

# John 8:12 Commentary

Note 4 tall (75') lighted "candelabras" in center of the Court of the Women (See [Note Below](#))  
Located in the [Court of the Women](#)

**John 8:12 Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."**

- **I am the Light:** Jn 1:4-9 Jn 3:19 Jn 9:5 Jn 12:35 Isa 9:2 42:6,7 49:6 60:1-3 Ho 6:3 Mal 4:2 Mt 4:14-16 Lu 1:78,79 2:32 Ac 13:47 26:23
- **will not walk in the darkness:** Jn 12:35,46 Ps 18:28 97:11 Isa 50:10 2Pe 2:4,17 Jude 1:6,13
- **will have the Light of life:** Jn 7:17 14:6 Job 33:28 Ps 49:19 Rev 21:24

## Related Passages:

John 1:4-9 In Him was life, and the life was the **Light** of men. 5 The **Light** shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend (or overpower) it. 6 There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness, to testify about the **Light**, so that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the **Light**, but he came to testify about the **Light**. 9 There was the true **Light** which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.

John 3:19 "This is the judgment, that the **Light** has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the **Light**, for their deeds were evil.

John 9:5 "While I am in the world, I am the **Light** of the world."

John 12:35 So Jesus said to them, "For a little while longer the **Light** is among you. Walk while you have the **Light**, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes.

John 12:46 "I have come as **Light** into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.

Isaiah 9:1-2 But there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. 2 The people who walk in darkness Will see a great **light**; Those who live in a dark land, The **light** will shine on them.

Isaiah 42:6 "I am the LORD, I have called You in righteousness, I will also hold You by the hand and watch over You, And I will appoint You as a covenant to the people, As a **light** to the nations,

Isaiah 60:1-3 Arise, shine; for your **light** has come, And the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. 2 "For behold, darkness will cover the earth And deep darkness the peoples; But the LORD will rise upon you And His glory will appear upon you. 3 "Nations will come to your **light**, And kings to the brightness of your rising.

Isaiah 60:19 "No longer will you have the sun for light by day, Nor for brightness will the moon give you light; But you will have the LORD for an everlasting **light**, And your God for your glory.

Malachi 4:2 "But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall.

Luke 2:32 A **LIGHT** OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES, And the glory of Your people Israel."

Psalms 27:1 A Psalm of David. The LORD is my **light** and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the defense of my life; Whom shall I dread?

Colossians 1:13 For He rescued us from the domain of **darkness**, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,

2 Peter 1:19 So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.

Acts 26:18 to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'

2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Psalm 19:8 The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

Psalm 119:130 The unfolding of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.

## "I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD"

**Then** (oun) in this case marks progress in the narrative. The question is progress from what? Some commentators would say this **then** marks progression from the events of John 7, especially the famous invitation to come to Him to drink on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles (Jn 7:37-39) which was followed by a division among the Jews and an aborted attempt to arrest Him. The **"then"** would follow those events and skip the famous story of the woman caught in adultery in John 7:53-8:11.

**Steven Cole** gives some excellent background on the timing of Jesus' enlightening (pun) declaration in John 8:12 - Jesus was in Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles. During that feast, as we've seen, the Jews performed a ceremony where a priest went to the Pool of Siloam, drew water in a golden pitcher, and returned in procession to the temple, where he poured it out at the base of the altar. It commemorated God's provision of water from the rock that sustained Israel in the wilderness (cf. Nu 20:8-11+). It was in connection with that ceremony that Jesus proclaimed whoever drank of Him would have rivers of living water flowing from his innermost being. At that same feast, the Jews performed another ceremony where they lit four huge candelabras or torches in the Court of the Women in the temple (**ED: [SEE DEPICTION ABOVE](#)** - *"Every evening during the Feast of Tabernacles, just after the evening sacrifice and before sunset, priests entered the Court of Women to light...giant chandelier-like lampstands."* [Insights on John](#)), commemorating the fact that the Lord had been a [pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night](#) to protect and guide Israel in that desolate desert for 40 years (cf. Ex 13:21-22+; Nu 9:15-23+). That cloud appeared on the day when Israel left Egypt, standing as a barrier between them and Pharaoh's armies on the night before they crossed the Red Sea. Then as it went with them in that wilderness, it was a graphic symbol of the fact that the Lord God was with His people. If, as we saw last week, the story of the woman caught in adultery (Jn 7:53-8:11) was not a part of John's original Gospel, then the incident before us, where Jesus claims to be the Light of the world, took place either during or just after the Feast of Tabernacles, when the spectacle of these huge torches being lit in the temple would still be fresh in people's minds. John 8:20 tells us that Jesus spoke these words in the treasury, as He taught in the temple. The treasury was the place, in the Court of the Women, where people could put their offerings into some trumpet-like receptacles. So, in the same courtyard where the torches were lit, Jesus boldly proclaimed, "I am the Light of the world." How would you have reacted if you had been a Jew listening there? How should you respond to this astounding claim today? ([Jesus: Light of the World](#))

**Jesus again spoke to them, saying** - Who is **them** to whom Jesus **again** speaks? The answer depends on how you interpret the **then** in the preceding paragraph. The last words He had spoken to the crowd in John 7 were the famous invitation in John 7:37-39. If we take John 8:1-11 as in the correct order in the Gospel (which is doubtful as discussed above), Jesus spoke only to the scribes and Pharisees and then to the woman after the former group had departed (Jn 8:9). **Them** therefore would refer to the Jewish crowd that had heard Him in Jn 7:37-39 or had heard His interaction with the legalists and the woman in Jn 8:1-11. Personally I would favor the audience here (that hears about Jesus as the Light) to be the same audience that had heard from His lips about the Living Water, but you be the judge. Either way, Jesus is in the Treasury in the Court of the Women, the most public part of the temple (Jn 8:20), either on the same day (as the "great day of the feast" Jn 7:37) or the following day.

**Henry Morris** on **I am the Light** - This is the second of the great **"I am"** statements of Christ in the gospel of John (John 6:35) which compares Him to the sun. Physically speaking, the sun is the life and light of the physical world (Genesis 1:14-16; John 1:4,9; Revelation 21:23-25; 22:5). Christ indeed did create the sun and even now sustains its life-giving radiations (Hebrews 1:3).

**I am (ego eimi) the Light (phos) of the world (kosmos)** - The use of **I Am** (the Greek [ego eimi](#)) signifies that Jesus is claiming His DEITY. And He did not say He was "a light" (as among many), but that He was THE Light, the one and only Light to give spiritual enlightenment to the spiritually dark world. **THOUGHT:** Show this passage to your skeptical friends who say He never claimed to be God! The Lord's claim to deity was emphatic being the very first thing He said in this passage. We are so used to hearing this declaration, that we fail to get a sense of the impact this statement would have had on the hearers. It sounds somewhat egocentric unless the person saying it is God. One can imagine the surprised reaction of the Jews and the shock of the religious leaders (Jn

8:13). This is the same Man who had also recently proclaimed "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst." (Jn 6:35) And then even more recently He declared "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" (Jn 7:37-38) So the same Man Who had claimed He was the bread of life and was the source of drink to the thirsty, not claimed to be the Light. Jesus' bold claims demanded a verdict! He did then and they still do today! Have you believed in Jesus as your Savior? Do not miss that Jesus does not say He is only the Light of the Jews, but of the world, for the whole world lies in spiritual darkness and needs His Light.

**Ryle** on why the world needs the **Light** - These words imply that the world needs light, and is naturally in a dark condition. It is so in a moral and spiritual point of view--and it has been so for nearly 6,000 years. In ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, in modern England, France, and Germany, the same report is true. The vast majority of men neither see nor understand the value of their souls, the true nature of God, nor the reality of a world to come! Notwithstanding all the discoveries of art and science, "darkness still covers the earth, and gross darkness the people." ([Isaiah. 60:2.](#))

**Steven Cole** points out the fascinating parallels of Jesus' claims with the nation of Israel wandering in the wilderness - Note that in John 6, Jesus is the **manna** in the wilderness who provides for His people's hunger. In John 7, Jesus is the **water** from the rock in the wilderness, providing for their thirst. In John 8, Jesus is the **pillar of fire** in the wilderness, providing protection and guidance by His presence with them. Thus Jesus is the all-sufficient Savior, providing for His people's every need, even when they are traveling through a barren wilderness on their way to the Promised Land....As I said, in the Old Testament, the Jews recognized the pillar and the cloud as the Lord (Exod. 13:21; 14:19-25). Furthermore, light is often used as a metaphor for God. Psalm 27:1 proclaims, "The Lord is my light and my salvation ...." In a prophecy about Jesus Christ (Matt. 4:16), Isaiah 9:2 predicts, "The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them." In Isaiah 42:6 & 49:6, the Lord tells His Servant, the Messiah, that He has appointed Him to be "a light to the nations" (or, "world," in John 8:12). In Isaiah 60:19-20, God says to His people, "No longer will you have the sun for light by day, nor for brightness will the moon give you light; but you will have the Lord for an everlasting light, and your God for your glory. Your sun will no longer set, nor will your moon wane; for you will have the Lord for an everlasting light." This is fulfilled in Revelation 21:23-24, where instead of the sun and moon, the nations have the Lamb as their lamp, and that Lamb is identified as "the Lord God" (22:5). Also, 1 John 1:5 tells us, "God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all." This reveals that God is absolutely pure and holy. Since Jesus is the light, He is without any sin (John 8:46; Heb. 7:26). Jesus' claim to be the Light of the world is a claim to be the Lord God in human flesh. ([Jesus: Light of the World](#))

Jesus is the image of the invisible God and the exact radiance of His nature (Heb 1:3, Col 1:15). Jesus comes from God, Who is light (1Jn1:5). "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (Jn 1:4). The Word was among men as light before the incarnation (Jn 1:9; Jn 9:5), and light came with the incarnation (Jn 3:19-21; 8:12; 12:46). Christ is light through the illuminating energy of the Spirit (Jn 14:21, 26; 16:13; 1Jn 2:20, 27), which is received through love (Jn 14:22, 23). The object of Christ's work is to make men sons of light (Jn 12:36, 46), and to endow them with the light of life (Jn 8:12).

**Light** in the Bible is a symbol of God and His holiness (Acts 9:3; 1Jn 1:5). In John "light" is closely linked with distinguishing between the true and the false, between reality and illusion. As the **Light of the world** Jesus becomes the one and ONLY source of illumination of spiritual reality. Believe in Him and we see all as it really is (Acts 26:18). Refuse to believe in Jesus and you are left with only "human standards" and spiritual darkness (Jn 3:19, 20).

According to tradition, **Light** was one of the names of the Messiah. Jesus' description as the Light may have recalled to the Jewish audience Moses' description of the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night (Ex 13:21,22, Ne 9:12). The pillar of fire represented God's presence, protection, and guidance. Jesus brings God's presence, protection, and guidance. Jesus' exclusive claim (cf Jn 9:5) as the Light of the world (Gentiles and Jews) would have startled the Pharisees and further inflamed their hatred for him.

**Bruce Barton** - In the Bible, "light" symbolizes the holiness of God (see also Psalm 27:1; 36:9; Acts 9:3; 1 John 1:5). Jesus is not merely a light or *another* light, he is *the one and only* true Light. As the Light, Jesus illumines the truth, gives people spiritual understanding, and reveals to us God himself and what he has done for us. (BORROW [John - Life Application Commentary](#))

In Jn 8:20 we are told that Jesus spoke these words in the Treasury in the Court of the Women, the most public part of the temple. The center of the Court was surrounded by large sections of stadium-like seats. In the open space of the Court sat four huge candelabra, each with four golden bowls, each one filled from a pitcher of oil by a youth of priestly descent. These were lit on the 1st night of the Feast of Tabernacles at the first ceremony called "The Illumination of the Temple". When darkness fell the candelabra were lit, and the elders danced and led the people in singing psalms before the Lord all night. The brilliance and glow from the burning flames of the huge candelabra were said to be so bright that the light could be seen throughout the whole city. It may have been against this background that Jesus cried out, "I am the Light of the world." The CANDLESTICK was to be extinguished after the feast, but His light would remain.

**John Piper** - the way Jesus is the light of the world is precisely by being one with the Father. Jesus is the light of the world because he comes from the Father and speaks for the Father and is going to the Father and is one with the Father ([I Am the Light of the World](#))

**He who** (present tense - as one's lifestyle continually) **follows** ([akoloutheo](#)) **Me** - Note that follows in the present tense speaks of our habitual practice. The only way we can continually follow Jesus is by continually jettisoning self-reliance and relying wholly on the Holy Spirit Who gives us the desire and the power to follow Jesus (Php 2:13NLT+). Note that **he who follows Me** is a great description of a disciple as this verb essentially means going in the same way or direction (as Jesus)! Mark it down (in contrast to what some popular commentators like Thomas Constable teach - see [his comment on Jn 8:31](#)) **EVERY** believer is also a disciple! Believers are not subdivided into "have's" and "have not's" but are all equal at the foot of the Cross, as followers of Jesus Christ the Lord.

**Follows** ([akoloutheo](#)) is a technical term in Hebrew and Greek that describes the relationship of a disciple to his teacher. The essence of Christianity in fact lies in those words "follow Jesus." The first thing involved in following Jesus is a cleaving to Him in genuine heart felt (not just head knowledge) trust (= obedience). Those cleaving to Him must also follow His leading and act according to His example (See the vitally important topic [Walking Like Jesus Walked!](#) You may be surprised to learn how Jesus walked for those powerful 3+ years preceding the Cross!) When we walk with Him, He promised we would never walk in **darkness!** He is our Lamp wherever we walk, always walking with us, His Spirit within us, filling (controlling) us (Eph 5:18), enabling us to "Walk by the Spirit." (Gal 5:16) When Jesus says go, I go. When He says stop, I stop. His sheep know His voice and follow Him (Jn 10:27).

**John MacArthur** on **He who follows Me** - In that context, it (**follows** - [akoloutheo](#)) has the connotation of complete submission to Jesus as Lord. God does not accept a half-hearted following of Christ—of receiving Him as Savior, but not following Him as Lord. The person who comes to Jesus comes to Him on His terms, or he does not come at all—a truth Jesus illustrated in Matthew 8:18–22. An even more striking illustration of that principle is found in Jesus' dialogue with the rich young ruler in Luke 18:18–27.... In a shocking contradiction of contemporary evangelistic principles, Jesus actually turned away an eager prospect (in Luke 18:18–27). But the Lord was not interested in making salvation artificially easy for people, but genuine. He wanted their absolute allegiance, obedience, and submission. In Luke 9:23–24 He said, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it."...Following Christ is not burdensome, as walking in the light illustrates. It is far easier than stumbling around in the dark (cf. Jer. 13:16). (See [John Commentary](#))

**Ryle** - To follow Christ is to commit ourselves wholly and entirely to Him as our only leader and Savior, and to submit ourselves to Him in every matter, both of doctrine and practice. "**Following**" is only another word for "believing." It is the same act of soul, only seen from a different point of view. As Israel followed the pillar of cloud and fire in all their journeyings--moving whenever it moved, stopping whenever it tarried, asking no questions, marching on in faith--so must a man deal with Christ. He must "follow the Lamb wherever He goes." (Rev. 14:4.)...This means "**following**" as a disciple, servant, traveller, soldier, or sheep. What the teacher is to the scholar, the master to the servant, the guide to the traveller, the general to the soldier, the shepherd to the sheep, that is Christ to true Christians. See Matt. 16:24; 19:21; John 10:27; 12:26. **Following** here, we must always remember, does not mean copying and imitating, but trusting, putting faith in another

**William Barclay** on the meaning of the Greek word for **follow** - [akoloutheo](#) has five different but closely connected meanings.

- (i) It is often used of a soldier following his captain. On the long route marches, into battle, in campaigns in strange lands, the soldier follows wherever the captain may lead. The Christian is the soldier whose commander is Christ.
- (ii) It is often used of a slave accompanying his master. Wherever the master goes the slave is in attendance upon him, always ready to spring to his service and to carry out the tasks he gives him to do. He is literally at his master's beck and call. The Christian is the slave whose joy it is always to serve Christ.
- (iii) It is often used of accepting a wise counsellor's opinion. When a man is in doubt he goes to the expert, and if he is wise he accepts the judgment he receives. The Christian is the man who guides his life and conduct by the counsel of Christ.
- (iv) It is often used of giving obedience to the laws of a city or a state. If a man is to be a useful member of any society or citizen of any community, he must agree to abide by its laws. The Christian, being a citizen of the kingdom of heaven, accepts the law of the kingdom and of Christ as the law which governs his life.
- (v) It is often used of following a teacher's line of argument, or of following the gist of someone's speech. The Christian is the man who has understood the meaning of the teaching of Christ. He has not listened in dull incomprehension or with slack inattention. He takes the message into his mind and understands, receives the

words into his memory and remembers, and hides them in his heart and obeys.

To be a follower of Christ is to give oneself body, soul and spirit into the obedience of the Master; and to enter upon that following is to walk in the light. When we walk alone we are bound to stumble and grope, for so many of life's problems are beyond our solution. When we walk alone we are bound to take the wrong way, because we have no secure map of life. We need the heavenly wisdom to walk the earthly way. The man who has a sure guide and an accurate map is the man who is bound to come in safety to his journey's end. Jesus Christ is that guide; he alone possesses the map to life. To follow him is to walk in safety through life and afterwards to enter into glory.

**Warren Wiersbe** - To "follow" the Lord Jesus means to believe on Him, to trust Him; and the results are *life* and *light* for the believer. The unsaved are walking in darkness because they love darkness (John 3:17ff). One of the major messages in this Gospel is that the spiritual light is now shining, but people cannot comprehend it—and they try to put it out (John 1:4-5). (BORROW [The Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**THOUGHT** - Jesus was THE Light, but to those who followed Him (disciples), He gave them the privilege and the power to be the Lights of the world (Mt 5:14-16+, cf Php 2:14-15+). Jesus is gone physically, but the influence of His light remains, so the question each of us needs to ask ourselves, is His light shining forth from my innermost being, like a "moon" reflecting the sun (Son)?

**Will** (absolutely) **not walk** ([peripateo](#)) **in the darkness** ([skotia](#)) - Notice again the future tense "**will**" which identifies this as a prophecy (actually a prophetic promise) from Jesus to all His followers or disciples. Next notice that Jesus first gives us the negative prophetic promise (identified by future tense "**will**"). **Not** is the strong double negative in the Greek indicating that the believer's new domain is the kingdom of light not the kingdom of darkness. It follows (pun intended) that if we are continually following the One Who is the essence of Light, we cannot walk in darkness because darkness is in essence the absence of light. **Darkness** has no existence by itself, being definable simply as an absence of light. As an aside that descriptive definition ("*no existence by itself*") could be applied to every soul without the Light of the World as their Savior, for while they have a visible, transient "existence," it is meaningless from the perspective of eternity (cf 1Jn 2:17, 1Pe 1:18, Eccl 1:2)! The world is enshrouded (a [shroud](#) is used to wrap a corpse!) in spiritual **darkness**, a symbol of evil, sin, and ignorance (Isa 9:2; Mt 4:16; 27:45; Jn 3:19). The natural man stumbles and gropes about in this world. He knows nothing other than the temporal things of this world as he sees them (cf 2Co 4:18). His only hope is the hope of living a long life before death overtakes him. He walks in **darkness**, ignorant of real life now and eternal **darkness** in the hereafter (cp. Jn 12:35, 46). Men love the darkness and hate the Light of the world because Jesus exposes their evil behavior (Jn 3:19-20).

