

# THE DAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS EVE

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## PLEASE NOTE!

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Text published by:	European CEF® Kilchzimmer 4438 Langenbruck Switzerland <a href="http://www.cefeurope.com">www.cefeurope.com</a>
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# Introduction

## Make yourself available for counselling

When you present the Gospel message, there will be children who will respond to it independently. They may or may not at a later date tell you that they have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. There will, however, be others who would like some help. They may have questions to ask; they may need help or encouragement in knowing what to say.

As you teach the saved children, there may be times when they would like advice in a difficult situation; they may need clarification on how a particular lesson applies to their daily lives; they may find themselves in a situation where they do not know what the Bible says they should do; they may want to share a difficulty so that you can pray for them, especially if you are the only Christian support they have.

For these reasons it is important that the children know you are available to talk. It is also important that they know when and where to go when they want to talk to you. Finally, it is essential that unsaved children do not confuse coming to the Lord Jesus with coming to you.

In all cases you should not make yourself available at the same time as giving the Gospel invitation, so that the children never get the impression that they cannot come to Christ without coming through you, or that they are saved simply by waiting to speak to you.

### ***An example for use with the unsaved child***

“Do you really want to live for the Lord Jesus, but don’t know how to come to Him? I will be glad to explain it from the Bible; come and see me. I’ll be standing by that tree when the meeting is over. Remember, I can’t take away your sin - only the Lord Jesus can do that - but I will be glad to help you understand better how you can come to Him. Just come and sit with me under that tree.”

### ***An example for use with the saved child***

“If you have trusted the Lord Jesus as your Saviour and you have never told me about it, please let me know. I’ll be standing beside the piano after the meeting is finished. I would like to know if you too have trusted the Lord Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, so that I can pray for you and perhaps help you.”

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# The Day Before Christmas Eve

## The child's situation

Surely every child has experienced fear of the dark. Children know these feelings and can easily identify with Lars's situation.

## Application

Unsaved: Ask Jesus to be the light of your life. He will lead you out of the darkness of this world.

## Memory verse

"... I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life"  
John 8:12

## Short explanation of the memory verse

The world is imprisoned in the darkness of sin, uncertainty and lack of direction. When Jesus says that He is the Light of the World, it means that without Him there is no salvation from the darkness of sin. Without Him, there is no direction for our pathway through life, no knowledge of the meaning of life and eternity.

Jesus promised that every one who follows Him "shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life".

## Visual for teaching the memory verse

Cut out the candle shape on page 8. (Depending on the size of your group, you may want to enlarge the visual first.) Cut the candle into several pieces and use them as a puzzle on the flannelboard. A child can try to put the verse together.

## Memory verse handcraft

See page 9.

## Song suggestion

Choose a suitable song on the theme of "the Light of the World".

Show the different islands on the map (see page 10).

Tip for using the flashcards:

To make the flashcards easier to turn, before using the lesson open the book in the middle and carefully fold the pages in the opposite direction. Then do the same with the other pictures. You will find that the pages are now much easier to turn.

Read (or have a child read) the verse from your Bible.

## Lesson

On the coast of Schleswig-Holstein, in Husum Bay (North Germany), lie the North Frisian islands of Sylt and Föhr, as well as the small and large Hallig Islands. Many of the islands are naturally protected against strong tides by sand dunes, others are made secure by an embankment or a dike. Still others are completely abandoned to the waves. On these little Hallig Islands the houses are built on a height.

The tide ebbs and flows in its rhythm along the North Sea coast. When it ebbs, the tide is out for about six hours and broad mud flats are exposed. At low tide, you can walk from island to island with the help of a guide. Water channels of various lengths and depths run through the mud flats. As the tide comes in, they fill up with water first. They are very deep in places and have strong currents which can endanger the life of anyone walking on the mud flats.

This is a true story about something which happened between 1940 and 1950. A Frisian lady from the island of Föhr has left us a written account of this incident.

