## Tilingi3 24

## The Lord is my light <br> anid my salvaiton whom shall frear?

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Welcome to another week where we can see how to glow in the dark like Jesus! So far we've talked about shining God's light and how Jesus is that light in the darkness. Last time, Jesus was at dinner with his best buds when he said one of them was going to betray him. Well, this came true, and that night he was betrayed and arrested. He was brought to court to determine if he was innocent or guilty. The one who had to make the final decision was someone named Pilate.
Jesus hadn't broken any laws. He was completely innocent. But the religious leaders really wanted him gone anyway. They were threatened by Jesus' popularity, and his teachings about God felt so contrary to what they thought they knew about God.
They also thought he was lying about being God's son. For that, especially, they didn't want Jesus arrested and put in jail. They wanted him to receive the worst punishment . . . they wanted him dead.

Pilate couldn't find anything to pin on Jesus. So he let the people choose who they wanted to set free. He probably thought they would choose to let Jesus go. But the crowd chose to have Barabbas released instead! Barabbas was someone who was actually guilty of committing crimes. The religious leaders convinced the crowd to believe that Jesus deserved to die.

By the end, everyone demanded it.
The crowd had made a terible choice. They really thought they were making the right call, though.
Before he died, Jesus even prayed for the people who put him on the cross, saying that they didn't know what they were doing.
Sometimes we don't know what to do, and we choose the wrong thing. But God never gives up on us.
God loves us and forgives us. Every day we get the chance to choose light . . to choose Jesus.

## This is not the end of the story.

lf's incredibly sad, but even in this dark moment, there were still many people who chose to believe that Jesus truly was the son of God. And we'll find out that something unbelievably amazing happened just a few days later. [Just not today!]

Have you ever made a pinky promise with someone? lf's when twa friends lock pinkies and make a promise together - like "I promise to play that game with you today" or "I promise to pray for you tonight."

God makes promises with humans, too, called covenants.
In Jeremiah 31, verses 3l-34, God made a covenant promise to the people of Israel. God's side of the promise was always kept, but the Israelites had trouble keeping their end. They kept forgetting about God and turning to everything else, but God never forgot them and wanted to renew the covenant with the people. God says they will always be God's people, and God will always forgive them.

This promise is for us, too. God forgives us each time we mess up and turn away from God. When we choose Jesus, we choose the road that leads to God . . .the God who, like Jeremiah says, forgives and will remember our sins no more. We can choose Jesus.

## SCRIPTURE/APPLICATION

- Who did the religious leaders hand Jesus over to so that he could be put on trial?
- What choice did Pilate give to the crowd?


We might not always notice it, but there are a lot of times when we have to make a choice between what pleases God and what doesn't. Whenever that happens, we can shine Jesus bright and remember that in any situation, we can choose Jesus!

Using a piece of transparency film or another type of sturdy plastic cut into a circle, slightly larger than the opening of a cardboard tube.

Have kids write "Jesus" on the paper and attach it to the end of a cardboard tube using plastic wrap and rubbber bands. Shine a flashlight or phone light through the tube and project the word onto a flat surface. Provide markers and stickers for them to decorate the cardboard tube.

Provide an assortment of neon-colored plastic straws cuti into pieces. Give each kid a length of string and tape one side to the table. Have them insert the straw pieces through the other end of the string until filled.

Tie a knot or tape ends together. Cut out the medallions on the provided printable and use glue dots to stick them to any of the straw pieces on the necklace.

Alternatively, you can punch two holes at the ends of each medallion and string them while they're adding the straws.

Scan QR code for a worked example.