Peter writes that in Christ we have been "called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." (1Pe 2:9) In Col 1:12-13 Paul writes believers are to be giving thanks "to the Father, Who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in **Light**. For He rescued us from the domain ([exousia](#) - the right and the might) of **darkness**, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son."

**NET Note** - The coming of Jesus into the world provokes judgment: A choosing up of sides becomes necessary. The one who comes to the light, that is, who follows Jesus, will not **walk in the darkness**. The one who refuses to come, will **walk in the darkness**. In this contrast, there are only two alternatives. So it is with a person's decision about Jesus. Furthermore, this serves as in implicit indictment of Jesus' opponents, who still **walk in the darkness**, because they refuse to come to Him. This sets up the contrast in chap. 9 between the man born blind, who receives both physical and spiritual sight, and the Pharisees (John 9:13, 15, 16) who have physical sight but remain in spiritual **darkness**.

**Ryle** - The expression "**darkness**" in the New Testament sometimes denotes sin, as 1 John 1:6, and sometimes ignorance and unbelief, as 1 Thess. 5:4. He that so follows Christ shall "not walk in darkness." He shall not be left in ignorance, like the many around him. He shall not grope in doubt and uncertainty, but shall see the way to heaven, and know where he is going. He "shall have the light of life." He shall feel within him the light of God's countenance shining on him. He shall find in his conscience and understanding a living light, which nothing can altogether quench. The lights with which many please themselves shall go out in the valley of the shadow of death, and prove worse than useless. But the light that Christ gives to every one that follows Him shall never fail.

**Henry Morris** on **walk** - This is the first New Testament reference to the spiritual "**walk**" of the believer, and it is important to note that the "**walk**" is to "follow" the steps of Jesus (cf 1Pe 2:21) and "walk in Him" (Colossians 2:6). In the Old Testament, the first reference is when Enoch and then Noah, "walked with God" (Genesis 5:24; 6:9). The believer is further commanded to "walk in the light" (1 John 1:7), "walk in wisdom" (Colossians 4:5), "walk in love" (Ephesians 5:2), "walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4), "walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:16), "walk in the truth" (3 John 4), and "walk in good works" (Ephesians 2:10). On the other hand, he is not to walk "according to the course of this world" or "as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind" (Ephesians 2:2; 4:17).

**But** - This is one of the most glorious changes of direction, when by grace God transfers us in Christ from spiritual darkness to



spiritual light.

**Will have the Light (phos) of life (zoe)** - The one who does not follow Jesus is deceived and tragically spends his or her entire earthly life in spiritual darkness, ignorant of the glorious truths of God, and then in the next life eternally separated from Him. In a word, their life ends up being an empty existence! This tragic truth should move each of us deeply as His followers to seek by the power of the Spirit (Acts 1:8) and the power of the Gospel (Ro 1:16) to snatch those around us out of the future fires that are never quenched (see Jude 1:23, Col 4:3, Ps 126:5,6) **Light of life** describes the light which springs from and issues in life, a life of fruitfulness as God intended for men and women made in His image. Not only shall followers of Jesus see Him, the **Light of life**, but we shall possess His supernatural **life**, today (Col 3:4) and forever (1Jn 3:2). Indeed, in this dark world, Christ's disciples are now the light of the world (Mt 5:14, 15, 16, Php 2:15).

**Henry Morris** on **light of Life** - Note the profound prophetic significance of this claim of Christ. It is as strong an assertion of omnipotent deity as one could imagine, but it does not sound conceited or insane as it would have if it had come from any other man. Rather, it has proved prophetically true for 2000 years. He has been the light of the world--the inspiration for the world's greatest music and art, its most dedicated hospitals and missions, its greatest and most influential nations and governments. Furthermore, millions of individuals who have followed Him have testified that He was the light of their lives as they walked, not in darkness, but in the light of life.

**Ryle** says **light of life** means "He shall possess living light. He shall have spiritual light, as much superior to the light of any lamp or even of the sun, as the living water offered to the Samaritan woman was superior to the water of Jacob's well." The spiritual light that Christ gives is independent of time or place,—is not affected by sickness or death,—burns on forever, and cannot be quenched. He that has it shall feel light within his mind, heart, and conscience,—shall see light before him on the grave, death, and the world to come,—shall have light shining round him, guiding him in his journey through life, and shall reflect light by his conduct, ways and conversation. Brentius remarks, that if a man could continually "follow" the sun, he would always be in broad daylight in every part of the globe. So it is with Christ and believers. Always following Him, they will always have light.

**Rodney Whitacre** on the **Light of life** - this deliverance is not just a rescue from darkness and a glimpse of the light, but an ongoing **life** apart from darkness through possession of **the light of life**. This pregnant phrase refers to "the light which both springs from life and issues in life; of which life is the essential principle and the necessary result" (Westcott 1908:2:3). The world lies in darkness and death because it has rebelled against God and thus broken contact with the one source of light and life. Jesus claims to be the light that brings light and life back to the world and sets it free from its bondage to sin. All the salvation that went before, such as the deliverance celebrated at this feast, was a type of this deepest and truest salvation that Jesus now offers. ([Jesus Reveals Himself as the Light of the World John 8:12-20](#))

**William Barclay** on the **Light of Life** - The light of life means two things. The Greek can mean either the light which issues from the source of life or the light which gives life. In this passage it means both. Jesus is the very light of God come among men; and he is the light which gives men life. Just as the flower can never blossom when it never sees the sunlight, so our lives can never flower with the grace and beauty they ought to have until they are irradiated with the light of the presence of Jesus.

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**I am** (1510)(eimi) **Eimí** is the usual verb of existence, meaning to be or to have existence. For example, in Jn 1:1 **eimi** is used 3 times all in the imperfect tense (Gk = "en") to describe the Word's (Jesus') continual existence, continual presence with His Father and continual existence as God.

**Ego eimi** - Jesus Himself used **ego eimi** to express His eternal self-existence (without beginning, without end) in Jn 8:58 = "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, **I am**." He was saying He was Yahweh (I Am the One Who Is). Jesus is clearly claiming that He is God! The Jehovah's Witness New World Translation (2013) translates Jn 8:58 incorrectly as "I have been" which Greek scholars say is absolutely incorrect! Compare other "**I Am**" statements by Jesus = Jn 4:26, 8:24, 28, 13:19, 18:5, 6 ["they drew back and fell to the ground!" = His Name "I Am" literally knocked an entire band of from 300-600 soldiers backward abruptly and hard onto the ground! His Name is indeed powerful!], Jn 18:8. see similar use in Ex 3:14 above). In Ge 17:1 God addresses Abram declaring "I am (**ego eimi**) God" (cp similar uses in Ge 26:24, 31:13, 46:3, Ex 3:6, 7:5, 8:18, 14:4, 18, 20:2, 29:46, etc). Note that there are about 174 uses of "**ego eimi**" in the Septuagint and 48 uses in the NT, but not all uses refer to God (e.g., Mt 14:27). There are 24 uses of **ego eimi** in John's Gospel and most do refer to the Messiah. E.g., in the first occurrence, Jesus tells the Samaritan woman "**I Am**" (**ego eimi**) (Jn 4:26) when she made a reference to the Messiah (Jn 4:25). In fact **ego eimi** introduces His great "I am" statements in John = "I am"... "the bread of life" (Jn 6:35, 41, 48, 51), "the Light of the world," (Jn 8:12), "the door" (Jn 10:7, 9), "the good shepherd" (Jn 10:11, 14), "the resurrection and the life," (Jn 11:25), "the Way and the Truth and the Life" (Jn 14:6); "the true Vine" (Jn 15:1, 5). At Paul's conversion on the Damascus Road Jesus told him "I am (**ego eimi**) Jesus Whom you are persecuting." (Acts 9:5). In the final use of **ego eimi** in

Scripture Jesus affirms "**I am** the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star." (Rev 22:16)

**Here are all the occurrences of ego eimi in the New Testament**- NOTE THAT WHILE NOT ALL USES OF THIS PHRASE REFER TO JESUS, MOST OF THEM DO -- Matt. 14:27; Matt. 22:32; Matt. 24:5; Matt. 26:22; Matt. 26:25; Mk. 6:50; Mk. 13:6; Mk. 14:62; Lk. 1:19; Lk. 21:8; Lk. 22:70; Lk. 24:39; Jn. 4:26; Jn. 6:20; Jn. 6:35; Jn. 6:41; Jn. 6:48; Jn. 6:51; Jn. 8:12; Jn. 8:18; Jn. 8:24; Jn. 8:28; Jn. 8:58; Jn. 9:9; Jn. 10:7; Jn. 10:9; Jn. 10:11; Jn. 10:14; Jn. 11:25; Jn. 13:19; Jn. 14:6; Jn. 15:1; Jn. 15:5; Jn. 18:5; Jn. 18:6; Jn. 18:8; Acts 9:5; Acts 10:21; Acts 18:10; Acts 22:3; Acts 22:8; Acts 26:15; Acts 26:29; Rev. 1:8; Rev. 1:17; Rev. 2:23; Rev. 21:6; Rev. 22:16

**Light** (5457) **phos** from **pháo** = to shine) is defined by many lexicons as that which contrasts with darkness. **Light** is the medium of illumination that makes sight possible or makes things visible. In Scripture **phos** can refer to literal, physical light (Ge 1:3), but often is used metaphorically or symbolically, the greatest metaphorical use being used to symbolize Jesus as "the **Light** of the world." (Jn 8:12). See the [Dictionary of Biblical Imagery](#) for over 12 pages of discussion of the imagery associated with light.

**Phos in John** - Jn. 1:4; Jn. 1:5; Jn. 1:7; Jn. 1:8; Jn. 1:9; Jn. 3:19; Jn. 3:20; Jn. 3:21; Jn. 5:35; Jn. 8:12; Jn. 9:5; Jn. 11:9; Jn. 11:10; Jn. 12:35; Jn. 12:36; Jn. 12:46

**Related Resource:** [Dictionary of Biblical Imagery](#) for over 12 pages of discussion of the imagery associated with **light**.

**J D Watson - Phos** - In Classical Greek usage, the basic meaning of phōs (English phosphorus, etc.) is light and brightness and conveys the ideas of sunlight, daylight, torchlight, firelight, and so forth. In other words, it refers to light itself, not the source of light, such as the sun, a torch, fire, or a lamp. Even early in secular usage, it was also used figuratively "to mean the sphere of ethical good, whereas misdeeds are said to take place in darkness."<sup>140</sup> All that was carried over into NT usage but intensified all the more by its identification with Christ.

The Christian, therefore, is to walk in light. Since we were once "darkness, but now are ... light in the Lord," we are to "walk as children of light" (Eph. 5:8). In other words, we conduct ourselves according to light, the light of Christ and His Word. As He is the Light (John 1:4; 8:12) and is the Word who became flesh (1:14), then it is His Word in which we are to walk.

What seems obvious about darkness and light is that they cannot coexist. If you turn on a light in a dark room, darkness flees. But it's not as obvious in practical application. People talk much about "gray areas" of conduct, avoiding the terms right or wrong and truth or error. But the Scripture contains no such "gray areas." Conduct is either moral or immoral, good or bad, true or false.

What, then, are the "attributes" of light? Generally speaking, light pictures two basic thoughts.

First, in regard to the intellect, light pictures truth. So, to walk according to light means that we walk according to truth. No longer are we ignorant, for the truth of Jesus Christ is in us. Moreover, walking according to light means that we are growing in the knowledge of Christ day by day.

Second, in regard to morality, light pictures holiness. To walk according to light means that we live a pure, holy life; we walk as holy people. All that we say and do shines forth the light of Christ that is in us (cf. Eph. 4:17–32). (A Word for the Day)

**World** (2889) (**kosmos** related to the verb **kosmeo** = to order or adorn, to put in order [Mt 25:7 = "trimmed"], to adorn literally [1Ti 2:9], to adorn figuratively [Titus 2:9+]) means essentially something that is well-arranged, that which has order or something arranged harmoniously. **Kosmos** refers to an ordered system or a system where order prevails. In the NT **kosmos** refers to this present evil man-centered (humanistic) world-system ruled and directed by Satan (1Jn 5:19, Jn 12:31) and adamantly opposed to God in every respect! Kosmos represents the self-centered, godless value system and mores of fallen mankind. The goal of the **world** is self-glory, self-fulfillment, self-indulgence, self-satisfaction, and every other form of self-serving. In this sense **kosmos** is much like the Greek word for **flesh** (**sarx**), which can be a neutral word, but which many times in the NT takes on an evil connotation.

**John's use of kosmos in his Gospel** - Jn. 1:9; Jn. 1:10; Jn. 1:29; Jn. 3:16; Jn. 3:17; Jn. 3:19; Jn. 4:42; Jn. 6:14; Jn. 6:33; Jn. 6:51; Jn. 7:4; Jn. 7:7; Jn. 8:12; Jn. 8:23; Jn. 8:26; Jn. 9:5; Jn. 9:39; Jn. 10:36; Jn. 11:9; Jn. 11:27; Jn. 12:19; Jn. 12:25; Jn. 12:31; Jn. 12:46; Jn. 12:47; Jn. 13:1; Jn. 14:17; Jn. 14:19; Jn. 14:22; Jn. 14:27; Jn. 14:30; Jn. 14:31; Jn. 15:18; Jn. 15:19; Jn. 16:8; Jn. 16:11; Jn. 16:20; Jn. 16:21; Jn. 16:28; Jn. 16:33; Jn. 17:5; Jn. 17:6; Jn. 17:9; Jn. 17:11; Jn. 17:13; Jn. 17:14; Jn. 17:15; Jn. 17:16; Jn. 17:18; Jn. 17:21; Jn. 17:23; Jn. 17:24; Jn. 17:25; Jn. 18:20; Jn. 18:36; Jn. 18:37; Jn. 21:25

**Related Resource:** [An Out-of-this-World Experience A Look at Kosmos in the Johannine Literature](#)

**Follows** (190) **akoloutheo** from **a** = expresses union with, likeness + **keleuthos** = a road, way) means to walk the same road (Ponder that simple definition dear believer - Am I willing to walk the same road as Jesus?) Literally to follow (like the crowds followed Jesus) and in a figurative sense to follow Jesus as a disciple. To follow (closely) and was used of soldiers, servants and pupils. To go after someone or something (not always as a true disciple however as we see with the crowds who physically followed Jesus, following without a willingness to commit to Him! see John 6:60-65, 66+) Early in the history of the Greek language **akoloutheo** came to mean to imitate or follow someone's example. This dual meaning colored the New Testament use of our word **akoloutheo**. Note that most of the uses of **akoloutheo** are in the Gospels and thus this verb is firmly linked with the life of Jesus, for He is the One to follow.

**Mounce** says "following is not only a description of movement, but it is also a metaphor of salvation. To follow Christ means to accompany Him to learn from Him, and to respond to His voice.

**Lawrence Richards** - In the NT, "**to follow**" is from the Greek **akoloutheō**. It is often used in narrative passages with a common, descriptive meaning. But it also has a special spiritual impact, linked with discipleship. The Christian disciple is one who has chosen to follow Jesus. The disciple expresses that basic commitment by daily choices of obedience to the Lord. **Akoloutheō** expresses a disciple's commitment in quite a number of NT passages (Mt 4:20, 22; 8:19, 22; 9:9; 10:38; 16:24; 19:21, 27, 28; Mk 1:18; 2:14; 8:34; 10:21, 28; Lk 5:11, 27, 28; 9:23, 57, 59, 61; 18:22, 28; Jn 1:43; 8:12; 10:4, 5, 27; 12:26; 21:19, 22; Rev 14:4) (BORROW [Expository Dictionary of Bible Words](#))

**TDNT** - In Greek the ordinary sense of following led to that of intellectual, moral, and religious following. (IN NT) External following is still involved (cf. Matt. 8:19; Mark 10:28) but with a total commitment and in an exclusive relation to one who is recognized as not just a teacher but the Messiah. This discipleship brings participation in salvation (Mark 10:17; Luke 9:61-62; Jn. 8:12; Rev. 14:4), but also in suffering (Matt. 8:19-20; Mark 8:34; Jn. 12:25-26). The strength of the figurative use may have been in the presence of sayings like Matt. 10:38, the possibility of discipleship without literally going after Jesus, and the active stress which rules out the use of a noun to express the concept. Since it is the historical Jesus that is followed, it is natural that other terms should be found in the other NT writings to describe the relation to the exalted Lord and his Spirit. Rev. 14:4 simply applies Matt. 10:38 to a particular group. (BORROW [Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament : abridged in one volume](#))

**Akoloutheo** - 86v- Matt. 4:20; Matt. 4:22; Matt. 4:25; Matt. 8:1; Matt. 8:10; Matt. 8:19; Matt. 8:22; Matt. 8:23; Matt. 9:9; Matt. 9:19; Matt. 9:27; Matt. 10:38; Matt. 12:15; Matt. 14:13; Matt. 16:24; Matt. 19:2; Matt. 19:21; Matt. 19:27; Matt. 19:28; Matt. 20:29; Matt. 20:34; Matt. 21:9; Matt. 26:58; Matt. 27:55; Mk. 1:18; Mk. 2:14; Mk. 2:15; Mk. 3:7; Mk. 5:24; Mk. 6:1; Mk. 8:34; Mk. 9:38; Mk. 10:21; Mk. 10:28; Mk. 10:32; Mk. 10:52; Mk. 11:9; Mk. 14:13; Mk. 14:54; Mk. 15:41; Lk. 5:11; Lk. 5:27; Lk. 5:28; Lk. 7:9; Lk. 9:11; Lk. 9:23; Lk. 9:49; Lk. 9:57; Lk. 9:59; Lk. 9:61; Lk. 18:22; Lk. 18:28; Lk. 18:43; Lk. 22:10; Lk. 22:39; Lk. 22:54; Lk. 23:27; Jn. 1:37; Jn. 1:38; Jn. 1:40; Jn. 1:43; Jn. 6:2; Jn. 8:12; Jn. 10:4; Jn. 10:5; Jn. 10:27; Jn. 11:31; Jn. 12:26; Jn. 13:36; Jn. 13:37; Jn. 18:15; Jn. 20:6; Jn. 21:19; Jn. 21:20; Jn. 21:22; Acts 12:8; Acts 12:9; Acts 13:43; Acts 21:36; 1 Co. 10:4; Rev. 6:8; Rev. 14:4; Rev. 14:8; Rev. 14:9; Rev. 14:13; Rev. 19:14

**Walk** (Behave, Conduct) (4043) **peripateo** from **peri** = about, around + **pateo** = walk, tread) means literally to walk around (walk around in a complete circuit or full circle), to go here and there walking, to tread all around. Fig = live or pass one's life (by far most common NT use) walking about in the sphere of the truth or in darkness. In its figurative sense, **peripateo** refers to an habitual way or bent of life, to a life-style. (See [Spurgeon's comments on what it means to walk](#)) Ray Stedman commenting on [Col 3:1-17] writes re "walk": That (referring to Col3:1-4) is the true basis for living a Christian life. Scripture calls it "walking with the Lord." I like that figure because a walk, of course, merely consists of two simple steps, repeated over and over again. It is not a complicated thing. In the same way, the Christian life is a matter of taking two steps, one step after another. Then you are beginning to walk. Those two steps follow in this passage. Paul describes them as, "Put off the old man," and "put on the new." Then repeat them. That is all. Keep walking through every day like that. That is how Scripture exhorts us to live.