### Flashcard 1

There was only one farmstead on Süderoog, the smaller Hallig Island. At that time it was run by Farmer Baudewig, who lived a lonely life there. When he needed food, he drove his horse and cart across the mud flats to the nearest island of Pellworm.

It would soon be Christmas. Farmer Baudewig had a visitor from the mainland, a 14-year old boy called Lars. He had come on the post boat to celebrate Christmas with his lonely relative. This year Lars wanted to experience Christmas in a completely different way and the thought of celebrating Christmas on Süderoog, with its one house, was a really exciting idea. At home when he thought about the old house on Süderoog, he always remembered a picture in the hall, which was made entirely of shells. There was a beautiful lighthouse in the picture with a Bible verse beside it. The letters were made of little gray shells. The Bible verse read, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life" (John 8:12).

On the day before Christmas Eve, Farmer Baudewig said to Lars, "Today we are going to Pellworm. Since you are here, we should make it special for ourselves. We need a Christmas tree, some groceries from Liermann's shop and some items from Jensen's bakery."

### Flashcard 2

Farmer Baudewig harnessed the horse to the wagon and they set off across the mud flats, in the direction of Pellworm. They had not travelled very far when it became hard to see. There was so much fog that they decided to turn back. Just when they arrived back home,

the weather cleared up again, so Farmer Baudewig decided to attempt the journey again, in spite of the delay. As a precaution, he phoned the shops on Pellworm to ask for the goods to be brought to the jetty. That would save time. Remember, you can only be out on the mud flats for a limited time. They would need to be back at home before the tide came in again.

Before they left Farmer Baudewig put two oil lamps in the window. These lights were to show them the way, in case it got dark even earlier.

Then they were really moving forward! Lars was amazed at how well the horses knew the way and avoided the deep water channels. Here they could trot along quite freely. Sometimes the water splashed up high. Farmer Baudewig drove the horses on as fast as they could go.

### Flashcard 3

But then he suddenly stopped them on a sandbank in the middle of the mud flats and turned to the boy.

“Lars, it’s better if you wait here for me until I come back from Pellworm. You can have my torch and the foghorn. The light will show me the way back if it gets dark earlier. If the fog comes up again, blow the foghorn. Then I will follow the sound towards you. Goodbye, I’ll go as fast as I can.”

It wasn’t long before the cart trundled up at Pellworm. Farmer Baudewig arrived there safely. The goods he had ordered had already been delivered to the jetty. Farmer Baudewig quickly stowed everything in the cart and turned it around for the journey home.

### Flashcard 4

Just then Mr. Liermann the grocer came along, looking serious and thoughtful. He knew how treacherous and dangerous the mud flats were.

“Farmer Baudewig,” he said, “if I were you, I would not drive back to Süderoog tonight. The tide has already turned. You can spend the night at my house.”

If it weren’t for the boy waiting on the sandbank, Farmer Baudewig would gladly have accepted the offer. Now he had to go back out onto the mud flats, in the direction of Süderoog. He kept making the horses go even faster. Even though they knew the way, every metre was crucial with the incoming tide, so that they didn’t end up in the deep water channels.

### Flashcard 5

Alone on the sandbank, the boy had watched the cart as it grew smaller and smaller and disappeared in the haze. The dusk slowly

crept in from the East, and the tide from the West. How quickly the water was coming back towards him! It had already reached the large stone on the sandbank. The water channels were filling up with more and more water. In the distance, he could already see places where the dark evening clouds were reflecting in a shining, smooth stretch of water.

“What will happen if my Uncle can’t find his way back? What will happen if the tide comes in too soon and it gets dark early?” Many questions raced through his mind.

He stared towards Pellworm, looking for a dark spot. But it was already getting dark and everything was starting to become a blur before his eyes. Then a terrible fear took control of him.

“What will happen if I drown?” he wondered anxiously.

He held on tightly to his torch, as though it were a life belt, and kept on looking over towards Pellworm. The light from the torch became dimmer and dimmer, until it went out completely. Then he blew with all his strength into the foghorn. Surely the dull sound could be heard! Soon, however, his strength gave out, and the tones became quieter and quieter.

