

Hope

Our vision for 2020 and what it would hold and what we would accomplish may have been clear in the beginning but I think for many of us it did not go as we may have planned. Vacations have been canceled. School is not anything like it has been before. Sunday Morning may even look different than before.

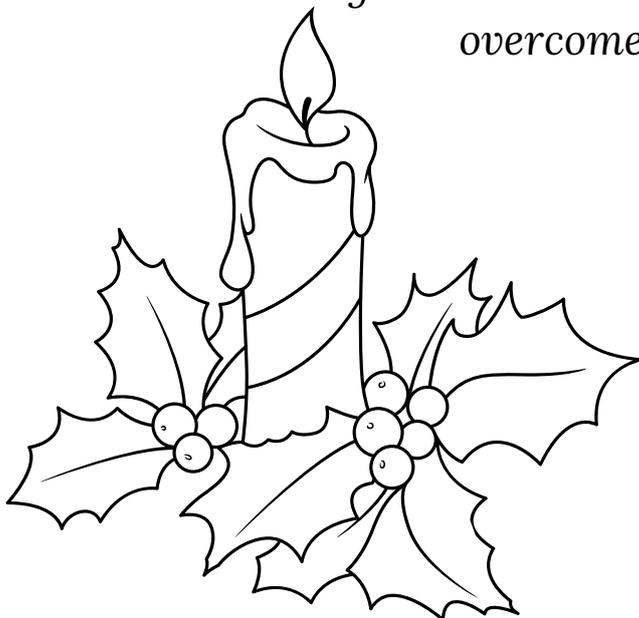
2020 may even feel like we have been feeling around in the dark in unfamiliar places and spaces.

Being in the dark can mean just what it sounds like or it can be used to describe what life feels like sometimes. We can be in the dark when we are out camping and the sun goes down. We can be in the dark when we are playing hide and seek and find a great spot! We can also be in the dark when others are making decisions and we don't know exactly why. We can be in the dark when we don't know where life is headed. Either way, physically or those times in life, being in the dark can feel scary.

What are some ways you have been in the dark? Physically or because of circumstances in your life.

Here is what the Bible tells us about darkness and light.
Read John 1:1-5 (ESV)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. John 1:1-5 (ESV)



Note: If your kiddos are old enough this would be a great verse to write out. And it is a great verse for us adults to write out and keep in mind. Especially 'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.' If they are not to the age of writing or not very interested in that they could illustrate the verse. And don't forget about Pure Joy Creative's coloring sheets!)

Activities and questions:

Turn off all the lights in your home and make it as dark as you can. Then light the first candle. Hope. The hope candle shines bright in the darkness and the darkness can not overcome our hope. (Lighting candles is a favorite thing for my kids to do when they get old enough. We have 4 kids so generally the candles get lit four times in our home)

What do you notice about the light and the darkness? Can the darkness overtake or cancel the light of the candle?

Who is the light John 1:5 is talking about?

What does it mean for our lives that the darkness can not overcome the light?

No matter how dark our circumstances Jesus is always there. No matter how dark the world is Jesus is there our hope remains His light is shining in the midst of this year and it will continue to shine. Next time we light the candle we will read from our Bibles about the Hope we have because of Jesus.



Matthew 1:18-2:12

The announcement of Jesus happened in different ways. Joseph discovered Mary was pregnant and then an angel appeared to tell him more. Wise men knew about the birth of the king because a star had appeared. Today we will read about how these different people found out about Jesus and found out more about Jesus in different ways.

Questions:

Who appeared to Joseph?

What did the angel call him?

What did the angel tell him?

How did the wise men find out about Jesus?

How do people we live around learn that Jesus came and is coming again?

What are some ways we can tell others about Jesus?

Are there people in your life you can tell about Jesus? How would you tell those people about Jesus?