**Peripateo in John's writings** - Jn. 1:36; Jn. 5:8; Jn. 5:9; Jn. 5:11; Jn. 5:12; Jn. 6:19; Jn. 6:66; Jn. 7:1; Jn. 8:12; Jn. 10:23; Jn. 11:9; Jn. 11:10; Jn. 11:54; Jn. 12:35; Jn. 21:18; 1 Jn. 1:6; 1 Jn. 1:7; 1 Jn. 2:6; 1 Jn. 2:11; 2 Jn. 1:4; 2 Jn. 1:6; 3 Jn. 1:3; 3 Jn. 1:4; Rev. 2:1; Rev. 3:4; Rev. 9:20; Rev. 16:15; Rev. 21:24

**Darkness** (4653) **skotia** from **skotos** = darkness) means literal darkness in some NT uses (Jn 6:17, 20:1), but more often (14/16x) is used figuratively to refer to spiritual darkness. In every NT figurative use, darkness is contrasted with light in all but one passage (1Jn 2:11). Darkness has no existence by itself, being definable simply as an absence of light. In the spiritual sense darkness describes both the state and works of a person. It symbolizes evil and sin, everything that life should **not** be and everything that a person should **not** do! People who think that the Lord does not see what they do in the dark are mistaken (Ezek



8:12) "Considered in itself **darkness** it a strongly negative image in human experience. It is physically oppressive; it is the natural environment for a host of evil happenings; and it is associated with death, imprisonment and ultimate evil. Darkness is in principle associated with evil, opposed to God's purposes of order and goodness in the universe and in human society....Darkness in the Bible is not equal in power to light. " (From [Dictionary Of Biblical Imagery](#))

**Skotia** - 13v - Matt. 4:16; Matt. 10:27; Lk. 12:3; Jn. 1:5; Jn. 6:17; Jn. 8:12; Jn. 12:35; Jn. 12:46; Jn. 20:1; 1 Jn. 1:5; 1 Jn. 2:8; 1 Jn. 2:9; 1 Jn. 2:11

**Related Resource: 7 page discussion of darkness in [Dictionary Of Biblical Imagery](#)** (page 678) Here is a brief excerpt - "**Darkness as a Spiritual Force.** The power of darkness in the NT is so vivid that it is more than a symbol, becoming nothing less than a spiritual reality. Jesus himself spoke of "the power of darkness" (Lk 22:53), and Paul spoke of how Christians do not battle against physical enemies but against "the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places" (Eph 6:12 NRSV). The context into which darkness is here placed is the cosmic spiritual battle between good and evil, God and Satan. "What partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness?" Paul asks. "Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness? What agreement does Christ have with Beliar?" (2 Cor 6:14–15 NRSV). The world itself is divided into "children of light" and children "of the night or of darkness" (1 Thess 5:5). The ultimate power of darkness was manifested with the temporary triumph of evil as Christ hung dying on the cross-a triumph of evil that took the form of a three-hour darkness that left people awestruck (Mt 27:45; Mk 15:33; Lk 23:44)."

**Life** ([2222](#)) **zoe** in Scripture is used (1) to refer to **physical life** (Ro 8:38+, 1Co 3:22, Php 1:20+, Jas 4:14, etc) but more often to (2) to **supernatural life** in contrast to a life subject to eternal death (Jn 3:36, see all 43 uses of "eternal life" below). This quality of life speaks of fullness of life which alone belongs to God the Giver of life and is available to His children now (Ro 6:4+, Ep 4:18+) as well as in eternity future (Mk 10:30, Titus 1:2+ on Eternal Life).

**Zao in John's writings** - Jn. 1:4; Jn. 3:15; Jn. 3:16; Jn. 3:36; Jn. 4:14; Jn. 4:36; Jn. 5:24; Jn. 5:26; Jn. 5:29; Jn. 5:39; Jn. 5:40; Jn. 6:27; Jn. 6:33; Jn. 6:35; Jn. 6:40; Jn. 6:47; Jn. 6:48; Jn. 6:51; Jn. 6:53; Jn. 6:54; Jn. 6:63; Jn. 6:68; Jn. 8:12; Jn. 10:10; Jn. 10:28; Jn. 11:25; Jn. 12:25; Jn. 12:50; Jn. 14:6; Jn. 17:2; Jn. 17:3; Jn. 20:31; 1 Jn. 1:1; 1 Jn. 1:2; 1 Jn. 2:25; 1 Jn. 3:14; 1 Jn. 3:15; 1 Jn. 5:11; 1 Jn. 5:12; 1 Jn. 5:13; 1 Jn. 5:16; 1 Jn. 5:20; Rev. 2:7; Rev. 2:10; Rev. 3:5; Rev. 7:17; Rev. 11:11; Rev. 13:8; Rev. 16:3; Rev. 17:8; Rev. 20:12; Rev. 20:15; Rev. 21:6; Rev. 21:27; Rev. 22:1; Rev. 22:2; Rev. 22:14; Rev. 22:17; Rev. 22:19

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### Background to Jesus' Declaration in John 8:12 - from [William Barclay](#)

The scene of this argument with the Jewish authorities was in the Temple treasury, which was in the [Court of the Women](#). The first Temple court was the [Court of the Gentiles \(another source\)](#); the second was the [Court of the Women](#). It was so called because women might not pass beyond it unless they were actually about to offer sacrifice on the altar which was in the Court of the Priests. Round the [Court of the Women](#) there was a colonnade or porch; and, in that porch, set against the wall, there were thirteen treasure chests into which people dropped their offerings. These were called The Trumpets because they were shaped like trumpets, narrow at the top and swelling out towards the foot.

The thirteen treasure chests all had their allotted offering. Into the first two were dropped the [half shekels which every Jew had to pay towards the upkeep of the Temple](#). Into the third and fourth were dropped sums which would purchase the two pigeons which a woman had to offer for her purification after the birth of a child (Leviticus 12:8). Into the fifth were put contributions towards the cost of the wood which was needed to keep the altar fire alight. Into the sixth were dropped contributions towards the cost of the incense which was used at the Temple services. Into the seventh went contributions towards the upkeep of the golden vessels which were used at these services. Sometimes a man or a family set apart a certain sum to make some trespass- or thank-offering; into the remaining six trumpets people dropped any money which remained after such an offering had been made, or anything extra which they wished to offer.

Clearly the Temple treasury ([SEE DEPICTION](#)) would be a busy place, with a constant flow of worshippers coming and going. There would be no better place to collect an audience of devout people and to teach them than the Temple treasury.

In this passage Jesus makes the great claim: **"I am the Light of the World."** It is very likely that the background against which he made it made it doubly vivid and impressive. The festival with which John connects these discourses is the **Festival of Tabernacles** (John 7:2+). We have already seen ( John 7:37+) how its ceremonies lent drama to Jesus' claim to give to men the living water. But there was another ceremony connected with this festival.

On the evening of its first day there was a ceremony called The Illumination of the Temple ([see note below](#)). It took place in the

[Court of the Women](#). The court was surrounded with deep galleries, erected to hold the spectators. In the centre four great candelabra were prepared. When the dark came the four great candelabra were lit and, it was said, they sent such a blaze of light throughout Jerusalem that every courtyard was lit up with their brilliance. Then all night long, until cock-crow the next morning, the greatest and the wisest and the holiest men in Israel danced before the Lord and sang psalms of joy and praise while the people watched. Jesus is saying:

*"You have seen the blaze of the Temple illuminations piercing the darkness of the night. I am the Light of the World, and, for the man who follows me there will be light, not only for one exciting night, but for all the pathway of his life. The light in the Temple is a brilliant light, but in the end it flickers and dies. I am the Light which lasts forever."*

#### NOTES:

**THE ILLUMINATION OF THE TEMPLE** (Source: [Israel My Glory article - The Feast of Tabernacles](#)) - A second fascinating ceremony associated with the Feast of Tabernacles involved lights. Each afternoon of the seven days, priests and pilgrims gathered at the [Court of the Women](#). Four large oil lamps illuminated the court. It was said that the light from these lamps was so bright it penetrated every courtyard in Jerusalem.

As the women watched from the upper terraces, the *"men of piety and good works used to dance before the oil lamps with burning torches in their hands, singing songs and praises."* Meanwhile, *"countless levites played on harps, lyres, cymbals and trumpets and instruments of music"* (Mishnah Sukkot 5:4). The light festivities continued all night until dawn.

The illumination from these imposing Temple lamps symbolized two realities. The first was the reality of the **"Light of all Lights"**— the [Shekinah Glory](#)—the visible presence of God that filled the first Temple, which Solomon built (1Ki 8:10–11). The second was **Ha'or Gadol (the Great Light)** Who would soon come and bring light to those who were spiritually dead and dwelling in darkness (Isaiah 9:2+).

Jesus was at the Temple. Perhaps it was during the light celebration or when the lights were extinguished on the eighth day that He said for all to hear, **"I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life"** (Jn. 8:12). He proclaimed two truths with this statement:

(1) He is the **"Great Light"** who the prophet Isaiah said would come, and

(2) He is **God in the flesh and the Glory of the Temple** (cf. Jn. 1:14+). (ED: NOTE THAT THE SHEKINAH GLORY DEPARTED IN EZEKIEL 8:1-11:25+ [\[SEE DEPICTION OF THE PROGRESSIVE DEPARTURE OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD FROM SOLOMON'S TEMPLE\]](#) AND HAD BEEN ABSENT FOR MORE THAN 400 YEARS. NOW THE GLORY HAD RETURNED TO THE TEMPLE!!! - John 1:14+.)

The response was threefold. Some religious people rejected Him (Jn. 8:13), others were inquisitive enough to ask Him for more information (Jn. 8:25), and still others believed and received him (Jn. 8:30) (ED: BUT WAS THEIR BELIEF UNTO SALVATION? SEE COMMENTARY ON THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES John 8:31-59). The joy associated with the lights and water rituals of the Feast of Tabernacles anticipated Jesus' coming and bringing light and life to a dark, sinful world.

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#### Shine!

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

Today's Scripture: Matthew 5:14-16

Author Anne Lamott once wrote that the people she admires have "purpose, heart, balance, gratitude, joy. . . . They follow a brighter light than the glimmer of their own candle; they are part of something beautiful."

In my experience, such people are not simply religious. They are committed disciples of Christ. Jesus explained why His followers have a sort of luminous quality. "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). Believing in Jesus as our Savior, we now can light up the world. We are told, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

This doesn't mean we must always display an artificial cheerfulness. Many of us don't possess a sunny disposition. We may struggle with moods of depression. We may have to battle melancholy. But in the Holy Spirit's power, we can be like the Christians to whom Paul wrote, "You shine as lights in the world" (Philippians 2:15). As Francis of Assisi put it: "Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace! Where there is hatred, let me sow love; . . . where there is darkness, light."

Just as the moon reflects the radiance of the sun, so we who believe and follow the Savior can reflect Him who is the light of the world. By: [Vernon Grounds](#) ([Click to go to the full devotional](#) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

There is sunshine in my soul today,  
More glorious and bright  
Than glows in any earthly sky,  
For Jesus is my light.  
—Hewitt

A world in darkness needs the light of the gospel.

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## The Light Of The World

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

Today's Scripture: 1 John 2:7-11

One dark and ominous night during World War II, a US aircraft carrier was plowing through heavy seas in the South Pacific. All lights were out because of enemy submarines. One plane was missing. Somewhere in that pitch-black sky it was circling in a seemingly futile search for the carrier—its only landing place, its only hope of not being swallowed up by the giant ocean. The ship's captain, knowing the terrible risk involved, gave the order, "Light up the ship." Soon the plane zoomed onto the deck like a homing pigeon.

At Bethlehem, knowing the risk, God gave the command, "Light up the world." Then Jesus was born. A new and radiant light began to shine, pushing back the darkness of the world, of spiritual ignorance, and of sin and despair. Like a ship lit up in an otherwise darkened sea of sinful humanity, Christ came as "the light of the world" (John 8:12). John wrote, "The darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining" (1 John 2:8). When Jesus the Savior entered this world, it was like the sunrise breaking radiantly over the horizon of human history (Luke 1:78-79).

In fathomless grace, God allowed His Son to die on the cross to save us from eternal darkness. What a blessed message for Christmas—and every day of the year! By: [Vernon Grounds](#) ([Click to go to the full devotional](#) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Long ago in Bethlehem  
One cold and starry night,  
Jesus came from heaven above  
To bring us love and light.  
—Fitzhugh

Without the light of Jesus, we would be in the dark about God.

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## A Light In The Darkness

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

Today's Scripture: Luke 2:25-33

An artist was painting a winter scene. Snow blanketed the ground and the pine trees. Night was falling, and the landscape was enveloped in semi-darkness. A log cabin was barely visible in the shadows. The whole scene was one of gloom.

Then the artist used some yellow tints to put the cheerful glow of a lamp in one of the cabin windows. That lone light, its golden rays reflecting on the snow, completely transformed the impression given by the painting. In contrast to the cold darkness of the surrounding forest, that light in the window created a warm feeling of love and security.

What happened on that canvas is a striking portrayal of one of the most dramatic events of all history. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem's stable, a light was placed in this sin-darkened world. The apostle John testified, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4).

During this week, as we commemorate the birth of the Lord Jesus, let's be mindful of how much brighter this world is because He came into it. Jesus declared, "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).

How has Jesus brightened your life? By: [Richard DeHaan](#) ([Click to go to the full devotional](#) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.) ([See related devotional thoughts by Ken Petersen](#), Our Daily Bread author)

The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin,  
The Light of the world is Jesus;  
Like sunshine at noonday His glory shone in,  
The Light of the world is Jesus.  
—Bliss

Without the light of Jesus, we would be in the dark about God.

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### Ray Pritchard - To Bring Light to the World

“Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’” (John 8:12).

In 1646 the Dutch artist Rembrandt created a painting called “The Adoration of the Shepherds.” It depicts his vision of what it was like for the shepherds to see the baby Jesus. The painting is dark because it is a night scene inside a barn. The dark tones force the viewer to study the images carefully. In the center is the Babe in the feeding trough. Mary is by his side, Joseph not far away. The shepherds are gathered around, intently studying the baby whose birth was announced by the angelic choir. If you look into the gloom, you can see outlines of the sheep. The shepherds couldn’t leave their sheep outside so they brought them into the barn with them. To the right a rickety ladder leans on a crossbeam. Next to the ladder is a rooster.

Soon it hits you that the ladder and crossbeam make the dim outline of a cross. The rooster is a symbol of betrayal in the distant future. Even in this joyous moment, the cross looms over the baby Jesus. But the most significant feature is the light. Unlike other Renaissance artists, Rembrandt didn’t paint Jesus as an angel with a halo. He is a very normal, very human baby. All is dark in the painting except for the baby in the manger. The light isn’t shining on the baby; it’s shining out from him. This was Rembrandt’s way of saying that all hope and light shines from the manger—lighting up a darkened world. This beloved Christmas carol says it well:

Silent night, holy night,  
Son of God, love’s pure light  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Is there hope in the world? Yes! Hope invaded the world 2000 years ago at Bethlehem. If we want that hope to invade our lives, we must do what the shepherds did so long ago. We must come to Bethlehem and bow before the newborn King. Hope is available but only to those who will humble themselves and bow in faith before the Lord Jesus Christ.

Will you bow before him and crown him as your King?

Lord Jesus, there will always be room in my heart for you! Amen.

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### Humble Stars

You shine as lights in the world. —Philippians 2:15

Today’s Scripture: Philippians 2:1-18

Our culture elevates certain people to the category of “star” because of their ability in sports, music, acting, or some other talent. The stars who are often appreciated and loved the most, though, are those who accept their popularity graciously and maintain humility despite their greatness. They are humble stars.

Followers of Christ are to be stars of another kind. Jesus said that He is “the light of the world” (John 8:12). We too are to shine “as lights in the world” by being “blameless and harmless, children of God without fault” (Philippians 2:15). That’s how we stand out in the dark, sinful world around us.

We can also look to Jesus as our model of humility. Although He had every right to hold on to His high position in heaven with God, He “made Himself of no reputation,” the apostle Paul wrote (v.7). He became not only a man but a servant. What a lowly position for the Creator of heaven and earth!

Jesus is our example of genuine servanthood, yet He is the brightest Star of the universe. As we become like Him, we will be bright and shining stars, and people will be drawn to Christ through our humble service.

Is your light shining brightly? —[Dave Branon](#) ([Click to go to the full devotional](#) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

I want my life to shine for Jesus  
So that everywhere I go  
The watching world will see He loves them  
And His saving grace will know.  
—Hess

You can be too big for God to use, but you can't be too small.

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## THE GIFT OF LIGHT

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

Sir Christopher Wren designed and built more than 50 church buildings in London during the late 1600s. His design style had two main features—the first of which was sturdy, tall steeples. The second, however, was more profound. Wren was convinced that all of the windows in his churches must use clear glass as opposed to the stained glass so popular in churches of that era. In part his reason for the clear glass is found in these words attributed to him: “God’s greatest gift to man is light.” Allowing light to cover people as they worshipped was, to Wren, a celebration of that gift.

In the Genesis account, on the first day of creation God made light (1:3). The light God created is even more than just a means by which to see. It’s a picture of what Christ brought when He entered this darkened world. In John 8:12, our Lord said, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.” To the follower of Christ, light is one of the great reminders of the character of our Saviour and the quality of the life He has given us through His sacrifice on the cross.

Wren was right. God’s greatest gift to man is light—Jesus Christ, the Light of the world!

JESUS CAME TO GIVE LIGHT TO A DARK WORLD.

AUTHOR Bill Crowder ([Click to go to the full devotional](#) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

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## A Lantern Lit By Christ

I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness. — John 8:12

Today’s Scripture: 2 Corinthians 4:1-6

In Benjamin Franklin’s day the streets of Philadelphia were dark after sunset. Nighttime pedestrians had to walk cautiously to avoid rocks and holes.

Franklin decided to set a good example for his fellow citizens by placing a lantern outside his home. As people stumbled down his street at night, they would come to that oasis of light and realize what a blessing it was. Soon other Philadelphians were putting up their own lanterns. After sunset the whole village became a place of illuminated safety.

The world around us is dark with spiritual ignorance. For multitudes of people, the aimlessness of their existence leads to unspoken despair.

We can’t single-handedly drive back the darkness everywhere, but we can do something significant. We can let our redeemed, Christ-ignited lives serve as lanterns of light. Our Savior commands us, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Mt. 5:16).