The boy stood there in the loneliness of the vast sea, with death approaching before his eyes. He began to feel desperate. He looked around in every direction, as if help might appear from somewhere.

### Flashcard 6

Then he saw a faint light in the north, in the direction of Süderoog. It was faint, but it gleamed at him in a friendly and encouraging way.

A thought flashed through his mind. “That must be the two oil lamps in the window of our house.”

Lars felt a glimmer of hope in his fearful heart. He saw the light there in the distance and then, in his mind, he began to wander through the house from the living room into the hallway. There was a light in the hallway too, bright and strong, lighting up the whole world. Lars clearly saw the picture of the lighthouse with the Bible verse. What was written there, in letters made of shells?

Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life” (John 8:12).

The boy was filled with hope. Of course, he wasn’t alone there on the sandbanks! The “Light of the World” was there with him. Who is the Light of the World? The Lord Jesus, God’s Son. Lars believed that with all his heart. Now he began to talk to the Lord Jesus, to call on Him in his need.

“If the Lord Jesus is the Light of the World, then He sees me in my terrible situation,” he thought. “Then He has the power to save me.”

There on the sandbank, Lars promised to trust the Lord Jesus and to follow Him for the rest of his life.

Does God hear the cry of a person who calls to Him when they are in need? Yes, we know He does, for in God's Word the Bible we read, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me" (Psalm 50:15).

It was not long until his Uncle came back again. He had not been away for long, but to Lars the minutes had seemed like hours. Now God had brought the horse back to the exact spot where Lars was standing - not even a metre off course.

Farmer Baudewig helped the scared boy into the cart. Lars began to cry from exhaustion, but also out of thankfulness that the Lord Jesus had helped him. Now He would bring them both safely home.

On Christmas Eve they both still felt the shock of what had happened. Then Lars told the story of what he had experienced on the mud flats and how the picture with the Bible verse had pointed out the way of salvation to him. Afterwards, Lars was allowed to take the picture home as a precious reminder of what had happened.

