

Chanukah, Christmas and You

Sermon Small Group Questions
Speaker: Pastor Myles Weiss

USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

- This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session together. After considering the needs of your group, you may choose one of the following options:
 1. one section of questions
 2. one or two questions from each section
- Feel free to adapt the format to meet the needs of your group. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, add Scripture and ask suitable questions. Remember that this is only a guide.
- Personal application is key to everyone's growth and should be included in every discussion. When asked how he or she intends to apply a certain principle a group member may say, "I need to spend more time in the Bible and in prayer." It is important for you to help group members make applications that are more specific and commit to a specific plan of action by asking, for example, "How are you going to begin?" An example is to get up 30 minutes earlier each morning, spending 15 minutes reading the Bible and 10 minutes in prayer. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.
- As the leader your goal is to help bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their need for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.

INTRODUCTION

Chanukah vs. Christmas... Or does it? A closer look at Chanukah and Christmas reveals there is a seamless connection.

MESSAGE

In the Book of John we see Jesus observing Chanukah:

[John 10:22 NLT]

It was now winter, and Jesus was in Jerusalem at the time of Hanukkah, the Festival of Dedication.

Chanukah began between the Old Testament and the New Testament

An evil ruler took power and wouldn't let the Jews continue with their religious customs. The Jewish people called him "Mad Man" because he was so evil. Finally a priest of God rose up against the king and they fought against this king to restore their freedom. During this uprising the oil that kept the Menorah burning in the temple was running out. And when they were down to one day's worth of oil God miraculously let it burn for 8 days.

Chanukah Menorah: has 9 candles the one in the middle is the servant candle that brings light to the others.

[Philippians 2:5-15 NLT]

You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him. Do everything without complaining and arguing, so that no one can criticize you. Live clean, innocent lives as children of God, shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people.

The other eight candles represent the 8 days that God let the candles in the temple burn on only one day's worth of oil.

Why 8 candles? It is the number of new beginnings.

Today can be a day of new beginnings for you because the Light of the world has come to bring you His light

4 points of Chanukah.

1. God protects His people both Jew and Gentile.
2. He wanted the temple to be cleansed. Not just the building but us as the Temple of the Holy Spirit
3. We serve a God of miracles
4. He is the Light of the world and has filled us with that light so that we may bring Light to those around us just as a fully lit Menorah.

[John 8:12 NLT]

Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, "I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life."

[Mark 10:45 NLT]

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many."

[John 1:4, 5 NLT]

The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.

[Matthew 5:14 NLT]

"You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Before this weekends message what was your understanding of Chanukah?**
- 2. Share a recent story of when God let His light shine through you.**
- 3. What can you do this week to be the light of God to our world?**
- 4. End your time praying for the Jewish people that they will hear the voice of their savior and respond to his call.**