Instead of bemoaning the darkness, we can show the way to those around us. As Christ shines through us, lost souls stumbling in



spiritual darkness will be attracted to Him who is the Light of the world. [Vernon Grounds](#) ([Click to go to the full devotional](#) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

We've a Savior to show to the nations,  
Who the path of sorrow has trod,  
That all of the world's great peoples  
Might come to the truth of God.  
—Nichol

The smallest light still shines in the darkest night.

---

## Let There Be Light

God said, "Let there be light." Genesis 1:3

Today's Scripture & Insight: Genesis 1:1–5

In my daughter's earliest days, I often named for her the things she encountered. I'd identify objects or allow her to touch something unfamiliar and say the word for her, bringing understanding—and vocabulary—to the vast world she was exploring. Though my husband and I might naturally have expected (or hoped) her first word would be Mama or Daddy, she surprised us with an entirely different first word: her small mouth murmured light one day—a sweet, mispronounced echo of the word light I'd just shared with her.

Light is one of God's first words recorded for us in the Bible. As the Spirit of God hovered over a dark, formless, and empty Earth, God introduced light into His creation, saying, "Let there be light" (Genesis 1:3). He said the light was good, which the rest of Scripture bears out: the psalmist explains that God's words illuminate our understanding (Psalm 119:130), and Jesus refers to Himself as "the light of the world," the giver of the light of life (John 8:12).

God's first utterance in the work of creation was to give light. That wasn't because He needed light to do His work; no, the light was for us. Light enables us to see Him and to identify His fingerprints on the creation around us, to discern what is good from what is not, and to follow Jesus one step at a time in this vast world. [Kirsten Holmberg](#) ([Click to go to the full devotional](#) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

In what area of your life do you most need God's light right now? How has His light helped you in the past?

Thank You, Jesus, for being the light of life, who illuminates the path for me every day.

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## Reflecting the Son

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. John 1:5

Today's Scripture & Insight: Matthew 5:14-16

Due to its location among sheer mountains and its northern latitude, Rjukan, Norway, does not see natural sunlight from October to March. To lighten up the town, the citizens installed large mirrors on the mountainside to reflect the sunrays and beam sunlight into the town square. The continuous glow is made possible because the giant mirrors rotate with the rising and setting sun.

I like to think of the Christian life as a similar scenario. Jesus said His followers are "the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14). John the disciple wrote that Christ the true light "shines in the darkness" (John 1:5). So too, Jesus invites us to reflect our light into the darkness around us: "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). That is a call for us to show love in the face of hatred, patience in response to trouble, and peace in moments of conflict. As the apostle Paul reminds us, "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light" (Eph. 5:8).

Jesus also said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). Our light is a reflection of Jesus the Son. Just as without the sun the large mirrors of Rjukan would have no light to reflect, so too we can do nothing without Jesus. [Lawrence Darmani](#) ([Click to go to the full devotional](#) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Teach us, Lord, what it is to reflect Your light, especially when life's demands can tempt us to live selfishly. Help us today to live in

Your love.

Reflect the Son and shine for Him.

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## Leave the Light On

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Matthew 5:14

Today's Scripture & Insight: Matthew 5:13–16

A hotel chain's commercial featured one little building standing amidst a dark night. Nothing else was around. The only light in the scene came from a small lamp near the door on the porch of the building. The bulb cast enough illumination for a visitor to walk up the steps and enter the building. The commercial ended with the phrase, "We'll leave the light on for you."

A porch light is akin to a welcome sign, reminding weary travelers that there's a comfortable place still open where they can stop and rest. The light invites those passing by to come on in and escape from the dark, weary journey.

Jesus says the lives of those who believe in Him should resemble that of a welcoming light. He told His followers, "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden" (Matthew 5:14). As believers, we're to illuminate a dark world.

As He directs and empowers us, "[others] may see [our] good deeds and glorify [our] Father in heaven" (v. 16). And as we leave our lights on, they will feel welcomed to come to us to learn more about the one true Light of the World—Jesus (John 8:12). In a weary and dark world, His light always remains on.

Have you left your light on? As Jesus shines through you today, others may see and begin radiating His light too. [Katara Patton](#) ([Click to go to the full devotional](#) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

In what ways can you shine your light for Jesus today? What can prevent you from shining for Him?

Jesus, help me to shine brightly so that others may be drawn to You.

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## Darkness and Light

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. John 8:12

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 3:1–2, 16–20

As I sat in the courtroom, I witnessed several examples of the brokenness of our world: a daughter estranged from her mother; a husband and wife who'd lost the love they once had and now shared only bitterness; a husband who yearned to be reconciled with his wife and to be reunited with his children. They desperately needed changed hearts, healed wounds, and for God's love to prevail.

Sometimes when the world around us seems to hold only darkness and despair, it's easy to give in to despair. But then the Spirit, who lives inside believers in Christ (John 14:17), reminds us that Jesus died for that brokenness and pain. When He came into the world as a human, He brought light into the darkness (1:4–5; 8:12). We see this in His conversation with Nicodemus, who furtively came to Jesus in the cover of darkness but left impacted by the Light (3:1–2; 19:38–40).

Jesus taught Nicodemus that "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (3:16).

Yet even though Jesus brought light and love into the world, many remain lost in the darkness of their sin (vv. 19–20). If we're His followers, we have the light that dispels darkness. In gratitude, let's pray that God will make us beacons of His love (Matthew 5:14–16). [Alyson Kieda](#) ([Click to go to the full devotional](#) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

When has your hope been renewed through remembering that God loves you? How can you share Christ's light with others?

Thank You, God, for coming to save me from the darkness of sin and despair. Help me to remain in Your light.

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## Keepers of the Light

For God . . . made his light shine in our hearts. 2 Corinthians 4:6

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 8:12–16

They call them “Keepers of the Light.”

At the lighthouse on the cape of Hatteras Island just off the North Carolina coast of the United States, there's a memorial to those who've tended the light stations there since 1803. Shortly after the existing structure was moved inland because of shoreline erosion, the names of the keepers were etched on the old foundation stones and arranged into an amphitheater shape facing the new site. That way—as a placard explains—today's visitors can follow in the historical keepers' footsteps and “watch over” the lighthouse as well.

Jesus is the ultimate light-giver. He said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12). That's a radical thing for anyone to claim. But Jesus said it to affirm His relationship with His heavenly Father, the Creator of light and life who sent Him.

When we look to Jesus for salvation and follow His teaching, we're restored in relationship with God, and He gives us new power and purpose. His transforming life and love—“the light of all mankind” (1:4)—shines in us and through us and out to a dark and sometimes dangerous world.

As believers in Jesus, we become “keepers of the light.” May others see His light shine from us and discover the life and hope He alone can give!

By: [James Banks](#) ([Click to go to the full devotional](#) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

In what practical ways can you shine Jesus' light? Where is God calling you to be obedient to Him today?

Jesus, I praise You for Your light and love. Help me to shine for You.

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## Christmas Lights

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. John 8:12

Today's Scripture & Insight: John 8:12–20

Each year for several weeks around Christmas, Singapore's tourist belt, Orchard Road, is transformed into a wonderland of lights and colors. This light-up is designed to attract tourists to spend their money at the many stores along the street during this “golden month of business.” Shoppers come to enjoy the festivities, listen to choirs sing familiar Christmas carols, and watch performers entertain.

The first Christmas “light-up” ever was not created by electrical cables, glitter, and neon lights but by “the glory of the Lord [that] shone around” (Luke 2:9). No tourists saw it, just a few simple shepherds out in their field. And it was followed by an unexpected rendition of “Glory to God in the Highest” by an angelic choir (v. 14).

The shepherds went to Bethlehem to see if what the angels said was true (v. 15). After they had confirmed it, they could not keep to themselves what they had heard and seen. “When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child” (v. 17).

Many of us have heard the Christmas story often. This Christmas, why not share the good news with others that Christ—“the light of the world”—has come (John 8:12). By: [C. P. Hia](#) ([Click to go to the full devotional](#) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, help me this Christmas to reflect the light of Your presence and goodness to others.

Read more of the Christmas story in God of the Stable at [discoveryseries.org/hp145](http://discoveryseries.org/hp145).

The gift of God's love in us can bring light to any darkness.

"He that followeth Me."—John 8:12-20.

YES, but I must make sure that I follow Him in Spirit and in truth (Jn 4:24). It is so easy to be self-deceived. I may follow a pleasant emotion, while all the time a bit of grim cross-bearing is being ignored. I may be satisfied to be "out on the ocean sailing," singing of "a home beyond the tide," while all the time there is a piece of perilous salvage work to be done beneath the waves. To "follow Jesus" is to face the hostility of scribes and Pharisees, to offer restoring friendship to publicans and sinners, to pray in blood-shedding in Gethsemane, to brave the derision of the brutal mob, and to be "ready" for the appalling happenings on Calvary! Therefore, following is not a light picnic; it is a possible martyrdom!

But if I set my face "to go," the Lord Himself will visit me with "the light of life." And the resource shall not be broken and spasmodic: it shall be mine without ceasing. "Be thou faithful ... and I will give thee ... life." That life will flow into my soul, just as the oxygenating air flows down to the diver who is faithfully busy recovering wreckage from the wealth-strewn bed of the mighty sea. Let me be faithful, and every moment the Lord will crown me with His own vitalizing life!

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J R Miller - I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." John 8:12

We are always coming to points we have never passed before. Every new temptation is such a point. We cannot get through it unless we have a guide.

Some of you know how dark and strange it seemed to you, the first time you had to enter the valley of sorrow. A godly man says: "I shall never forget, while memory lasts, the strangeness of the experience through which I passed, when first the reaper whose name is Death came into my home, and with his sickle keen cut down at one thrust, two of my children! The stroke blinded me for the moment; but when at length I opened my eyes, I saw the ark in the river, and that instantly steadied me. I knew then where I was."

Every new duty brings us also to a way we know not. Every fresh responsibility calls us to walk in an unfamiliar road. All of life is untrodden, and we cannot find the way ourselves.

Then there is that last walk on earth—into the valley of shadows. We never can get any experience in dying; for no feet ever walk twice on that way, nor has any friend ever come back to tell us what it is like. When we come to die, we shall find ourselves in an experience we have never known before. If we have not Christ in the strange, unfamiliar path, we shall not find the way.

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## Words Of Light

I am the light of the world. —John 8:12

Today's Scripture: John 8:12-20

Jesus, an itinerant rabbi from the town of Nazareth, asserted that He was the light of the world. That was an incredible claim from a man in first-century Galilee, an obscure region in the Roman Empire. It could not boast of any impressive culture and had no famous philosophers, noted authors, or gifted sculptors. And we have no record that Jesus had any formal education.

More than that, Jesus lived before the invention of the printing press, radio, television, and e-mail. How could He expect His ideas to be circulated around the globe? The words He spoke were committed to the memories of His followers. Then the Light of the world was snuffed out by the darkness—or so it seemed.

Centuries later we still listen with amazement to Jesus' words, which His Father has miraculously preserved. His words lead us out of darkness into the light of God's truth; they fulfill His promise, "He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life" (John 8:12).

I encourage you to read the words of Jesus in the Gospels. Ponder them. Let them grip your mind and change your life. You'll exclaim as His contemporaries did: "No man ever spoke like this Man!" (John 7:46). [Vernon Grounds](#) ([Click to go to the full devotional](#)) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Thy Word is a lamp to my feet,  
A light to my path always  
To guide and to save me from sin  
And to show me the heavenly way.  
—Sellers

Because Jesus is the Light of the world, we don't need to be in the dark about God.

---

## A Great Light

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. — Isaiah 9:2

Today's Scripture: Isaiah 9:1-7

I was driving through the mountains of western Maryland on a cold December night. As I topped a ridge near Rocky Gap State Park, a brilliant sea of lights caught my attention. What in the world is that? I wondered as the exit road flashed past. It so aroused my curiosity that 5 miles down the interstate I turned around and drove back to see what it was—a local community's celebration in lights during the Christmas season. At noon, I wouldn't have noticed anything. But at night, the dazzling display couldn't be ignored.

Strange, isn't it, that we complain about the moral and spiritual darkness of our world, yet it is the perfect setting for the radiance of the Lord Jesus Christ. At Christmas, we often read these prophetic words: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined" (Isaiah 9:2).

Jesus said of Himself: "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12), and to His disciples, "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden" (Matthew 5:14).

In a dark world, people don't see a great light without wondering why it's there and what it means. We get to tell them [David C. McCasland](#) ([Click to go to the full devotional](#)) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

O Holy One of glorious birth  
Who lives within our heart,  
May we to all men everywhere  
Your wondrous love impart.  
—Brandt

To lead others out of the darkness, let them see your light.

---

## Nic At Nite

I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness. —John 12:46

Today's Scripture: John 3:1-21

According to the apostle John, Nicodemus "came to Jesus by night" (John 3:2). Was this Pharisee skulking under cover of darkness, embarrassed or ashamed that he, as one of the ruling class, was curious about Jesus?

Some have suggested that it was just cooler at night. Others have said that evening was a better time to ask Jesus questions because it was quieter and there were fewer distractions.

We really don't know the reason Nicodemus went to Jesus at night, but John seemed determined to make a point of that specific fact. Every time he mentioned Nicodemus, he identified him by saying something like: "You know who I'm talking about—the guy who came to Jesus by night" (see 7:50; 19:39).

Nicodemus, no doubt, was quite moral and lived according to Mosaic Law. People probably thought he was a pretty good person. Yet none of that mattered. He was in the dark about who Jesus really was, and he wanted to know the truth. So he was drawn from the darkness into the presence of "the light of the world" (John 8:12).

Jesus calls us "out of darkness" too (1 Peter 2:9) and promises that whoever believes in Him will not stay in the dark (John 12:46). [Cindy Hess Kasper](#) ([Click to go to the full devotional](#)) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Our search for truth is hindered by  
The darkness of the night,  
Until the Bright and Morning Star  
Reveals His brilliant light.  
—Sper

Faith in Christ is not a leap into the dark; it's a step into the Light.

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## The Light Of The World

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

Today's Scripture: John 1:1-9

Scholar and historian Will Durant wrote 11 volumes titled The Story Of Civilization. Across the pages of that monumental work moves a procession of the world's outstanding persons—rulers, philosophers, military heroes, artists, scientists, and explorers.

When someone spends his life studying history and keeping company with the most influential men and women of all time, his appraisal of famous people is worthy of respect. And in Durant's opinion, Jesus of Nazareth stands out above all others.

From a human standpoint, Jesus was a young Jew who was crucified as a criminal in first-century Israel. He never commanded an army, ruled a nation, wrote a book, or did any of the other things that are regarded as significant achievements. Yet that young Jew had the audacity to declare, "I am the light of the world" (Jn. 8:12). And 20 centuries later, people are still following His light and being delivered "from the power of darkness" (Col. 1:13).

What place does Jesus occupy in your life? Jesus said, "He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life" (Jn. 8:12). Are you obediently and faithfully following Him and walking in that light? [Vernon Grounds](#) ([Click to go to the full devotional](#) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

No darkness have we who in Jesus abide—

The light of the world is Jesus;

We walk in the light when we follow our Guide—

The light of the world is Jesus.

—Bliss

God wants us to walk in the light of his Son, not stumble in the darkness of the world.

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## Pilot Lights

You shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life. — Philippians 2:15-16

Today's Scripture: Philippians 2:5-16

In 1982, a London pastor watched as a man stood on the church steps and witnessed to passersby about Jesus. The pastor had never seen anything like it. He admitted that before that day he had considered himself an evangelist because he preached evangelistic sermons. But that night a fire was kindled in his heart. He promised God he would begin talking to people outside his church as well as inside.

The pastor invited members of the church to join him, and the weekly venture became known as Pilot Lights. Just as a pilot light stays lit and ready to be used, members of the Pilot Lights commit themselves to be faithful to God and available for Him to use to tell others about Christ. After a time of training and prayer, they walk the sidewalks near the church every Saturday morning, talking with people about Jesus.

Our churches are to be places of wonderful friendship and support. But perhaps, like the pastor in London, we need to raise our eyes to see people just beyond the walls of our traditional practice. It's important to share the glow of worship together, but the sidewalks of life are filled with people who need to see the light of Christ shining through us (Phil. 2:15).

Let's step outside and be "pilot lights" burning with God's love today. By: [David C. McCasland](#) ([Click to go to the full devotional](#) including a related picture and a link at the bottom of the page to one of their excellent devotional booklets. Reprinted by permission from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Is your life a channel of blessing?

Is the love of God flowing through you?

Are you telling the lost of the Savior?

Are you ready His service to do?

—Smyth

A world in darkness needs the light of the gospel.

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## **James Smith - "I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD." John 8:12**

I. Think of the Nature of this Saying. What a revelation of Christ's character! What a consciousness of unlimited fulness!

II. Think of the Light the World has had. Light of science, philosophy, and of experience; yet, apart from Christ, it is a world rolling in spiritual darkness.

III. Think of the Light Christ has Brought into the World.

1. Light on the true character of God.
2. Light on the world's own character and need.
3. Light on the dark problems of human history.
4. Light on man's future and eternal destiny.

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## **Vance Havner - The Bushel and the Bed**

Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? (Mark 4:21).

Christ is the Light of the world (John 8:12).

Believers are the light of the world (Matt. 5:14).

Our Light is Christ within. We are to let our light shine, not shine it. It is to be a glow, not a glare.

TWO THINGS HINDER CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY, THE BUSHEL AND THE BED.

1. The bushel stands for business, commercialism, money-making.

Your only business is to do the will of God. That is your vocation but most Christians treat it as a vacation, something to be done only once in a while. If you are a farmer, it really is God's farm; you are just the tenant. If you keep store, really it is God's store; you are but the clerk. Don't let the bushel smother the candle!

2. The bed stands for pleasure, ease, worldly comfort.

There is no testimony among those who are at ease in Zion. Churches are filled with "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (2 Tim. 3:4). And if "she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Tim. 5:6) what a host of animated corpses run around doing church work! Said the Irishman who saw a tombstone marked "I yet live": "If I was dead I wouldn't be ashamed to admit it!" But professing believers are dead and don't know it nor does Sardis know she is dead though she has a name to be alive.

Beware the bushel and the bed!

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## **James Butler - Jesus the Light**

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12)

THIS verse is one of the great verses in the Bible. In this verse we learn some wonderful truths about Jesus Christ. We focus especially on the truths found in that part of the verse which says, "I am the light of the world." Among the truths taught in this statement are that Jesus is God, Jesus is Messiah, and Jesus is Savior.

Jesus is God. The two words "I am" are most significant. They are related to the great "I am" revelation of Jehovah God given to Moses in the back side of the desert. "I am" is the abbreviation of the name "I AM THAT I AM" (Exodus 3:14) which is the chief name of God given to Israel in the Old Testament. Therefore, the "I am" in our verse speaks of the Deity of Jesus Christ. Throughout the New Testament you will find these two words associated with Christ. And when you do, you have a testimony of the Deity of Christ.