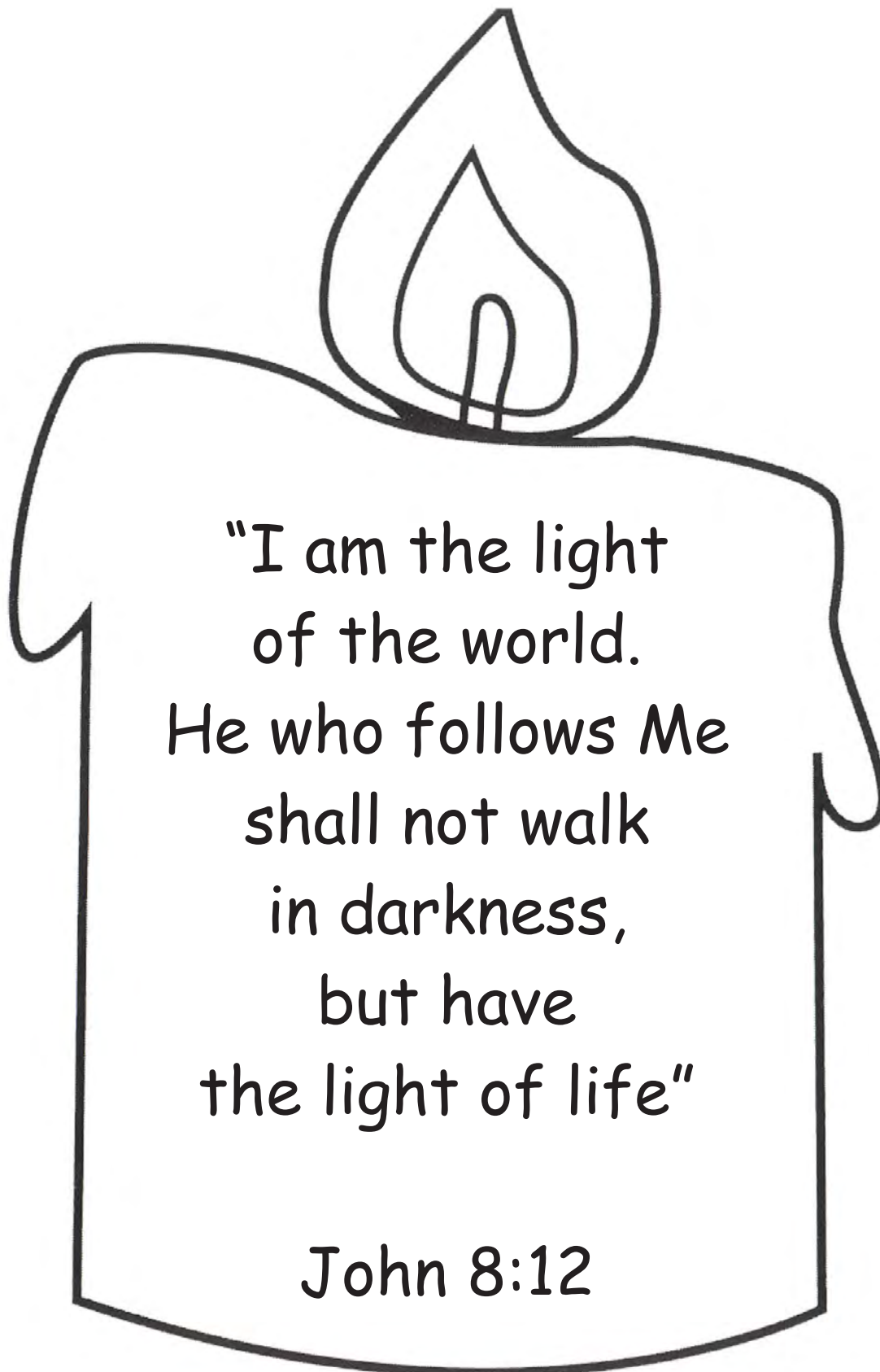
Straight after Christmas, Lars returned to the mainland on the post boat. Soon afterwards, Farmer Baudewig left Süderoog and moved to the large Hallig Island, called Hooge.

Did Lars remain loyal to the Lord Jesus? Did he keep his promise to follow Him? Yes, he could never forget his experience on the mud flats. In his home town he found a church, where he often heard about the Lord Jesus Christ, the Light of the World. Through this he was strengthened in his faith. And the picture with the Bible verse John 8:12 gave him so much joy.

Have you ever given your life over to the Lord Jesus? Or are you still living in the darkness of sin? You don't need to wait for an emergency in your life before calling out in prayer to the Lord Jesus. You can do that at any time. If you have still not asked Him into your life, it is like an emergency situation inside you, because sin separates you from God. You urgently need to be rescued from this situation. Only the Lord Jesus can rescue you from the sin in your life.

Read (or have a child read) the verse from your Bible.

