

## Teen Devotion

Year A – Easter 7

He Lives!



**One truth shared:** Heaven celebrates when we reflect God’s glory on earth.

*I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.*

**John 17:4,5**

### Glory on Earth

It can be fun to daydream about all the things we can do in heaven. But did you know that there is one amazing thing we can do now that we cannot do in heaven?

Before we get to that one thing, we need to remember how good this world used to be. In the beginning it was better than good. It was, as God said, “*very good.*”

The Garden of Eden was created to be a thing of perfect beauty and perfect efficiency. And that was just a nest to get things started. God created an entire world for us to discover and inhabit. Relationships were perfect. Work was a joy. God was there. Everything was *very good.*

Then darkness came.

A temptation led to doubt, and doubt led to sin. The world was darkened by the constant fear of death and all the many ways it causes suffering throughout life. Relationships were broken. Work became painful. We became distant from God, and nothing about that was good.

We will always long for the joy of heaven because we were created with eternity in our mind and a longing for God in our heart.

But Jesus brought something *very good* to a world that was darkened by sin. He brought glory to God on earth.

His selfless sacrifice for our sins was a remarkable demonstration of divine grace unlike anything this world had ever seen. Not even the beauty of Eden could compete with the way his light shone through the darkness.

And that brings us to the one amazing thing you can do now that you can’t do in heaven. You can shine in the darkness. When you reflect the love of Jesus to others, you bring hope in a way that makes heaven rejoice.

It’s okay to long for heaven. But don’t miss the opportunity you have right now to let your light shine in a dark place. You never know when God might use your light to bring hope to others.

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, there will be days when I long for the joys of heaven. But until you bring me there, help me to see the joy of shining your light in a dark place. Shine through me this week. Amen.

## Foundation Teen Facilitators Guide

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### Glory on Earth

**Starting the Discussion:** *This first section is intended to be light and easy, to engage and get the conversation going. Have a little fun with these questions.*

When you think of heaven, what is the first thing that comes to mind? Why?

**Connecting:** *This section serves as a bridge between the opening conversation and the body of the study/discussion. It should get the group thinking about the topic/text even before they've looked at it.*

- Share a time when a person's kindness toward you made a lasting difference in your life.
- Do you believe that you can make a difference in this world? Why or why not?
- Do you think Jesus longed to return to heaven?

**Digging In:** *Here we want to dig into some texts or the text for the day and see what Scripture says. The questions are meant to be open ended to give a beginning of a scriptural conversation. These are a guide for a spiritual and scriptural conversation.*

- In what ways did Jesus bring his Father glory on earth?
- How do you know if you're doing something for your own glory rather than for God's glory?

**Conclusion:** *Here we want to wrap up the discussion, perhaps circling back to the "connecting question" above.*

Think of one practical way you could bring glory to God this week. What might it look like to shine his glory in a dark place?