Genesis 15

The wise men were pointed to Jesus by the light of one star. God showed Abraham all the stars in the sky. He told him of all that was to come and all the people who would be in his lineage. One of those in his lineage would save the rest. Abraham would have his son Isaac. Isaac would marry and have children. The generations would continue until Jesus, the promised one, was announced by stars and angels.

Questions:

What does God tell us and Abraham about himself in chapter 15?

What was Abraham doing when God made his promise to him? (vs 12-21)

Abraham was looking forward to the son he was promised? What promises has God made us that we look forward to and hope for? (Verses about some of those promises- John 3:16, John 14:2-3, John 16:33, 1 Peter 2:24-25)

Activity:

If it is a clear night go outside and see if you can count the stars. If tonight does not work maybe another night during Advent will. What are other things we can see outside that remind us of God's promises?

Coloring sheets to go along with the promise verses:

John 3:16

<https://www.visualfaithmin.org/vcyhalfsheetgraphics/john-316-half-sheet-jpg-file-by-jamie-truwe?rq=John%2016>



John 3:16 Half Sheet JPG File
by Jamie Truwe
visualfaithmin.org

John 14:2-3

<https://www.visualfaithmin.org/vcyhalfsheetgraphics/john-142-half-sheet-by-kim-gilman?rq=John%2014>



John 14:2 Half Sheet by Kim
Gilman
visualfaithmin.org

John 16:33

<https://www.visualfaithmin.org/vcyhalfsheetgraphics/john-1633-half-sheet-by-jamie-truwe?rq=John%2016>



John 16:33 Half Sheet JPG File
by Jamie Truwe
visualfaithmin.org

1 Peter 2:24-25

<https://www.visualfaithmin.org/sally-beck-new-testament/luke-135-sally-beck-tif-file-rlj83-el3lj-yxzb-n9p9wxx-c5g98-ldkhg-76lzz-slx9y-s8dwz-hdzd4-sxfl3-keat-75afh-7nrr2-44w9j-nscpf-n4z4s-5ahl9-ke8t9-yk82t-xktt3-gxd7f-4ltjd-gfjpw-bndt4-6xkca-74ytl-9jn-wls4p?rq=1%20Peter%202>



1 Peter 2:25 - Sally Beck - TIF
File
visualfaithmin.org

Hebrews 11:1-12:2

Abraham was just one of the people saved by Faith. Hebrews 11 gives us a list of people who were not saved by what they did but by the gift of faith. While these people looked forward to Christ coming as we look back on all that he has done of us and for those who came before us. As Hebrews says it is a great cloud of witnesses to the work of Jesus, the founder, and perfecter of our faith.

Questions:

Who are the people mentioned in these verses?

What are some things God did in their lives?

We are all a part of the this great cloud of witnesses to the work of Christ. What would you write about in your bio for the great cloud of witnesses? Or what do you think would be written about the work of Christ in your life?

Activity:

Write out or Illustrate verses:

Hebrews 11:1-3 or Hebrews 12:2

If you would rather color instead of creating your own here is an option for that:

<https://www.visualfaithmin.org/print-color-pray/hebrews-121-2-half-s>

OR:

Write that bio for the great cloud of witnesses. You can write it about yourself, someone living in your house, someone you know...The opportunities are endless.

You could swap names with people in your family and write them about one another. This might even be a great gift idea for Grandparents. As a family write about the work of Christ in the lives of people you love.

1 Peter 2:1-9 & Psalms 139:7-12

The wise men saw a star. Joseph was approached by an angel. Abraham was pointed to the light of the stars. We no longer walk in darkness. Our hope is in the same person. The light that illuminates our paths comes from the same person, Jesus. Jesus may have appeared to people in different ways but the hope we have in him and the light he gives to our lives is the same. Our hope is in Christ. He is the light of the world. No matter how dark circumstances become the dark can NOT overcome the light.

Questions:

Whose light do we walk in?

Where can we go to escape from God?

According to these words written by David in Psalm 139 will we experience dark days?

Can the darkness overcome the light?

Activity:

Drive around and look at Christmas lights!!