

A Future of Light...or Darkness? (1/23/22)

Main Verses: Matthew 8:11-12

Key Verse: Matthew 8:11-12

'Takeaway': God's love can save us for a future of light and life instead of darkness.

Getting Started: Are you, or have you ever been, afraid of the dark?



READ the main verses (or have older kids help read).

Some **QUESTIONS** to consider:

Toddler/PreK:

- Who is the kingdom of heaven open to?
- Who are the sons of the kingdom? Why would they be thrown into the outer darkness?
- What do you think outer darkness refers to?

Elementary:

- How do we become part of the kingdom of heaven?
- Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived (and died) before Jesus came to earth, but are in the kingdom of heaven—why is that?
- Sons of the kingdom refers to Israel, the Jewish nation. Why would they be thrown into outer darkness?
- Using these verses, how would you describe outer darkness to someone?

Here are some **IMPORTANT IDEAS** we discover in these verses:

Toddler/PreK:

- The only way into the kingdom of heaven is through faith in Jesus, who died and rose for our sins on the cross.
- Faith in Jesus means our hearts are changed from being me-centered to God-centered day by day, as we learn and grow.
- God is holy, and without faith in Jesus, our sins will result in death and being separated from God forever.

Elementary:

- Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob recline at the table in the kingdom of heaven because of their faith in God's promises even though they lived before Jesus came to earth. Faith alone in Jesus and surrendering our lives to him (in faith) is the only way to enter the kingdom of heaven and live eternally with him.
- The Jewish people lose their "claim" to the kingdom unless they have faith in Jesus and his saving work.
- Outer darkness, and "weeping and gnashing of teeth" describe the terrible suffering awaiting those who die without faith and are separated from God forever.

An **ENCOURAGEMENT** in light of God's word:

(Toddler/PreK) Talk to God, thanking him for his kingdom, and that when we have faith in him we can be part of that kingdom. Ask Him to help you have faith in Jesus and his saving work on the cross, and to live for him every day.

(Elementary) Talk to God, thanking him for his plan from the beginning of creation that would mean that everyone who has faith in Jesus and his death and resurrection, can be part of God's kingdom. Ask Him to change your heart, knowing that Jesus is your only hope for forgiveness and freedom, and forever with God, surrendering your me-centered heart to His loving leadership. If you pray this, be sure to talk to a trusted adult in your life about your prayer.