## Visual for teaching memory verse





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# Memory verse handcraft

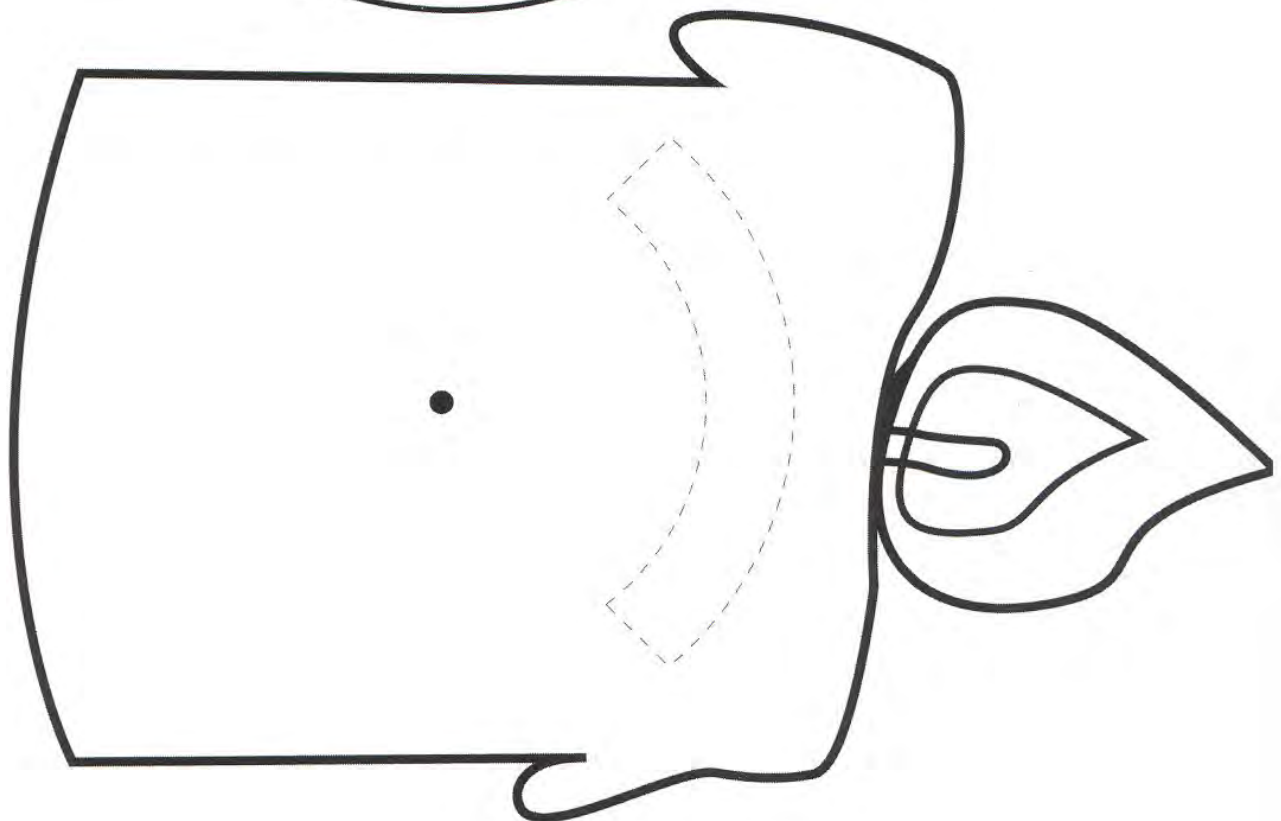


Photocopy the original onto card.

Give each child a copy to colour.

Cut around the dotted line on the candle.

Make a hole in each piece where marked with the dot. Use a paper fastener to put them together.







Copy, cut out and keep in your Bible



## Summary of steps for counselling the child who wants to come to Christ

### Make sure the child understands about

#### God

Who is God?  
God made us. He speaks to us through the Bible.  
God is holy and pure. He loves us.

#### Sin

What is sin?  
Sin is disobeying God's commands. It is against God.  
Speak about specific sins.  
The child is a sinner by nature and act. (We sin because we are sinners.)  
Sin deserves punishment.

#### The Saviour

Who alone can take away your sin?  
God the Son died on the cross for sinners.  
The Lord Jesus rose again from the dead.  
He is Lord of all.

### Explain how to be saved

Explain what the Lord wants us to do, and what He will do.  
Use a Bible verse (*John 1:12; 3:16; 6:37; Acts 16:31; Romans 6:23 or 10:13*).  
What does the Lord want you to do?  
What will the Lord do?  
Warn about difficulties.  
Ask: "Do you want to trust Christ, or would you rather wait?"  
Encourage the child to pray audibly (if ready).

### Speak about assurance of salvation

Go back to the Bible verse you used.  
Speak about a changed life.  
Tell him what the person who is truly trusting in Christ can know.

### Give (later) some advice about the Christian life

Read and obey your Bible.  
Talk to God, our heavenly Father.  
Tell others what the Lord has done for you.  
Ask God to forgive you when you sin.  
Meet with other Christians.  
Remember the Lord promises: "*I will never leave you*" (*Heb 13:5*).