Jesus is Messiah. "Light" declares Christ's office of Messiah. "Light" is a symbol of the Messiah. The prophet Isaiah in prophesying of the coming Messiah said, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined" (Isaiah 9:2). When Christ came to earth the first time, He brought this light (Matthew 4:13-16). But the people rejected the Light. When Christ comes again to earth, the people will not reject the Light; and He will rule from Jerusalem and bring light to the world.

Jesus is Savior. "Light" also says Jesus is the Savior. The prophet Malachi said, "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing [salvation] in his wings [rays of light]" (Malachi 4:2). Apostle John said in the book of Revelation about the new Jerusalem, "The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for ... the Lamb is the light thereof" (Revelation 21:23) The "Lamb" here is the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). It is Jesus Christ the Savior. (Daily Bible Reading, Volume 2)

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## **John 8:12–20; 12:44–50 LIGHT OF THE WORLD - John Bennett**

Light is one of John's favourite metaphors for the purity, holiness, and judgement of God. In John chapter 1 he says 'In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not ... That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world', vv. 4, 5, and 9. Elsewhere, he affirms that 'God is light, and in him is no darkness at all', 1 John 1:5. In John chapter 8 the religious enemies of the Lord Jesus once again try to discredit Him. They bring before Him an adulteress, and bid Him deal with her. Would He enforce the Law by decreeing her execution? Or would He set aside the dictates of the commandment in favour of mercy?

In unequalled brilliance, the Lord Jesus showed Himself to be 'the light of the world' by showing mercy, while upholding the law. He made no attempt, as the legalistic Pharisees often did, to find a loophole in the commandment. Nor did He explain away the righteous standard of the law. He agreed that the woman could justly be executed for her crime. Nevertheless, He exposed the hypocrisy of her accusers by reminding them that they had all violated God's holy standards and were likewise deserving of death. 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her', John 8:7, reminds us that the perfect God has the ultimate right to judge. As the barbs of conscience struck home to these men, they each drifted away in shame. Sadly, we do not read of any of them repenting of their duplicity and seeking the Lord. The woman in turn found that the sinless Lord, who had every right to condemn her, mercifully set her free with the injunction to 'sin no more'. There were no accusers to bear witness against her.

Having illustrated His perfect knowledge and holiness in His handling of this difficult situation, the Lord Jesus proceeds to offer Himself as the Light of the world who will enable men to 'not walk in darkness, but ... have the light of life', v. 12. He offers us freedom from slavery to sin and the liberty to serve God as we ought. Sadly, chapter 12 makes it clear that many were heedless of this invitation, John 12:35–43. (Day by Day: Divine Titles)

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### **Walk in the Light - Bill Bright**

"Later, in one of his talks, Jesus said to the people, 'I am the Light of the world. So if you follow me, you won't be stumbling through the darkness, for living light will flood your path.'" JOHN 8:12

The living room of our home was dark when I quietly slipped the key into the lock and opened the door one night, walking slowly and softly so as not to awaken Vonette and our sons who were very young. Though they had been trained to put away their toys, somehow in the rush to get ready for bed that night they had left cars and a train and other favorite playthings scattered throughout the living room.

You guessed it! I stepped on one with wheels that almost threw me to the floor before I could regain my balance. Many a person has broken a leg or an arm under similar circumstances, and some have even fallen and hit their heads on sharp objects, resulting in a fatal accident.

So it is in the spiritual realm. If we insist on walking in the darkness, we will inevitably stumble and take risks that can greatly jeopardize our spiritual health and, in some cases, lead to our spiritual death by cutting ourselves off from God.

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness." In the first epistle of John we are told, "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not tell the truth. If we walk in the light, as God is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses [and keeps on cleansing] us from all sin."

There is only one person who qualifies to be the light of the world. That is Jesus. So how do we follow Him? What does it mean to walk in the light? Basically, it means that there is no unconfessed sin. It means that we are filled with the Holy Spirit, that we are feasting upon the Word of God and obeying His commands which include sharing our love for Christ with others.

Bible Reading:

1 Thessalonians 5:4–8

Action Point: Through the enabling of the Holy Spirit, I shall walk in the light with Christ and reflect His light in such a way that those who walk in darkness will be drawn to the light as moths are drawn to a burning candle (Promises: A Daily Guide to Supernatural Living)

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### **Henry Blackaby - CALLED TO BE LIGHT**

"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." —Matthew 5:14–16

Children love to play with flashlights. Do you remember how much fun it was as a child to go into a dark room and turn on the flashlight? It could be pointed in any direction and on any thing and immediately illuminate that area. Flashlights are not only fun but also useful. We keep one in our car for emergencies; we keep one in the kitchen in case the electricity goes out; and we always take one on camping trips. While flashlights are used in a variety of places, they are always used for one purpose: to bring light to a dark place.

Have you ever tried to turn on a flashlight, only to find out the batteries were dead? Is a flashlight useful to you without batteries? No, it's not.

In John 8:12, Jesus says, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." As we consider Jesus's words, we are reminded that Jesus is the Light and that He, through the Holy Spirit, dwells within those of us who are Christians. He is the Light within us, and He wants to use our lives to bring light into the darkness around us.

Imagine yourself as a flashlight and your relationship with Jesus as the batteries. Your fellowship with Jesus is the source and sustainer of your light. Jesus holds you, the flashlight, in His hands so that He can direct and shine His light through you onto any person or situation He chooses. He can use you as a light in your neighborhood, your workplace, or your family. As long as the batteries are good, the flashlight is useful. However, if the batteries are corroded or dead, the flashlight is of no use.

In the same way, if we are out of fellowship with God, our lives (flashlights) are of no use in the kingdom of God. If corrosion is a problem, our batteries must be cleaned; if low on charge, they need to be recharged or replaced. In other words, in order to be the light of the world, we must be in a healthy, right relationship with Jesus so He can use us to shine His light into the darkness of this world.

As Jesus tells His disciples that they are the light of the world, He paints a wonderful word picture of a city sitting on a hill. When we are driving at night, the sight of a city on a hill is beautiful. The lights bring color and beauty to the night sky. As we approach the city, our eyes are drawn to the city lights; the lights become our focus because they dispel the darkness. The light of the city set on a hill will draw people to the city. Jesus tells His disciples that they are just like that city and that He will use them to draw the watching world to Himself. They will shine like lights in darkness for the purpose of drawing all people to God.

Lord, please give me the courage to let You place me in the middle of the darkness to shine as a light. May I not fear a dark place, but trust You to illuminate my world by shining Your perfect light through me today. Amen. (Called and Accountable)

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## **THE GOSPEL OF LIGHT - Robert Blackhouse with D Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. JOHN 14:6

Are we all doomed to perpetual blindness and darkness? There is but one hope. There is but one answer. There is but one cure. According to the Gospel, Jesus of Nazareth was the only begotten Son of God. He came down to earth because of the blindness of mankind, because man had been deluded by the god of this world. He came and brought that treatment that alone can avail. He has removed by His sacrificial, atoning death and His resurrection the stain of the guilt of sin. He has given new life and power to our diseased and paralyzed spiritual optic nerves. He enables us to see God, to behold the Father's face. And, looking at Him, the light of the eternal countenance irradiates our whole being.

He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). And that statement has been verified in countless thousands of experiences. He said that He was "the light of the world" (John 8:12) and that anyone who followed Him need no longer walk in darkness but will have "the light of life" (John 8:12). It is He alone who can reconcile us to God and enable us to see and to know God. The message of the Gospel therefore to this modern, distracted world is that in simplicity it has but to offer this prayer:

Holy Spirit, truth divine,  
Dawn upon this soul of mine.  
Word of God and inward light,  
Wake my spirit, clear my sight.

The Gospel states with assurance that all who offer this prayer in sincerity and truth will be able to say with the apostle Paul that "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6) has shined into their hearts. (Walking With God Day by Day)

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## **Daily Light on the Daily Path: "I am... the bright morning star."**

"A star shall come out of Jacob."

The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.-Until the day breathes and the shadows flee, turn, my beloved, be like a gazelle or a young stag on cleft mountains.

"Watchman, what time of the night?" The watchman says: "Morning comes, and also the night. If you will inquire, inquire; come back again."

"I am the light of the world."-"And I will give him the morning star."

"Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the door-keeper to stay awake. Therefore stay awake... lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake."

Rev 22:16. Nu 24:17. Ro 13:12. Song 2:17. Isa. 21:11, 12. Jn 8:12. Rev. 2:28. Mk 13:33-37.

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### **My Daily Pursuit - A W Tozer**

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. Jn 8:12

I once knew a man, a Southerner, who never quite made the English language hang together. He was a dear saint of God and was converted down in the southern part of Ohio. His conversion was so real and so marvelous, and he knew when and where it all happened.

Every year he would go back to the little church where he was converted, walk down the isle, kneel at the old-fashioned wooden altar and have an hour of Thanksgiving to thank God Almighty that He saw fit to save him.

One summer, he went back to find that the church had been sold and turned into a garage with a concrete floor. It was the same building, only it had been gutted out, and now they were using it for a garage. He stepped off to the approximate place where the old altar had been and knelt down in the oil and grease with all the fellows around him working and drilling while he praised and thanked God that he was ever converted.

Dare to believe in the infinite love and grace of God, and let His power bring you out of darkness and into His marvelous light.

The whole world was lost  
In the darkness of sin;  
The Light of the world is Jesus;  
Like sunshine at noon-day  
His glory shone in,  
The Light of the world is Jesus.  
PHILIP P. BLISS (1838–1876)

Dear God, I remember when Thee met my soul and Thy infinite grace rolled over me with cleansing power. I praise Thee today that Thee saw fit to save me. Amen.

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[The True Light](#) - John 8:12 - George Everard - 1868

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### **David Jeremiah - Turn On the Lights - [Signs of Life - DavidJeremiah.org](#)**

The human heart is dark without Christ, but what a difference Jesus makes!

Imagine a world without Christmas lights. That would be the world before 1882. Oh, people built bonfires and attached candles to the limbs of their Christmas trees (sometimes burning down the town in the process), but it wasn't until Edward Johnson, Thomas Edison's associate, invented electric Christmas tree lights that American homes began to really sparkle and twinkle.

As Johnson's family decorated for the holidays that year, he poured his energy into producing a string of eighty small, brightly colored lights. As they sparkled through the front window, crowds of people lined up to gasp in wonder. It seemed magical, especially after Johnson developed a system for making them flash on and off. Wanting to see the lights more closely, people knocked on the front door. Newspapers sent reports all over the country, and reporters marched, one after another, into and out of the Johnson home.

Electric Christmas tree lights didn't immediately become a commercial item, however, because no one except Thomas Edison, Edward Johnson, and a few others had electricity in their homes. Furthermore, it was rather expensive. Johnson's string of bulbs cost over \$100 in materials—more money than some Americans made in a year.

Gradually, however, as more people got electricity, Christmas lights became more popular. In 1910, General Electric introduced a string of bulbs that could be produced and sold inexpensively, and Christmas lights have been household items ever since.<sup>1</sup> ...

Nothing expresses the mission of Jesus Christ better than lights. In the Old Testament, the golden candlestick in the temple was a type of Christ signifying that the coming Messiah would be the light of Israel. And the prophet Isaiah predicted His coming by saying, "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined.... For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given" (Isaiah 9:2, 6).

In the Gospels, Jesus declared, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12), and John opened his Gospel saying, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4).

Now, I'm not a physicist, but I know a few things about light.

First of all, light destroys darkness. In fact, some scholars claim there's no such thing as darkness at all. In their view, darkness is simply the absence of light!

What I have observed, though, is when light comes, darkness flees. The human heart is dark without Christ, but what a difference Jesus makes. Missionary E. Stanley Jones said, "When I met Christ, I felt that I had swallowed sunshine!"<sup>2</sup>

How sad, then, when people love darkness rather than light. Jesus predicted this in John 3:19, but it's still hard for us to understand. Maybe an old story about a desert nomad who awakened in the middle of the night can help. This man sat up, lit a candle, and began eating dates from a bowl beside his bed. He took a bite from one end and saw a worm in it, so he threw it out of the tent. He bit into the second date, found another worm, and threw it away also. Reasoning that he wouldn't have any dates left to eat if he continued in this way, he blew out the candle and quickly ate all the dates.

Many people love iniquity so much they'd rather swallow their sins and wallow in darkness than to turn on the light of Christ—and light truly does define Christianity. Ephesians 5:8 says, "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light." In Philippians 2:15, we're described as "children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world."

We should picture ourselves like that! As you stroll up and down the aisles at the grocery store, remember that your smile, your attitude, your concern for others, and perhaps even your purchases should reflect the light of Jesus. As you work in your yard, remember that you're a mirror designed to reflect the light of Christ so that it shines into your neighbor's window. As you play a round of golf, remember that God may give you an opportunity to say a word for Him.

Now think of prison inmates. What a dark place they are in! Have you ever considered getting involved in a jailhouse ministry? Could you reflect Jesus' light by mentoring prisoners? distributing gifts at Christmas? regularly writing to someone behind bars?

We also need to shine a light into the streets of our inner cities. Does your church have a ministry to prostitutes? the addicted? alcoholics? the mentally ill? What about reaching out to the people in the nursing homes? Jesus said that when we do something for "the least of these," we do it unto Him (Matthew 25:40).

In His Sermon on the Mount, our Lord said, "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:14–16).

As I was working on this chapter, newspapers reported that a massive blackout struck the whole country of Colombia. From the northern Caribbean coast to the southern Amazon jungle, the power suddenly went off. People in Bogotá were trapped in elevators. In cities and in the countryside, ten thousand traffic signals were darkened, mobile telephones went dead, the stock market suspended trading, and homes lost their lights and refrigeration. Authorities blamed the failure on a single electricity substation.

I think the same thing is happening to the United States, spiritually speaking. A massive spiritual blackout is spreading across America and Western Europe, and this is the darkest day we've ever had in our culture. Our society is more corrupt now than it has ever been.

But even in that harsh fact, I find a bit of encouragement. The darker the night, the more noticeable when our light shines brightly.

A man I know recalls growing up in a little town in the mountains. There were few streetlights, and when bedtime came, the streets were dark. His bed was by the window, and every night the last thing he saw before closing his eyes was the tiny light of a neighbor's doorbell button—two blocks away. On a dark night, even a small light travels a long way.

So you may not be a famous humanitarian, a worldwide evangelist, or a well-known preacher. But when Jesus returned to heaven, He commissioned you and me to be His lights who must not hide our faith under a bushel. If we don't reflect the light of our Lord in



our dark culture, it remains dark. God has graciously given His children the capacity to meet human need in the power of the Holy Spirit and, as we do so, to be His light in a dark world. And that's our very identity.

In the devotional book *Voices of the Faithful*, a missionary named Gerri told of working in an African town. One day exciting news reached her. The Lozi king was coming to attend church services and to eat at her house. As far as Gerri knew, the king usually didn't visit private homes, and word of his upcoming visit spread through the town like wildfire.

When the day finally arrived, the king entered Gerri's house. She explained in the Lozi language that she was a missionary and that, in Lozi, the name Gerri sounded like "Jelly" because the "r" sound is hard for the people to pronounce. She boldly asked the king for a Lozi name. Though she didn't know it at the time, such a request was against protocol, but the king just smiled and said, "I'll think about it."

Later as he prepared to leave, the king said, "My wife and I have decided upon a name for you. It will be Liseli [pronounced lee-SHE-lee]. It means 'light.' Just as the sun gives light and life to plants, animals, and people, I want God's Word to be life and light to the people of Western Province."

Gerri later wrote, "I was stunned and pleased to receive this blessing. After the king left the room, a lady seated nearby privately said, 'Ah, you are a very lucky woman to be given a name by the king.' "3

Well, the King of kings has given you a name—and it's LIGHT! Jesus said, "You are the light of the world."

So turn on the light for Him and then shine before men that people might see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

## SIGNS OF LIFE

Life Sign: I am a source of light in a dark world.

Life Verse: Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.—Matthew 5:16

Life in Action: When people see me, do they see the light of Jesus shining through me? Here are four ways I can reflect the Light into others' lives today and every day:

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**D L Moody** - I am the light of the world.—John 8:12.

I HEARD OF AN INFIDEL once who said, "Look at your convert; it is all moonshine." The young convert replied to him, "I thank you for the compliment. We are perfectly willing to be called that. The moon borrows the light from the sun, and so we borrow ours from Christ."

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## Ivan Steeds - CHRIST IN THE CLOUD AND PILLAR OF FIRE

**Its Properties.** Mystery surrounded this strange object in the camp. The fiery pillar whose brilliance was softened by the misty cloud reminds us of One whose effulgent deity, too much for mortal eyes, was shielded by the fashion of His humble humanity.

**Its Pathway.** The desert was a trackless waste. No signposts marked their way but there was no danger of being lost so long as they followed this gracious guide. Wherever it lead, they safely followed. So is Christ to the believer. We follow One who has crossed the desert sands before us and has pioneered the way. His promise is for us, 'I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life', John 8:12.

**Its Protection.** It was a covering for their camp and a protective canopy above their heads. Umbrella-like it gave the redeemed people a protection from the heat of the sun during the day and the cold of the wilderness at night. The Hebrew poet informs us, 'He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night', Ps. 105:39. So is Christ to the believer.

**Its Positions.** The pillar cloud was ever with them. Whether it was the edge of the wilderness, the danger of the sea, the hunger of the desert, the glory of the mountain, or the filling of the sanctuary, the cloud was there. How like a Saviour who identifies with His people in every circumstance of their pilgrimage.

**Its Permanence.** It was always there. Unmoved by desert storms and so unlike normal clouds changeable in their vapour and their movements. How blessed the assurance of Exodus 13:22, 'He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people', and we are reminded of One who has promised us, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee', Heb 13:5–6.

**Its Plenitude.** They made the tabernacle, in every detail, according to the pattern. The labour was demanding but how worthwhile it all was when the newly constructed sanctuary was filled with the glory of the Lord. May we still enjoy, as we seek to follow the

pattern of His word, the compensations of the fullness of His presence in the midst of His redeemed people. (Day by Day: Christ Foreshadowed)

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### A Contrast

A miser, whose ruling passion was strong even in death, exclaimed: "Put out that candle, Marie."

"But, Uncle, suppose you want something."

"Put it out," he gasped, "one does not need light to die!"

Indeed we do. Alas! for those who have it not—for those who have to repeat the dying words of a noted infidel: "I'm taking a leap in the dark."

Now for the contrast. A lad lay dying. Said his mother tenderly: "Is Jesus with you in the dark valley?"

"Dark valley!" he whispered, "it's not dark, it's getting brighter and brighter, Mother. Oh," he murmured, "it's so bright now, that I have to shut my eyes!"

And so he passed away to be with Jesus, who said, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

—S.J.B.C. in Assembly Annals

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I am the LIGHT of the World; he that followeth Me... shall have the Light of Life (John 8:12).

