

John 18: 1-12 "Exposing and Confronting the Darkness"

Read John 12:31, 13:21-30, and 14:30.

1. In Matthew, Mark and Luke the theme of Jesus confronting the powers of darkness is expressed in stories of individual demonic encounters where Jesus exercises authority and casts the demon out giving freedom and new life to those in their grip. There are no such stories in John. John instead invites us to see a different face to the darkness. From these three references to the "ruler of the world" (Satan) what do we learn about the forces of darkness?

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2. Jesus is done talking. It is time, as he said, for Satan to appear. Who appears? From this group of people what do we learn about the forces of darkness and how they impact our world? Where do we see the current faces of darkness in our world?
3. Jesus exposes the darkness. Jesus answers their question of whom they seek by using the divine name – I am. What do we learn about what lies at the heart of sin from this exposure? How do you respond to this truth?
4. Peter confronts the forces of darkness with violence. In a way Peter represents us – as humanity has bought into the lie of redemptive violence. It is the belief that violence saves, that war brings peace, that might is right. Reflect together on how culturally we live out the myth of redemptive violence.
5. Jesus will confront the darkness by drinking the cup, the cup of God's wrath upon sin. As Romans 1:18-25 tells us the final expression of God's wrath is to give us over to our desires, to give us exactly what we want, which will ultimately consume us. In wrath God gives the forces of darkness exactly what they want at the cross. They do their worst, but they are played out. What does Jesus' resurrection tell us about the ultimate future of the forces of darkness? How does that impact you personally to receive this truth?
6. Jesus confronts the darkness ultimately by self-giving love and forgiveness. How does this invite us to a new posture when confronting the darkness of our world? Can you give examples of where you have seen this work?