blessed be you Light of life, source of the sacred flame within each of us,
Light which the darkness cannot put out.
I rise up with you this day. I rest with you this night. Amen*

Bible discussion

In your group share out these passages: Genesis 1:1-5, Psalm 33:6-9. Job 38:1,4-7

Read the passage through and then answer the following questions:

- If you had to describe your passage in three words, what would they be?
- What does the passage tell you about who God is?
- What does the passage tell you about who we are?

Feedback your thoughts together or to the bigger group. Look to draw out themes of God as creator and humankind as creation.

INPUT: Light and Dark. God who saves and creates

These passages are just a few of the thousands of ways God reminds us that we are part of his creation. We are often very good at thinking about our God who saves us, who deals with our shame and guides us toward a life in fullness. This is the true, beautiful and divine grace of God. But it isn't the whole story of who God is.

Too often we forget that the God who saves us, also made all of creation. More than that, he is also saving and restoring creation, just like he is for us. Our invitation this Lent is to remember who our faith is built on, to remember this extraordinary creation and creator. An invitation to live out an extraordinary faith which doesn't make God small, to live out a rebellious faith that looks like those first disciples who shunned cultural norms and followed Jesus whatever the cost.

The light of the world is our saving God AND our creator God. We are designed to have a better relationship with creation than what we have now. To do this, we need to refocus ourselves on bringing these characteristics of God together: Creator and Saviour. (*from SYTL Youth Resource*)

Discussion

“There can be no redemption without creation”
Samson Gitau, Kenyan Theologian (P4, Saying Yes to Life)

“One is left to wonder whether conceiving of God as the origination of all that is would make people of faith recognize that they have a responsibility to be the custodian’s of God’s creation, and in the process, their own survival” *Wangarai Maathai. (p4, Saying Yes to Life)*

- What do you think? Do we focus too much on the God of salvation in church and forget the God of creation? How do we hold both concepts together? Do you see them as equally important? How might it make a difference to our faith and our action in the world if we more strongly emphasised God as creator?

Reflection

Think about Phul’s story on p13,14 of *Saying Yes to Life*.

- Reflect on our own usage of electricity and light in our everyday life.
- Can you share any of your experiences that have given you a new appreciation of light?

Watch the interview with Christiana Figueres from Costa Rica who for 6 years was the Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

- What does she say that makes you think and what is important to reflect on?

Action

“Words, words and more words will not reverse environmental degradation of carbon emissions, but our actions together can act now for climate justice. Change begins with us!”
Thabo Makgoba, Archbishop of Southern Africa, p20 Saying Yes to Life.

- What changes will you make, when will you make them? Look back at the action points in the chapter for suggestions and resources.

A prayer on light from the United States of America

To the one who surges into the fissures that cannot be accessed,
To the one who floods into the crevices that cannot be reached,
To the one whose presence exposes, clarifies, restores and cultivates.
We bask. We thrive. We harbour no secrets. We hold onto no
heaviness we fear makes us unloved.
You are the first ingredient for life.
The universe, not to mention our hearts, would wither away
without you, Light of the world.
Amen

Morgan Lee.