

You Are a Light of the World.

Leader's Guide

Level: Adult Study

Overview: The purpose of this lesson is to examine the concept of sharing our faith. This will be done through the following:

- Reading a verse from scripture that reinforces this concept.
- Sharing a story of how people share the faith with people all over the world.
- Engaging in a discussion about what sharing our faith can look like.

Objectives:

1. Introduce/reinforce the idea of sharing our faith with others.
2. Explore how to share their faith and examine why it is an important part of their life in Christ.

Read: *Matthew 5:14-16*

“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.” Amen.

Story

Christians have been sharing the Faith with others for nearly 2000 years. They have offered a living witness to the love, hope, and salvation of Jesus Christ to people in big cities and even to those who live in the most remote corners of the world. Some of those who dedicated their lives to this important work are recognized as great saints in the Church.

Even today there are people who are hard at work sharing Christ with the world. Not just priests or monks, these people may stand next to you every Sunday during Liturgy. They come from many different backgrounds and age groups. Flora, an 83 year old Orthodox Christian from Alabama, is one such person.

Flora has volunteered for 8 Orthodox Mission Teams and has served in Alaska, Puerto Rico, Guatemala, Romania, and Albania. When she travels, she takes small wooden crosses with her. She sits in the middle of the village with the crosses, offers them to people, and strikes up a conversation about the cross whenever she gets the chance.

While in Alaska, she attracted many children as she sat and talked about the cross and its meaning in our lives as we grow in Christ. She also brought all of the women of the village together and coordinated a women's discussion group and Bible Study.

Flora is a great example of how Orthodox Christians, no matter who they are or where they find themselves, can touch other people's lives with the light of Christ.

Discussion Questions:

The illustration of us being lights to the world follows Christ's Sermon on the Mount where He describes what discipleship looks like. The Great Commission instructing His followers to make disciples of all nations comes right before Christ's Ascension into heaven. What does this say about the role that making disciples has in our own growth in discipleship?

To Consider: *Discuss the place of an Orthodox Christian in the world and how their lives can be examples of that which is good and a statement against that which is not. Reflect on how this may impact others.*

How do we let our light shine in the world and how do we teach others to observe all that Christ commanded? Are these things related?

To Consider: *Explore expressing our faith in word and deed. Encourage a discussion on how we talk about their faith with others. Ask how we serve others and talk about the importance this service has in the life of a Christian. Consider the subtle ways in which we share our faith like going to church on Sundays or saying a prayer before meals (even if we are in public).*

Why is sharing the light of Christ and making disciples of all nations so important?

To Consider: *Reinforce the idea that during Christ's earthly ministry He taught, healed, and served others both to reveal truth to the world and to serve as an example of how to live in harmony with that truth. Christ died and rose from the dead for the salvation of all people and that prior to His Ascension into heaven He commanded all His followers to take His teachings and the salvation He made possible to the ends of the earth, so that all people could come to know hope in God.*

What are some of the challenges we face in sharing Christ with others?

To Consider *Help them to recognize these challenges on a broad societal level as well as in their personal lives. Help them to feel safe sharing what may keep them from responding to people like the homeless, the sick or elderly, prisoners, or those in need half a world away.*

How do we overcome those challenges?

To Consider: *Talk about how prayer and dedication to our own growth in Christ can play a role in overcoming these challenges.*