

## **Light and Darkness**

### **John 3: 14-21**

(The text reads: "And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God." The gospel contrasts darkness and light as symbols of evil and goodness. As the people of God we come into the light and our goodness and kindness are reflected in the good deeds that are done in the name of our God. But how do we communicate these thoughts to children. The following is an attempt to illustrate how God's light of kindness radiates from the heart of a child to the heart of another.)

Good morning boys and girls! This morning we are going to talk about the light of God that shines in us.

In this bag I have something hidden from you  
If I show you – you will know it too.  
Do you think it is a ghost?  
No! Not even close.  
It is quiet like a mouse  
That creeps around your house.  
Do you think it is a kitten?  
No, it is something that must be written.  
I can share it all around  
But unless I speak it  
It doesn't make a sound.  
It beams like a light  
That spreads and shines so bright.  
I have hid it in here so you can't see.  
Can you guess what it might be?  
What is written, quiet and must be spoken?  
I hope it's not broken!  
To tell someone I have a secret isn't very nice.  
To keep a secret can be cold like ice.  
So let's look inside and see what's there.  
I think it is something that I should share.  
What's written? What can it be?  
In my hand I hold  
A word from God to unfold.  
Can you read it with me?  
"K-i-n-d" is the word you see.  
That's what God wants us to be.

He wants us to be kind to each other -  
To mother, father, sister and brother.  
God says when we speak from our mind  
To think of words that are kind.  
God wants us to share when we play  
With kindness to others every day.  
Giving kindness to others is God's light.  
That from within us shines so bright.  
So "kind" is God's word for this day.  
It is the light that shines in all that we do  
It is in all that we say.

Dear God.  
You taught us to be kind  
In every way.  
Help us always to be kind  
In all that we do and in all that we say.  
Amen.

Rev. Larry D. Laine

Props and items that are used for demonstration are very helpful in sharing an idea or a concept with a child. Use your hands as demonstratively as possible and communicate with enthusiasm and dramatic inflection. In this message use a flashlight, a bag and a piece of paper within the bag that has the word "Kind" written on it. Begin the message by turning the flashlight off and on. Use the flashlight when you open the bag to get out the piece of paper. Carefully hold the paper so the children can't see the word until you ask them to read the word with you. Hold the word up so they can see the written word "KIND" and continually point at it with the flashlight. Near the end when you talk of God's kindness shining like a light from within - shine the light on your heart and on the heart of a few of the children. It is best to memorize the message, deliver it slowly and always keep eye contact with the children. If you can't memorize the message, then simply use the ideas in progression.