

Intro:

Listen to the song "Daylight" by Remedy Drive and pass out the lyrics so your students can follow along.

Think of a time in your life where you were pretty sure it that time had simply stopped and you would be stuck in this horrendous moment for all eternity. The songwriter wrote this while his wife was in labor. It was a long painful night and in the morning they had a brand new baby girl.

Verses:

Psalm 19

Romans 1:19-20

Activities:

Option 1:

Charades: The psalm says "There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard." Creation speaks to us but it does not use words. Use the classic game of charades but instead of movies, or songs, or TV shows ... use bits of "Good News." Here are a few to get you going:

I just got an A on my math test

You just won a million dollars!

A brand new CAR!

For guys: She said YES!

For girls: He asked me OUT!

Summer is here and the time is right for dancing in the street.

Option 2:

You will need a few skeins of yarn (preferably different colors). You will also need an empty building. Have one person stand in the youth room and hold the end of a skein of yarn. Have a partner walk through the building, try to get into every room, unraveling the yarn as they go. Send them off in different directions. They can wrap it around doorknobs or chair legs for tension if needed. Have them walk the building until the skein is empty, then tie it off. When everyone is back in the youth room, tour the building and see how far reaching the "word" is.

Option 3:

Rent the movie *Shawshank Redemption*. (This is rated R so be sure you follow your church procedures before showing any of it.) Show the clip toward the end of the movie where Andy DuFrane is crawling through the sewers beneath the prison. Cut to the scene at the end where Andy is standing in the pouring rain with his arms outstretched. Mention that this is a great visual to go with Psalm 19.

Option 4 (An activity to close the lesson):

The psalm seems to be divided into three parts: verses 1-6, verses 7-10, and verses 11-14. Divide your group into three smaller groups. Give each group a section of the psalm and see if

they can reduce it to one sentence. Then gather your groups and compare sentences. See if you can reduce all three down to one. Now take the one and put it in a few words as possible. (Sometime during the week, text or E-mail that word to your students.)

Option 5:

Break your group into pairs and give them each a hymnal. See how many hymns you can find that talk about dawn or morning.

Questions:

There are very few writers in the Bible who wrote about their ups and downs the way David did. (David did not write all of the Psalms, only the majority of them. Others were written trying to copy his style.) One minute David was dancing with joy in the parade and the next he could be face down in a puddle. He didn't just feel "down," he experienced his sadness with his whole being. He often viewed his life as a long slow climb out of a deep, dark, damp tunnel. Picture yourself crawling up a steep slope on all fours. It's so dark you can't even tell where you are going except up. This psalm is that first breath of fresh air, that first hope of light at the surface.

Put the visual of Psalm 19 in your students' imagination (either by the video clip or by your own description) and play the song.

True or False: It's always darkest before the dawn. (Answer both literally and figuratively)

Where is the darkest place you have ever been ... not just in your closet with the door closed but a specific place where you could not even see your hand in front of your face. So dark that you could not even tell where you were. So dark it overcame all of your other senses. Where was that? Now put that image aside for later.

What do we mean when we say someone is "being kept in the dark?"

In what ways do we associate being in the dark with being alone?

Psalm 19 is divided into three parts: God's creation. God's "bigness" and our "finiteness." God revealing himself to us daily.

Just one generation ago, there were no photographs of the earth from space. All of the ideas of earth were based on our own view. Some of the first photos of earth from space were criticized because we were "not meant" to see what God can see.

Name some things that have made the world better because we have this "God's eye view?"

Many translations tell us to stand in fear of God. Early translations (like the Latin) use wording closer to "awe." When was the last time you stood in "awe"? Are you more comfortable with "fear" or "awe?" Explain.

In the song "Daylight" the singer tells us that "Light will make the night burn out" and "daylight is coming to break the dawn."

Jim Morrison of the Doors said:

“You know the day destroys the night
Night divides the day
Tried to run
Tried to hide
Break on through to the other side

Hymn writer Johann Rist wrote:
Break forth, O beauteous heavenly light,
And usher in the morning.

Rist was writing about Jesus' birth.

Morrison took some of his lyrics from a 1963 book called *City of Light* about a young executive on a drug-induced binge trying to make it to morning.

The composer of “Daylight” said the song was written the night his wife was in labor.

Re-read the last four verses of Psalm 19. Paul seems to reference these in Roman 1:19-20 ... the idea that we need only look around to see God's presence.

Talk about a time when you have seen God in God's creation.

How does the singer seem to acknowledge God?

How does this idea of God revealing himself fit with the theme of daylight?

In what ways do we associate light with “hope?”

We often put “faith” “hope” and “love” together. If “hope” is daylight...what are faith and love?

Where does this Psalm (and this song) leave the “night owls”? There are some people who are just “night people”. David wrote a Psalm for them (Psalm 134). Can you think of someone you know who would have a problem with “dawn”?

What do you tell people who connect with God better through the night than the daylight?

The singer says, “The darkness must precede the dawn.” What is the obvious next step?

Singer Arlo Guthrie said:
“You can't have a light without a dark to stick it in.”

Can we fully appreciate the “daylight” if we didn't come through the night? Can you think of an example from your own life?

Remember that first question about where you were when it was darkest? Now think of an answer to that question figuratively. (You don't have to say it out loud.) As a group, read Psalm 19 out loud. Think of it, not as a recitation, but as a prayer as if it were your own words.

Play the song "Daylight" again as your closing prayer.