- The Light... John 12:35.
  - The True Light... John 1:9.
  - A Great Light... Isaiah 9:2.
  - A Light Come into the World... John 12:46.
  - The Light of the World... John 8:12.
  - The Light of Men... John 1:4.
  - A Light to Lighten the Gentiles... Luke 2:32.
  - A Star... Numbers 24:17.
  - The Morning Star... Revelation 2:28.
  - The Bright and Morning Star... Revelation 22:16.
  - The Day Star... 2 Peter 1:19.
  - The Dayspring from on High... Luke 1:78.
  - The Sun of Righteousness... Malachi 4:2.
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### THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.—John 8:12

As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.—John 9:4–5

Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.—Genesis 1:2–5

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.—2 Corinthians 4:6

In him was life, and that life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.—John 1:4–5

This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.—John 3:19

You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. Those who walk in the dark do not know where they are going. Put your trust in the light while you have the light, so that you may become children of light.—John 12:35–36

The deepest darkness I ever experienced was during a tour of Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. The group had just entered a much deeper cavern and our guide informed us that the lights were about to be turned off. We were instructed not to move until the lights were turned on again, and nobody had a problem obeying that order! For the first time I understood what Moses meant when he described the tenth plague in Egypt as "darkness that can be felt" (Ex. 10:21–23). It's impossible to explain it, but we could feel the

darkness and were happy to see the lights come on again.

The people living on Planet Earth are very familiar with the sequence of day and night, so it's no surprise that in many languages light and darkness are used as metaphors. Light usually symbolizes what is good and darkness what is bad. For example, if you don't understand what's going on, you are "in the dark"; if you do understand, you are "enlightened." In Scripture, light speaks of God ("God is light," 1 John 1:5), and the darkness speaks of sin and Satan (John 3:19–21; Acts 26:18). Sinners perform "deeds of darkness" (Rom. 13:12), while God's people should live as "children of light" (Eph. 5:8–13). Jesus called hell "outer darkness" (Matt. 8:12; 25:30 NASB), but Revelation 21:25 tells us that there will be no night in heaven. Unbelievers are lost in the darkness (John 12:46), while believers have been called out of darkness and "into his wonderful light" (1 Peter 2:9).

When John the Baptist appeared on the scene and announced the arrival of the Messiah, "he came as a witness to testify concerning that light [Jesus]" (John 1:7). The only people you must tell that the light is shining are blind people! Many people believed John, repented of their sins, and had their eyes opened to truth, but the religious leaders of the nation remained in darkness. They thought that they could see and that the common people were ignorant, but it was quite the opposite. The common people believed John and followed Jesus, while the "spiritual leaders" resisted God's truth (Matt. 21:23–27). Some of them said that Jesus was a drunk, a glutton, and a demon-possessed man.

As in that day, so today: The most dangerous darkness in our "enlightened age" is the dense spiritual darkness that blinds the minds and controls the hearts of people who have never trusted Christ or who claim to know Him but don't follow Him. Jesus came to dispel spiritual darkness, and to do so, He had to endure the darkness and the suffering of the cross. As the prophet Isaiah described it, "the people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned" (Isa. 9:2; see also Matt. 4:15–16).

In order to live as "children of light," we must understand and personally apply the truths Jesus shared when He said, "I am the light of the world." Let's consider three aspects of this statement from our Lord.

#### The Setting

The context of John 7—9 is the celebration of the annual Festival of Tabernacles (John 7:2–3, 14, 37), which the Jewish people observed for eight days in the seventh month of their calendar, which would be sometime in our mid-September to mid-October (Lev. 23:33–44). It was not only a time of joyful thanksgiving for the harvest, but it was also a celebration of God's care of their ancestors during the years they wandered in the wilderness and lived in temporary dwellings. During the week of the festival, many people lived in booths made of tree branches set on the roofs of their houses. Jerusalem was filled with visitors and alive with celebration—singing and dancing, torch parades, and even people marching around the city walls in imitation of Israel's great victory at the city of Jericho (Josh. 6).

Early each morning during that week, some priests would carry water from the Pool of Siloam and pour it out on the west side of the brazen altar in the temple court. This reminded the people how God had provided water for their ancestors during their difficult journey to Canaan. This ritual should also have reminded them of the words of Isaiah: "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation" (Isa. 12:3). On the last day of the festival when the water was poured out, Jesus used the event as an opportunity to tell the people that they could satisfy their spiritual thirst by trusting Him and receiving the gift of the Spirit: "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink" (John 7:37–39).

At night during the week, the priests lit four large candelabra in the court of the women, and the glow from the light could be seen across the city. These lamps were reminders to the Jews of the pillar of fire by which God led Israel through the darkness. But they were also a symbol of the cloud of God's glory that led the nation by day and hovered over the tabernacle when the people camped (Ex. 13:21–22; 40:34–38; Num. 14:14). "The LORD is my light and my salvation" (Ps. 27:1). "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path" (Ps. 119:105). "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you" (Isa. 60:1). Did the celebrants in Jesus' day think of these verses?

The people who knew the Scriptures would remember that the prophet Ezekiel had described the glory of God departing from the temple in Jerusalem before the city was destroyed by the Babylonians. (See Ezek. 9—11.) As in the time of Samuel the prophet, they could say, "Ichabod—the glory has departed" (see 1 Sam. 4:21). When the priests were putting out the lamps at the end of the festival, perhaps that's when Jesus cried out, "I am the light of the world!"

#### The Meaning

It was proper for the Jewish people to observe this feast because God had commanded it. However, it was tragic that, in their many joyful activities, they were ignoring the Son of God, who alone could bless them! Jesus had to stand up and shout to get their attention. Divine truth had been replaced by man-made tradition. Nowhere did the Lord command the priests to light huge candelabra or to pour out water at the altar. There was nothing essentially wicked about either activity; but unless the priests and people lifted their minds and hearts to the Lord and experienced changed lives, those traditions were futile. When man's tradition

replaces God's Word, then illusion replaces reality. We glory in the past but never grow in the present.

Great value can be found in celebrating meaningful traditions that are handed down from generation to generation. Every nation, city, and family has them. The English word tradition comes from the Latin *traditio* and simply means "to hand over." When Paul commended the believers in Corinth for "holding to the traditions" (1 Cor. 11:2), he was referring to the commands he had received from the Lord and had faithfully passed on to them, including how to observe the Lord's Supper (vv. 23–26). The tradition itself is not wrong, but it is wrong to observe it in a meaningless and routine way and to ignore the Son of God. The late theologian and church historian Jaroslav Pelikan wrote, "Tradition is the living faith of the dead; traditionalism is the dead faith of the living."<sup>1</sup> In our Lord's time, the Pharisees practiced and protected their legalistic traditions and criticized Jesus for neglecting them, but Jesus rejected both their traditions and the legalism behind them (Mark 7:1–23). But before we criticize the Pharisees too severely, let's examine our own churches and see if perchance our practices may represent "the dead faith of the living." Godly tradition, born out of biblical truth, loving ministry, and deep spiritual experience, is too precious to be abused or ignored.

As the priests extinguished the candelabra in the court of the women and thus ended the festival, Jesus called out, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). He didn't condemn their tradition; He simply asked them to allow that tradition to point to Him. They had light in their temple but spiritual darkness in their minds and hearts. In spite of their joyful religious festivities, the priests and people were dead in their sins, and the festival itself could never give them life. Jesus offered them life—eternal life—if only they would trust Him and follow Him.

In short, Jesus wanted them to have lasting blessing in the present tense, and only He could give them that blessing. The Jews were only looking back and remembering what God had done for their ancestors, when God was willing that very day to give them the water of life and the light of life! "Light" is one of the names of the Messiah, based on the phrase "light dwells with him [God]" in Daniel 2:22, and surely the Jewish religious leaders knew this. They also knew the prophecy in Malachi 4:2: "But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays." Here they were, pouring out water, lighting lamps, living in booths, and having a joyful time, yet they really had nothing to celebrate because they had ignored Jesus.

Jesus knew the appalling spiritual condition of the people, especially that of the religious leaders. "Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.... For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes" (Matt. 13:13, 15; see also Isa. 6:9–10). They didn't know who Jesus was, nor were they willing to investigate (John 8:25). They claimed God as their spiritual Father (v. 41) and Abraham as their ancestral father (v. 39), when in reality Satan was their father (v. 44). Israel faced a much greater judgment than the "unclean" Gentiles, because they had been given more light and yet rejected it (vv. 39–45).

These Jewish religious leaders could see the sun in the heavens (John 8:2), but they did not know the Son who came down from heaven to save them. They didn't love Jesus (v. 42), understand Him (v. 43), believe in Him (v. 45), or honor Him (v. 49), nor did they really know the Father (vv. 54–55). Instead of listening to Jesus carefully and believing His words, they argued with Him, and as a consequence, they rejected Him. The darkness of unbelief and ungodliness was overcoming them.

In our physical world, the sun is "the light of the world," but in the spiritual kingdom, Jesus is the Light and there is no other. Everything in our galaxy depends on the sun, and without it, there would be only darkness and death. Satan masquerades as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:13–15), but Jesus is the only true Light (John 1:9). "For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5 NASB). If you have trusted Christ as your Savior and Lord, you need no angel or saint in heaven nor person on earth to represent you before God. Jesus is your Mediator, Advocate (1 John 2:1–2), and High Priest, interceding for you at the throne of God (Heb. 4:14–16). Just as the sun is sufficient to give light to our planet, so Jesus is sufficient to enlighten His church.

The sun is in the center of the earth's solar system and our planet orbits around it. Jesus is at the center of all things that relate to the Father and to His church and we must keep Him central. He must never be relegated to the fringes. The apostle John saw Jesus among the seven churches on earth (Rev. 1:13) and also in "the center before the throne" in heaven (Rev. 5:6; 7:17). When He was here on earth, Jesus was in the midst of the teachers in the temple (Luke 2:46), and He promises to be in the midst of His people when they assemble in His name (Matt. 18:20). At His crucifixion, He was placed between two thieves, accessible to both, and after His resurrection, He appeared in the midst of His disciples (Luke 24:36; John 20:19, 26). Jesus in the midst!

But why was Jesus Christ depicted at the center of things? To remind us "that in all things He may have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18 NKJV). It's unfortunate that there are people in our churches who are like Diotrophes and love to have the preeminence (3 John 9 NKJV).

During my many years of itinerant ministry, I preached to more than one church congregation that was divided and almost destroyed by people who wanted to be important and have their own way. We shouldn't be surprised if some Christians promote themselves; after all, even the apostles argued over which of them was the greatest (Luke 9:46; 22:24). But Jesus warned them, "For those who

exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted" (Matt. 23:12).

If the sun were extinguished, life as we know it on the earth would also be extinguished. Jesus is "the light of life," but only to those who trust Him and follow Him. Yes, the Father "causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good" (Matt. 5:45), but the Son of God shines His grace and glory only on those who trust and obey. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

When we fellowship with the Lord, meditate on the Word, and obey what He commands, God's light shines "in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6). We not only learn more about Christ, but we also become more like Christ, "transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:18). The most important part of our lives is the part that only God sees—our daily worship time with Him; and to ignore that privilege or treat it carelessly will cause us gradually to go from heavenly sunshine into earthly shadows.

The nation of Israel was chosen to be "a light for the Gentiles" (Isa. 42:6; 49:6), a privilege that God eventually gave to Paul and the church (Acts 13:47). Jesus watched as the Jewish religious leaders lit the festal lamps each night, but the light did not transform anybody. They were just as blind as ever. The Jews may have boasted over Isaiah 42:6 (see Rom. 2:17–24), but they ignored Isaiah 42:7: "To open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness."

But that's exactly what Jesus did in John 9, and He is still doing it today through His faithful servants. Let's watch Him and learn how to do it.

#### The Living

James Hudson Taylor was weary and ill and had gone to visit friends in Brighton, England, where he hoped to find rest and spiritual enrichment. It was Sunday, June 25, 1865, and he had accompanied his friends to the morning worship service; but Taylor was "unable to bear the sight of rejoicing multitudes in the house of God."<sup>2</sup> He left the meeting and walked down to the seashore, his heart greatly burdened. How could so many believers be so joyful and yet do so very little to share that joy with the lost, especially the lost in China? On that Sunday morning, Hudson Taylor resolved that, with the Lord's help, he would begin a mission to reach the lost of inland China. Two days later, he went to the London and County Bank and with a ten-pound note opened an account in the name of the China Inland Mission.

That piece of Christian history reminds me of what Jesus did, as recorded at the end of John 8. It was the last day of the weeklong Festival of Booths and the people were celebrating in the temple. At the same time, their religious leaders were rejecting their own Messiah, who was standing among them; in fact, they were on the verge of stoning Him! Undisturbed, Jesus calmly departed from the temple area and obeyed Isaiah 42:7 by bringing light to a blind beggar: "To open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness."

Jesus is not visibly walking our city streets today, but His people are here to represent Him and spread the light. Millions of people profess to be followers of the Lord, so there ought to be plenty of light in this world; yet things seem to be getting darker. Jesus promises that if we follow Him, we will walk in the light, not in the darkness, and that His light will give us life. Even more, we will be lights in this dark world and help others find the true Light. "You are the light of the world," said Jesus. "A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:14–16). Paul put it like this: "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light" (Eph. 5:8).

The festive crowd in the temple did not impress Jesus, nor did the angry religious leaders who wanted to kill Him disturb Him. He simply moved away from the crowd and went to help an individual who was desperately in need. He left people who were spiritually blind to go heal a man who was physically blind. Our Lord turned away from the religious leaders who rejected Him and ministered to a poor man who obeyed Him and ended up worshipping Him! In the temple, Jesus exposed darkness and was rejected, but to the beggar, He brought light and was worshipped. More than once the record tells us that Jesus turned from the crowd in order to minister to individuals, a practice that would bother believers today who measure ministry only by numbers.

How we look at other people determines how much we can help them. To our Lord's disciples, the blind beggar was a theological problem to discuss and not a needy person to help. Perhaps they had been discussing whether the beggar was even worthy of help; for if his parents were the guilty ones, then the man couldn't be blamed for his blindness. But Jesus totally rejected their viewpoint and focused on the man and his needs. The next time you sing "Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee," remember that the author, Bernard of Clairvaux, said, "Justice seeks out the merits of the case, but pity only regards the need." The disciples wanted justice; Jesus opted for mercy.

Suppose that back in 1945, Jesus had asked me if I deserved to be saved. Of course I didn't deserve it. I didn't deserve it then, and I haven't deserved it since! I trusted Him, and in His mercy He didn't give me what I did deserve: judgment. And in His grace He gave

me what I didn't deserve: salvation! "For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:13–14). Christ is our Light and we trust Him; He is our Leader and we follow Him; He is our Life and we grow in Him and reveal Him to this dark world.

The religious leaders and most of the common people in Jesus' day were blind to who He was and to the very Scriptures they claimed to obey. Jesus told them, "You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you possess eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life" (John 5:39–40). When we trust Jesus and follow Him, He enables us to see things as they really are. The Jews bragged about their temple, but Jesus knew that the day would come when the Romans would destroy Herod's temple. The Jews also boasted of their great ancestor Abraham, but Jesus said that the first birth was not sufficient, and that people needed to be born again (John 3). The Jews and their Samaritan neighbors debated over whether Jerusalem or Mount Gerizim was God's appointed place for worship, and Jesus told them to forget geography and worship God "in the Spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). The priests poured out water at the Festival of Booths without realizing that the water represented the promised Holy Spirit (John 7:37–39).

David put it beautifully when he wrote, "For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light" (Ps. 36:9). We cannot receive light from history, science, or any other discipline unless God's light shines on it first. God's Word is light (Ps. 119:105, 130) and God's Spirit is light (Rev. 4:5), and if we yield to the Spirit and live in the Word, God will teach us. Apart from the Spirit's ministry, the Bible is a closed book. Furthermore, when we follow Jesus and walk in the light, we see this world and its dangerous illusions as they really are and we will not be deceived. "But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth" (1 John 2:20).

Jesus told the Jews, "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32), but they didn't understand what He was saying. Because they had rejected the light, they thought He was talking about political freedom from slavery when He was actually referring to spiritual freedom from sin.

The way Jesus healed the blind beggar helps us better understand how we, the "children of light" (1 Thess. 5:5), may share God's love and be used by Him to open the eyes of those who are spiritually blind. First, Jesus put mud in the blind man's eyes, which must have seemed cruel to those who were watching; but Jesus knew what He was doing. He could heal blind eyes merely by touching them (Matt. 9:27–31) or by putting His spittle on them (Mark 8:22–26), but the irritation from the mud encouraged this man to obey our Lord's words: "Go wash in the Pool of Siloam" (John 9:7). As we witness to the lost, we must not fail to deal with sin, because there can be no conversion without conviction and contrition. The apostle John explains to his Gentile readers that "Siloam" means "sent" (v. 7), and he sees this as a reference to the Messiah, who was sent by the Father (see also 3:17, 34; 5:36; 7:29; 8:18, 42; 9:4). The beggar was healed by Jesus, not by the water from the Pool of Siloam.

Knowing it would anger the Pharisees, Jesus had deliberately healed the man on the Sabbath day, and this ignited a controversy. In their attempt to gather evidence against Jesus, the religious leaders interrogated the beggar and his parents, and four times they asked how he had been healed (John 9:10, 15, 19, 26). The parents were evasive, because they didn't want to be excommunicated from the synagogue; but the healed man did not change his testimony. In fact, his witness became so personal and powerful that the angry Pharisees insulted him and expelled him from the synagogue. This was a costly experience for a Jew, for it would cut him off from official worship and social fellowship. But better that he could see and build his own life than that he remain a blind beggar for the rest of his life. And Jesus always cares for His sheep. He found the man in the temple and there opened his spiritual eyes (Eph. 1:18) and brought him into the flock of the Lord (John 9:35–38).

It's beautiful to see how this man grew in his knowledge of who Jesus was. "The man they call Jesus" (John 9:11) was his first statement about Jesus, but then he said, "He is a prophet" (v. 17). The Pharisees called Jesus a sinner, for after all He had dishonored the Sabbath; but the beggar called Him a man of God (v. 33). When Jesus met him in the temple, the beggar discovered that this "sinner" was actually the Son of Man, a title of the Messiah (vv. 35–38; see also Dan. 7:13–14), and he worshipped Him. We will one day meet this healed man in heaven and hear from his own lips what the Savior did for him.

Did you notice how Jesus moved from the universal ("the light of the world") to the individual ("the one following me," see John 8:12)? That's because He brings His light to the world through the good works of His own disciples. James Hudson Taylor and his associates were lights shining in China, just as you and I must be lights shining wherever God has put us. The phrase "good works" includes many things, from visiting the lonely and feeding the hungry to teaching the ignorant, assisting the needy, and encouraging the discouraged. It always includes sharing the good news of Jesus and seeking to love others as Jesus loves us.

In our modern world, we are so accustomed to electric lights of all kinds that we forget the spiritual darkness that enshrouds our globe and blinds the minds and hearts of lost people. But the greatest tragedy is that people think they are "enlightened" when the light that is in them is actually darkness. Jesus said, "Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are healthy, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are unhealthy, your body also is full of darkness. See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness" (Luke 11:34–35; see also John 9:39–41). Our outlook helps to determine our character and conduct; and character and



conduct determine the outcome of life. To obey Jesus and follow the Light of the World means to become a living light and avoid the delusions that lead to the detours toward darkness. It means to become the kind of people who can point others to the Savior so that they too might experience "the light of life." (See [He Walks with Me: Enjoying the Abiding Presence of God](#))

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### **James Smith - REJECTING THE LIGHT.**

"This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).

As the Light of the world Jesus Christ was a great Teacher come from God.

I. A Joyful Announcement. "Light is come into the world," a light brighter than the sun.

1. WHAT THIS LIGHT IS. It is the Light of Life (chap. 1:4). This is no mere cold, shining moonlight. It is the warm, living, compassionate light of the life of Jesus (2 Tim. 1:10).
2. WHERE THIS LIGHT HAS COME. "Into the world." "In Him was life," and He was in the world (chap. 1:10). Into the place of darkness and death, to shed abroad the light of life (John 3:16).
3. WHAT THIS LIGHT REVEALS. The revelation is twofold. The life of Christ, like the light of the sun, reveals His own hidden glory and power. The wisdom and love of the Father shine out in the Son. He is the image of the invisible God. It reveals, also, the true condition and destiny of man as an unclean and guilty sinner in His sight. The holiness of God and the awfulness of sin appear in eye-blinding brightness.

II. A Lamentable Condition. "Men love darkness rather than the light." What is the darkness? Just that place, or condition, where Christ is not. A Christ less life; they love—

1. THE DARKNESS OF IGNORANCE rather than the light of the knowledge of God as seen in the face of Jesus (2 Cor. 4:6).
2. THE DARKNESS OF SINFUL PLEASURE rather than the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ (2 Cor. 4:4).
3. THE DARKNESS OF DEATH rather than the light of life. This miserable choice reveals the depravity and perversity of man—a mind blinded by the god of this world.

III. A Sorrowful Reason. "Because their deeds were evil." Evil deeds lead to shame and confusion when suddenly brought into the light. The Holy Spirit has come to reprove the world of sin. At the shining of the light some confess their sin and forsake it. Others hug to their hearts their evil deeds, and deliberately hide their face from Heaven's merciful light. The Light has come; the responsibility is now with those who reject it (1 Kings 22:8).

IV. A Solemn Conclusion. "This is the condemnation." The condemnation will be just, because they loved the darkness. It is the wilful sinning for which there remaineth no more sacrifice (Heb. 10:26). If a man turn away from the sun, and refuse its light, then he can never see any light more convincing. If the deep ocean of God's mercy is reckoned too shallow to cover a man's sins, then they can never be covered. The presumptuous soul shall be cut off (Num. 15:30). While ye have the Light, believe in the Light. Yet a little while is the light with you. Has not Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of life" (John 8:12).

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### **F B Meyer - THE UNERRING GUIDE.(The Everpresent Guide.)**

"The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; that they might go by day and by night." That cloud probably always hid within its folds a heart of fire; but only when night fell on the world was it apparent.

**Jesus has Become the Pillar of Cloud Fire.** It was an emblem of the presence of God. In ancient warfare fire and smoke signals were used by the commanders to show that they were present. Similarly, whether moving majestically forward, or brooding over the Tabernacle in after days, Israel felt assured that the Lord of Hosts was with them, and that the God of Jacob was their refuge. Ages have passed since then. The glory has ceased from between the Seraphim, but Jesus fulfils for all the ages that sacred emblem. The cloud, His veiling flesh; the fire, His Godhead. "'The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father"; and we welcome His Promise: "Lo, I am with you alway." (See Nehemiah 9:19; Matthew 28:20)

**We must not Precede our Guide.** It was an Infallible Guide. The Book of Numbers makes very emphatic references to this, and tells us how absolutely the marches and halts of Israel were controlled. When it was taken up, they journeyed; when it settled down, they encamped. As long as it lay spread above the Tabernacle, there they stayed. No impatience, chafing at the long delay, could force the march. The camp might be pitched in a desolate place, far from Elim, and invaded by serpents, but there it must remain,

whether for days or months, until the cloud gathered up its fleecy folds, and sailed magnificently forward. We have as our sufficient Guide neither pillar of cloud nor fire, but the **Light of the World**, who said, "He that followeth Me shall not walk in the darkness." (John 8:12) He guides us with His eye. Only let us not precede Him. There should always be a space between the guiding cloud and you, "about two thousand cubits by measure." And when He says by the intimation of the Spirit within, or His Providence without, "Let us go hence," let us be sure that neither the warmth of the camp-fire, nor the attractiveness of the site retain us. Oh, to be able to say with the Psalmist: "My soul followeth hard after Thee!"

**Pillar and Cloud--Sun and Shield.** It was both Sun and Shield. When the excessive heat made it necessary for Israel to march at night, the light of the Fiery Pillar was enough to light the way: and when in the day the scorching glare of the sun was blinding, the cloud spread itself abroad like a great umbrella, so that the women and children could travel in comparative comfort.

"The Lord God is a Sun and Shield. He will give grace and glory. No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly."

Yes, and at times He will be a wall of defence, as when the cloud settled down between Israel and Pharaoh's hosts, so that the one came not near the other all the night. (Exodus 14:19–20)

"God With Us." May the Lord Jesus be to each one of us a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night, and over all the glory may He spread His wings as a canopy, so that His Presence may be a pavilion for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a covert from storm and rain till we reach our Father's Home, and rest in Paradise for ever! (Isaiah 4:5–6)

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## Tabletalk - THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

JOHN 8:12–30 "Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light life' " (v. 12).

If there is anything that all people would agree upon about Jesus, it is that He is a person who always invited His friends and enemies alike to make up their minds about who He was. During His earthly ministry, some believed He was the great eschatological (endtimes/final) prophet (John 7:40). Others were convinced of His messianic office (v. 41a). Disagreements over His identity once almost led to Jesus' arrest while He was celebrating the Feast of Booths (vv. 1–52), but He escaped because "His hour had not yet come" (vv. 30, 44). In this context, Jesus uttered His second "I AM" saying, declaring to the Pharisees: "I am the light of the world" (8:12).

Scripture often uses the metaphors of light and darkness when speaking of the Creator. God and His glory are often described using light: "God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). In referring to Himself as the light of the world, Jesus was again speaking of His identity with the one and only God. Other passages in the Gospels tell us that Christ shares in the exact same light as God the Father: Jesus radiated the refulgent glory of God Almighty in the transfiguration (Matt. 17:1–13). Moreover, John 1 explains how the Word, who is God, is incarnate in the person of Jesus of Nazareth as the light who shines in the darkness (John 1:1–5).

In the Bible, darkness often symbolically conveys the idea of spiritual blindness (Ps. 107:10–11; John 3:19). This makes Jesus' reference to darkness in 8:12 significant, for it means that He alone illumines the way out of the darkness of sin and death. Such darkness cannot finally overcome the light of the glory of God in Christ Jesus (John 1:5), although many will refuse to see the light when it is made manifest before them. The Pharisees in John 8:12–20 rejected Christ's testimony about Himself because it supposedly lacked the second witness required by the Mosaic law for confirmation. Jesus replied that His witness alone would be sufficient because of His heavenly origins and destiny as the exalted Lord of all. Still, there has always been more than the witness of Jesus' testimony to His person and work. The Father who gave this law also witnesses to the truth of Jesus' claims (Matt. 5:17–20; John 8:12–18). But many Pharisees missed this truth because they cared more about the Mosaic law's minutiae than the One who is its end goal. X

**CORAM DEO** Living before the face of God - Blindness to Jesus' identity is not an intellectual problem but a moral one: "Light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil" (John 3:19). We can show that Jesus is the Messiah and Son of God, but it takes a change in heart in the unbeliever to acquiesce to these truths. That is why we must pray for the Spirit to convert even as we are diligent to present and defend the gospel.

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## February 22: The Light of the World

Leviticus 12:1–13:59; John 8:12–30; Song of Solomon 6:11–13

"I am the light of the world! The one who follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). While some of Jesus' "I am" statements confused the Jews, the "following the light" imagery would have been familiar. God had led the Israelites out of Egypt and through the wilderness with a pillar of fire so they could walk at night (Exod 13:21). They couldn't deflect

or misunderstand this claim.

Jesus used this imagery to show the Jews that He offers clarity and meaning in a dark world. He offers life, grace, and spiritual awakening to those who are lost in the darkness. But the Pharisees couldn't comprehend the light; they misinterpreted Jesus' claims and fumbled around in the darkness and the details (John 8:19, 22, 25, 27).

When we've elevated ourselves in the darkness, it's hard to humble ourselves in the light.

Even when we have inklings that tell us there is a better way, we don't want to sacrifice our own pride. We prefer to be contrary and comfortable—to dwell on the details and exert our own opinions. But if we never call out the darkness, we'll never experience the flooding of light.

Are you calling out the darkness in and around you? REBECCA VAN NOORD

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#### **Vance Havner - "Let Your Light so Shine" John 8:12**

IN John 8:12 our Lord says, "I am the light of the world." He was "the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9). "I am come a light into the world," He declared in John 12:46. In the New Jerusalem, "the Lamb is the light thereof" (Rev. 21:23).

In Matthew 5:14 Jesus says to His disciples, "Ye are the light of the world." "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life," He tells us in John 8:12—and this light shines forth from our hearts, the Light of the Indwelling Christ, so that we shine as lights in the world (Phil. 2:15). The light is not generated within us by our own efforts; we are not the sources, but simply the instruments in and from which the Light shines. The Light is Christ living within because we have believed in Him and have been born again.

Jesus went on to say, "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." We are higher than the world, and nothing can hide the influence of a life that is in the will of God. Trouble and temptation and persecution only fan the flame. The life that is hid with Christ in God cannot be hidden in its outward influence for God.

Our Lord then gives us further teaching about our light-bearing. He states the negative side first: "Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." Indifference and worldliness, neglect of duty and any disobedience of the law of Christ—these are bushels that quench the Spirit and spoil our influence. Candles are meant for candlesticks. Our influence will take care of itself if we are in the candlestick of His will.

Then Jesus gives us positive instruction: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Mind you, He does not say "Shine your light" but "Let it shine." Some believers are much concerned about their influence. They strain and strive trying to make good impressions and labor that others may see how good they are. They are shining their light. But we need only to abide in Him, beware of all "bushels," and the light will shine of its own accord.

We are to let our light shine before men. We are not to hide in a cave, but live His life right out in the world of things as they are. The real saint is no cloistered recluse, but one who can meet life's wear and tear through Christ. We are to let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works. Not just in order that they may see our good works and nothing more, to be sure, but they must see our good works if they are to be influenced. Men cannot see inside our hearts and tell what sort of faith we have; they can see only our works. We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works (Eph. 2:10), and faith without works is dead (Jas. 2:20).

The purpose of it all is that they may glorify not us, but our Father in heaven! "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). That is the secret of unselfish goodness: living solely that God may be glorified. It is easy to take pride in our own influence for Christ—but then He decreases and we increase. We must ever remember to be only the friend of the Bridegroom. (Reflections on the Gospels)

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#### **Vance Havner - "The Light of the World" John 8:12-59**

AFTER the touching incident of the woman taken in adultery John records our Lord's discourse on light and freedom (8:12-59). Our Lord declares Himself to be the light of the world. We who believe are also the light of the world (Matt. 5:14), but our light is the reflected light of Christ.

In John's great passage, Jesus offers the double witness of Himself and the Father (verse 18). He tells the Pharisees they will die in their sins (verse 21) because they do not believe in Him (24). We are condemned already (John 3:18), we are under the wrath of God (John 3:36), and we shall die in our sins if we believe Him not. It is not drunkenness or immorality, but simple unbelief that

sends men to hell.

Again and again in this chapter (verses 24, 25, 28) Jesus makes the claim to be the Christ. The truly ideal life is described in verse 29: "And He that sent Me is with Me; the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him." Companionship and conformity! But He follows this statement with "If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free," appending it in verse 36 with "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Some had believed on account of His words in verse 29, but He made it clear that first contact must be followed by continuance. Looking into the law of liberty must be followed by continuing therein (Jas. 1:25).

The Pharisees prided themselves upon their Abrahamic descent, but our Lord calls them children of the devil (verse 44). Advocates of the modern "fatherhood of God" idea would do well to ponder this verse. Here were Jews, men of God's favored race, claiming "one Father, even God" (verse 41), but our Lord speedily smashes that claim with His flaming response. Soft preaching today stands in need of revision according to John 8.

Then follows a clear claim to sinlessness, which no mere man could dare to make (verse 46). Again He tells them they are not of God, and follows this with His staggering claim that those who keep His sayings shall never see death. The opposition grows more bitter with every exchange of words. They reply that even Abraham died—and yet He is claiming to be greater than Abraham. This leads to the climax when our Lord declares, "Before Abraham was, I am." Here is one of the most stupendous claims of the Christ in the four Gospels. Notice, He does not say, "Before Abraham was, I was." He links Himself with the Eternal "I Am That I Am" of the Old Testament.

It is no wonder that the Pharisees tried to kill Him. Here were the religious people of that day—strict in observing the law, proud of Abraham and Moses—being told that they were children of the devil and that One stood among them greater than Abraham, living before Abraham, and that Abraham saw Christ's day by faith and was glad! One wonders what He would say today if He were among us with audible voice, for Pharisaism is still with us. Would not men who pride themselves upon the Fatherhood of God be called again the children of the devil? (Reflections on the Gospels)

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#### **Tabletalk - The Light of the World JOHN 8:12–30**

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).

Many opinions about the person of Christ circulated during His public ministry. Some thought He was the great eschatological (end-times) prophet (John 7:40), while others thought He was indeed the Messiah (7:41). These opinions almost caused Jesus to be arrested because of the chaos they caused (7:41–43). But "no one laid hands on Him" because "His hour had not yet come" (7:30, 44). The second "I AM" saying of Jesus follows these events. Face-to-face with an adulteress and Pharisees, He declares, "I am the light of the world" (8:12).

Light and darkness are important motifs found throughout Scripture. Light is often used to describe God and his glory. In his epistles, John tells us that "... God is light and in him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). Jesus, by calling Himself the light of the world, is once again making reference to His deity. Lest there should be any doubt about His claim, there are two other places in the gospels where it is clear that Jesus shares the exact same light as God the Father. The first of these is found at the Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1–13) where Jesus radiates the refulgent glory of God from within. That Jesus shares the same light with His Father is also made clear in John 1. We are told that the Word is God (1:1) and that this Word who became incarnate in Christ Jesus is the Light shining in the darkness (1:4).

Jesus' reference to darkness in 8:12 is notable because the Bible often uses darkness as a metaphor for spiritual blindness (Ps. 107:10; John 3:19). Such blindness cannot subdue the glory of God in Jesus Christ because the darkness will never overcome the light (John 1:5).

Though the darkness of sin will not finally obscure Christ's glory, some men just will not see who Christ is. In John 8:13–20, the Pharisees rejected Christ's testimony about Himself because they said it lacked the second witness required by the law in order to verify its truth. Jesus answered them saying that even if His witness were alone, it would be sufficient because He knows where He came from and where He is going. Jesus came to fulfill the law, and He told the Pharisees that there really are two witnesses, the Father and the Son. The Pharisees, however, missed this because they were concerned only with the details of the law and not the Person to whom the details of the law pointed.

CORAM DEO When we read the Scriptures, it can be easy to become so consumed with the details and intricacies of its requirements that we forget that the whole Bible points to Christ. As you read and study the Bible, ask the Holy Spirit to help you see how all of the details point us to Jesus.

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## Robert Morgan - Eating Christianity

In her remarkable autobiography, *Queen of the Dark Chamber*, Christiana Tsai tells of growing up in imperial China where her father was an official of the Manchu dynasty. His twenty children lived in opulence and rarely ventured from their palatial compound. But as a teenager, Christiana begged to attend a Christian high school. Her father finally relented, saying, “Just be sure you don’t eat [fall for] Christianity.”

I made up my mind I was not going to “eat” Christianity, so I used to take a Chinese novel to chapel. I did not like the preaching. Another girl, a Miss Wu, hated this teaching, too, and we started to write a book denouncing all Christian teaching, insisting that Confucius and Buddha were our teachers.

But a famous American preacher was to speak in our church; for a little while I let down the bars on my heart and listened. His subject was “**Jesus, the Light of the World,**” and he used an illustration that stuck in my mind. He said,

“If a piece of wood is kept in a dark place, all kinds of ugly insects will hide under it. But if we expose it to the light, the insects will run away, for they love darkness and hate light. So with our hearts: if we do not have Jesus, the Light of the world, in our hearts, they will be dark too, and harbor evil thoughts. The moment we receive Him, the evil thoughts will be driven away.”

From childhood I had especially feared all kinds of insects, so this illustration made a deep impression on me. ...

Later during a game of croquet, Christiana dislodged a stone and recoiled at the insects scurrying away. The minister’s words came to mind and, dropping her mallet, she hurried home and knelt in prayer, asking Christ into her heart. I got up quickly, my heart pounding, my face all red. At last I had found peace. The burden of sin and the pessimism of unbelief had gone from my soul! I had found Christ! From that time, I opened my heart to the study of the Bible and found comfort in it. (BORROW [From this Verse](#))

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## Charles Stanley - The Victory That Is Yours

SCRIPTURE READING: John 8:32–37

KEY VERSE: John 8:12 Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

Jesus told His disciples: “If you abide in My word ... you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31–32). Christ knew His followers would face many temptations after He was gone. That was why He wanted them to focus on the truth of His Word, not the instability and spiritual darkness of the world around them.

As long as Christ was with them, the disciples followed with ease. Then came the night of His arrest, and Jesus was gone. However, instead of walking in the light of His truth, they allowed fear to capture their hearts. Many people struggle with emotional or physical bondage because they walk in the dim light of their own desires and resources, not the light of God’s Word.

Christ 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). Our hope as believers is the fact that Christ is our Source of light.

You may be struggling with something that has held you captive for years. Now is the time to ask God to help you face it and deal with it by submitting it to His control. Then claim the victory that is yours through the power of His Spirit. No matter what you are facing, there is hope in the light of God’s truth.

God, I submit the bondage in my life to Your control. I claim the victory that is mine today through the power of Your Spirit. (Into His Presence)

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## Chris Tiegreen - The Only Light

“I am the light of the world.” John 8:12

“When God spoke to humanity in Jesus, He said the last thing He has to say.”—G. Campbell Morgan

IN WORD How the world wants to change this claim of Jesus! One little word would satisfy all of the religious pluralists in our culture. If only Jesus had said “I am a light of the world,” few would disagree. We live in an age when people like to grab a little light from here, a little from there, and even a little from Jesus Himself. For most, He is one source of illumination among many.

Adherents of most of the world’s religions have a remarkable admiration for Jesus, as long as He is a light. As soon as we remind a nonbeliever that His claim is far more exclusive—He is the light—we are accused of arrogance and intolerance, as though we were

the ones who put those words in Jesus' mouth. No, these are His words, not ours. The claim is His, and whoever has an argument with this exclusivity has an argument with Him.

IN DEED Do we ourselves heed these words? Aren't we also sometimes guilty of seeking illumination from other sources? A little secular philosophy and psychology here, a little humanism and spiritism there? Or, perhaps a little closer to home, what about the editorials and advice columns in the morning paper? Or the mind and body experts? Does it all measure up to Christ?

Surely there is truth in some of mankind's research and findings, we would counter, and we are probably right; many have discovered some elements of truth, even apart from Christ. But it must all be measured by Him. Only He may validate for us what is—and is not—light and truth. Ask yourself this: Is Jesus my only source of light? Does my view of His exclusivity measure up to His claim? (The One Year At His Feet Devotional)

A reflection on THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD When I need to remember my real source of truth

Mankind's research and findings have discovered some elements of truth, even apart from Christ. But it must all be measured by Him. Only He may validate for us what is—and is not—light and truth. Ask yourself this: Is Jesus my only source of light? Does my view of His exclusivity measure up to His claim?

Jesus . . . said, "I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life."

JOHN 8:12

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### **Charles Stanley - HOW TO BE SALT AND LIGHT John 8:12, Matthew 5:13**

God calls us to be salt-and-light Christians in a bland, dark society. We need to remember salt must not lose its taste and light must not be hidden. Let me suggest three statements that declare and describe how to fulfill this role:

- "I am different." We should not become like the world. We must guard against being sucked into the prevailing culture and conforming to society's expectations.
- "I am responsible." Every once in awhile we need to ask some hard questions: Are we making contact with others? Are we seeking isolation? It's up to us to spread the salt and light.
- "I am influential." Let's not kid ourselves. The very fact that we belong to Christ—that we don't adopt to the system, that we march to a different drumbeat—gives us an influence in this society of ours. We are influencing others in our every behavior, be it good or bad. Even when we aren't trying, out comes the salt and on comes the light.

Remember to keep your light "on" and your saltshaker tipped! (Day by DAY with Charles Swindoll)

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If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.—Galatians 5:25.

He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness.—John 8:12.

No, my dear Lord, in following Thee,  
Not in the dark, uncertainly,  
This foot obedient moves,  
T'is with a Brother and a King,  
Who many to His yoke will bring;  
Who ever lives and ever loves. JOHN GAMBOLD.

If we are so led by the Spirit, where we go, and what we do, is of comparatively little moment; we may be forced by the circumstances of our life into surroundings that seem full of peril, but if God sent us there, such surroundings can do us no harm, though they may dull our feeling of happiness. Only let us remember that if, by God's mercy, we are free agents, and can choose our own way of life, then it is simple mockery to talk of aspirations for the higher life, if we deliberately indulge our lower nature, by living in an atmosphere of worldliness, or by doing something which is, perhaps, quite innocent for others, but consciously works us harm. GEORGE H. WILKINSON.

No one who has not tried it would believe how many difficulties are cleared out of a man's road by the simple act of trying to follow Christ. ALEXANDER MACLAREN.

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When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.' JOHN 8:12

My wife Anne and I often ride through nearby neighborhoods, enjoying the Christmas lights. Ever so often we'll come across a truly awesome display covering the house and yard and trees, and Anne will say, "Now that really is over the top there!" And I'll say, "Yeah, bless their heart." (That's a Southern gentleman's way of saying, "You know it really is pitiful looking, isn't it?") But whatever the case, I've got good news for you if you're one of those that have all those lights. You see, lights are an important symbol of the meaning of Christmas. Jesus entered this world to be the light in the darkness, and God got in on the original light show. After all, the angels appeared to the shepherds, and whenever angels appear they often have this dazzling array around them. And then there was the star over Bethlehem that the wise men were drawn to.

So the next time you go driving around looking at Christmas lights, remember the coming of Jesus, "the Light of the world."

—BRYANT WRIGHT Right from the Heart

We are called to be a light to the world. In what ways do you let your light shine?

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I Am: the light of the world JULY 23

Then Jesus spoke to them again: "I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows Me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life." ...

As He was passing by, He saw a man blind from birth. His disciples questioned Him: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," Jesus answered. "This came about so that God's works might be displayed in him. We must do the works of Him who sent Me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

After He said these things He spit on the ground, made some mud from the saliva, and spread the mud on his eyes. "Go," He told him, "wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means "Sent"). So he left, washed, and came back seeing.

Life was in Him,  
and that life was the light of men.  
That light shines in the darkness,  
yet the darkness did not overcome it.

~ JOHN 8:12; 9:1-7; 1:4-5

Related Texts:; Psalm 27:1; John 1:1-14; 3:19-22; 12:44-46; 1 John 1:1-7; Revelation 21:2-27 ([CSB One-Minute Bible for Students](#))

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I heard the voice of Jesus say  
'I am this dark world's Light;  
Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise,  
And all thy day be bright.'  
I looked to Jesus, and I found  
In Him my Star, my Sun;  
And in that light of life I'll walk  
Till travelling days are done.  
Horatius Bonar, 1808-89

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### Henry Morris - A Light to the Gentiles

"And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth" (Isa. 49:6).

These words were presumably directed to the Son by the Father as the triune God prepared to implement the ancient promise that a Savior would come to bring salvation to a world lost in sin. That salvation would not only be the restoration of Israel as God's elect nation, but also would reach the Gentile nations and spread to the ends of the earth.

The old prophet Simeon referred to this prophecy when he took up the infant Jesus in his arms, and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.... For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel" (Luke 2:29-32).

Similar prophecies occur in other Old Testament passages as well. "I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles" (Isa. 42:6). "Arise, shine; for thy



light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.... And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Isa. 60:1–3). The latter verse apparently prophesies even the coming of the Magi to worship the child Jesus in Bethlehem.

Paul used this truth as he preached to Gentiles in Antioch and elsewhere. "So hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth" (Acts 13:47; also note Acts 26:23). In fact, Jesus not only enlightens both Jews and Gentiles, but is "the light of the world" (John 8:12). (Days to Remember)

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## **Martin Manser - Walking With God -**

### **Follow me!**

'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.' (John 8:12)

Mike was sitting by the window as his plane came in to land at Dubai. A few hundred feet from the ground, he saw that a mist was creeping in from the desert; fifty feet from the ground, it was clear that it was now moving rapidly and becoming thicker; as the plane touched down, they were suddenly surrounded by a pea-soup fog. The pilot pulled off the runway and stopped the plane. Then came the announcement: 'Well, we just made it! The airport is now closed and there are an awful lot of planes up there circling around! However, I don't actually know where I am! So we'll just have to wait until they send a fire truck out to guide us in.'

A few minutes later Mike could see on his seat-back screen (set to give a pilot's eye view) the flashing lights of the fire truck and the sign on top of it saying 'Follow me'. The plane slowly began to creep forward; but then the lights of the truck seemed to get dimmer, until they eventually disappeared completely. The captain came back on: 'Well, sorry, ladies and gentlemen, but I've lost him! So rather than roll around blind, I think we'll just wait till he comes back and finds us!' Sure enough, a few minutes later, the welcome 'Follow me' sign came into view again and, tucked in close this time, the plane found its way at last to the stand.

Such an amazingly equipped plane, but brought to a halt by little drops of water vapour in the sky! Rendered completely useless, until a little fire truck came along saying 'Follow me'!

That's really rather like us, isn't it? Such amazing creatures, yet so easily paralysed, so easily lost, through even the smallest things in life. To people who recognize they get lost in the fog of life at times, Jesus comes along and simply says, 'Follow me—I'll get you there!' Today, hear his promise and stay close to him in all you do—and you'll get there too!

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. (Isaiah 9:2)

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## **The Light Of Life - Frank E Ray**

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

In him was life and the life was the light of men. When you have life, you have light. When Jesus is in you there's a light around you. You don't have to tell anyone that you've been born again, because the light on the inside will show up on the outside. You don't have to walk around with a big old Bible tucked under your arm. If you open your mouth, somebody will know you have life. If you sing somebody will know it; if you pray somebody will know it, because what you have, the world didn't give it to you and the world can't take it away. John 11:25–26 I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

You may say, "But, you're still stumbling." Can I let you in on a little secret? God ain't through with me yet. He's still molding me and still shaping me. He's still cutting off some stuff; he's still pruning me. One of these mornings, he's going to present me a perfect vessel. How about you? Is he through with you yet? Is he still working on you? Do you still need to drop off a little stuff? Do you still have a little envy in you, a little malice, a little jealousy? If you feel a little weak, wounded, weary, and without strength, steal away somewhere and say, "Precious Lord take my hand lead me on and let me stand; I'm tired; I'm weak and I'm worn, but through the storm, through the night, oh lead me on. Lead me on to the light." Look people straight in the eye and say, "Child, I've been through it, but I'm still holding on." Don't be afraid to tell them. "Child, I've come through the storm and rain but I still made it. Because every one of us have done enough wrong to be wiped off of this map. But he gave us another chance. (365 days in the Presence of God)

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## **LIGHT FOR LIFE—NOW AND FOREVER**

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. JOHN 8:12

No one would argue the importance of light; no one would doubt that we need light to live. But what do you do with it once you have it?

Jesus came from heaven, calling himself the light of the world. It was not a claim to be ignored by those dwelling in darkness. How should individuals respond to the light of the world? Matthew Henry points the way.

## **WALK WITH MATTHEW HENRY**

"If Christ is the light, then it is our duty to follow him, to submit ourselves to his guidance, and in everything take directions from him.

"It is not enough to gaze upon this light. We must follow it, believe in it, and walk in it; for it is a light to our feet, not our eyes only.

"It is the happiness of those who follow Christ that they shall not walk in darkness. They shall have the light of life—that knowledge and enjoyment of God which is spiritual life now, and everlasting life in the future.

"Follow Christ, and we shall undoubtedly be guided safely in both worlds. Follow Christ, and we shall follow him to heaven.

"One sun enlightens the whole world; so does one Christ, and there need be no more.

"What a dungeon the world would be without the sun, or the Son!" walk closer to god

Imagine what would happen if the sun actually vanished. Earth would be a cold, lifeless planet. But take away the light of the world, and the picture is even darker and colder.

To know God and enjoy him—that truly is "the light of life."

Jesus came to bring light in the midst of darkness. Light for your daily decisions. Light for this life and the next.

Follow him, and you need never stumble in the dark again. And that's a thought that should brighten anyone's day! (NIV Once A Day, Walk with Jesus)

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## **David Wilkerson - THE LIFE BEHIND THE LIGHT**

Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, '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).

Jesus was, and still is, the light of the world. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4). Simply put, the life that Christ possessed was His source of light to the world. He said that all who believe "shall have the light of life" (same verse). What is the "life behind the light" that Scripture speaks of?

When John uses the word life, he is speaking of the whole biography of Jesus' existence. Jesus tells us that we are to live as He did. For us to be as Christ was in the world, His life has to be something we can know and experience for ourselves.

I relate to the life that is in Christ by rejoicing in the kind, little things that He did and said. His everyday deeds, words and walk with the Father are meant to define the meaning of the Christ-life to us.

I think of Jesus' friendship with Lazarus; of His retreat from the multitudes after a long period of ministry; of His enjoyment of time spent in the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. I think of His taking the little children into His arms and blessing them; of His obedience to His mother, even as a grown man; of turning the water into wine at the wedding feast. I think of Jesus' love and care for the scorned, the unlovely, the poor; of His compassion for the woman caught in adultery; of His honoring the widow who had only two mites to give.

I doubt there would be enough books to record all the loving things Jesus did while on earth. In these passages, we find the ways we are to relate our lives to His and comprehend the life that is the light. (God is Faithful: A Daily Invitation into the Father Heart of God)

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## **LIFESAVING LIGHT**

The day was full of light! The waves tumbled against the shore in a most inviting way, while a slight breeze made the palm trees shudder with delight.

The scuba diving club decided it was a great day for an underwater adventure. Everyone geared up excitedly. After the leader assigned buddies, Jim, a member of the group, was particularly eager because this was his first real dive. He had practiced in small bodies of water many times, but seeing the ocean floor was a dream come true.

After offering a brief goodbye to his family, he walked out into the ocean. Then seemingly out of nowhere, a storm blew in. Pellet-like raindrops fell as thunder crashed. Lightning popped all around. Everyone scattered, seeking shelter. About an hour into the storm, Jim's family panicked. The other divers were returning, but Jim had not been seen anywhere.

His family and friends began to pray. After another half-hour, he came running toward the car through the darkness of the storm. It turned out that when he had returned to the surface of the ocean, the storm was so heavy and the clouds were so dark that he couldn't see the shoreline. So he dropped his gear and swam toward a glowing light, which guided him to safety.

That day Jim learned some important lessons about life and scuba diving. Sometimes when storms break out, a person must be willing to let go of the weights that hold him down. No matter how valuable the scuba gear, Jim's life was more important. He never replaced the equipment but allowed it to rest forever on the ocean floor.

His love for his family and God increased greatly as a result of the dive. He realized, too, that during even the bleakest hours of life,

God's light is the light that leads to life.

"I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. WHOEVER FOLLOWS ME WILL NEVER WALK IN DARKNESS, BUT WILL HAVE THE LIGHT OF LIFE."

JOHN 8:12 (Good Night God: Night Time Devotionals)

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### **Phillips Brooks Yearbook - I am the Light of the world.—John 8:12.**

Christ is unspeakably great and glorious in Himself. The glory which He had with His Father "before the world was," of that we can only meditate and wonder; but the glory which He has had since the world was, the glory which He has had in relation to the world, is all bound up with the world's possibilities, has all consisted in the utterance and revelation and fulfilment of capacities which were in the very nature of the world on which His Light has shone.

V. 4, 5.

Tell us, thou clear and heavenly tongue,  
Where is the Babe but lately sprung?  
Lies He the lily-banks among?  
Or say, if this new Birth of ours  
Sleeps, laid within some ark of flowers  
Spangled with dew-light; thou canst clear  
All doubts, and manifest the where.  
Declare to us, bright star, if we shall seek  
Him in the morning's blushing cheek,  
Or search the bed of spices through  
To find Him out.

Star.—"No, this ye need not do;  
But only come, and see Him rest,  
A princely Babe, in's mother's breast."

Come then, come then, and let us bring  
Unto our pretty Twelfth-tide King  
Each one his several offering.

Herrick.

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### **J I Packer -**

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." JOHN 8:12

What does God say in the gospel—that is, the good news (which is what "gospel" means) concerning God's love to the lost? He announces the most staggering free gift of all time. He offers total rescue (that is, salvation) from the rebellious nonconformity to Himself which is the root of all our guilt, misery, and frustration, and whose Bible name is sin. He promises a new, endless life of pardon, peace, moral power, and joyful purpose to all who are humble enough not to try and earn it, but simply to receive it. How can God make this offer? Through Christ's death as a sacrifice for sins. How do we receive this life? By renouncing rebellion and embracing the risen Savior as our Master; the life is found within that relationship. What happens then? Increasingly we prove the truth of Jesus' words, "Whoever follows me ... will have the light of life."

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### **Billy Graham - July 30 – Morning The Light of Life**

Your faith and hope are in God. 1 PETER 1:21NIV

We get so used to this world that we lose sight of the next. We get so used to the darkness and chaos of this world's suffering and violence that we lose sight of the brightness of Him who alone could say, "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).

He alone is "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). He alone is the Hope of the hopeless, the Savior of the lost, the Guide of the wandering. He alone is "the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word" (Hebrews 1:3 NIV).

Today world leaders struggle with almost insurmountable problems—and they always will. But in the midst of this world's persistent darkness, never lose sight of Jesus. He alone is the hope of the world—and He is your hope as well.

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## **Ken Hemphill - GOD IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD**

John 8:12 I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows Me will never walk in the darkness.

When I was a child, my bedroom was on the back of the house. And just outside my window, a weeping willow tree stood backlit by a streetlight. On windy nights, my room would fill with what appeared to be demons and dragons as the shadows of willow tree limbs played across the walls. When I could take it no longer, I would cry out to my father, who with one flip of a switch would bathe my room in light. The shadows of childhood fear would vanish.

Jesus' declaration that "I am the light of the world" would have instantly and dramatically caught everyone's attention. The setting was the Feast of Tabernacles. A part of that celebration was the much anticipated lighting of the festive golden lamps. These lamps reminded the worshipers of the pillar of fire which God had used to lead Israel during those long-ago years of wilderness wandering.

Perhaps you have already noticed that Jesus never said he would provide enlightenment, as other religious leaders claimed. He declared instead that he was the source of all light. It was Yahweh (Jehovah) who spoke light into being, and the connection of the word "light" with the declaration "I am" made this declaration even more stunning. Jesus was the very glory of God. He was and is that pillar of light which gives life.

But this light does not belong to mankind in general. Only those who follow him are delivered from darkness. The word "follows" in verse 12 carries the idea of continuously following. We experience the light of his presence only as we are wholeheartedly following him. We don't have to walk in darkness.

One final note: you may recall that Jesus also said that his kingdom followers would be the "light of the world" (Matt. 5:14). Our light is not of the same essence as his, but it is the clear reflection of it. Like the moon reflects the light of the sun, so we are intended to reflect the light of God's Son. (from "God Is...")

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Spurgeon - [The light of the world](#)

'Ye are the light of the world.' Matthew 5:14

The believer is appointed to be a lighthouse to others, a cheering lamp, a guiding star. It is true that his light will be increased as he learns more of Christ; he will be able to impart more instruction to others when he has received more, but even while he is yet a beginner, his faith in Jesus is in itself a light; men see his good works even before they discover his knowledge. The man of faith who aims at holiness is a light of the world, even though his knowledge may be very limited and his experience that of a babe. Every Christian should see the application of the text to himself. It is not spoken to the apostles or to ministers exclusively, but to the entire body of the faithful—'Ye are the light of the world.' You humble men and women whose usefulness will be confined to your houses or to your workplaces, whose voices will never be heard in the streets, whose speech will only be eloquent in the ears of those who gather by your firesides, noiseless and unobserved as your lives will be, you are the true light of the world. Not alone the men whose learned volumes load our shelves, not alone the men whose thundering tones startle the nations, or who with busy care for God's glory compass sea and land to find subjects for the kingdom of Jesus, but you, each one of you, who are humbly resting upon the Saviour and lovingly carrying out your high vocation as the children of God and followers of his dear Son. Let us never forget that light must first be imparted to us, or it can never go forth from us. We are not lights of the world by nature; at best we are but lamps unlit until the Spirit of God comes. Ask yourself whether God has ever kindled you by the flame of his Spirit. Have you been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into light?

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## **Charles Stanley - Living Clean in a Dirty World**

SCRIPTURE READING: 2 Corinthians 6:14–18

KEY VERSE: John 8:12

Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

How do you live clean in a dirty world? One of the first steps toward discovering this comes when you realize that God has given you a different nature from that of the world.

In 2 Corinthians 6:14, Paul asked, "What communion has light with darkness?" If you are a believer, the light of God's salvation burns within you. Jesus is the Light of the World. He told His followers, "He who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but have

the light of life" (John 8:12).

While you remain physically in the world, your eternal place of residence is in heaven. Through Jesus Christ, God has purified your life. Binding association with the world only darkens the light of Christ's presence within you.

God instructed the nation of Israel to keep the lamps in the temple lit throughout the day and night. Only the very best olive oil was to be burned in the lamps. However, the people became complacent in their devotion to the Lord and began burning cheaper oil. As a result, smoke filled the temple, blackening its walls.

This is what happens to us when we fail to keep ourselves pure before the Lord. We think our association with the world will not harm us, but it blackens our lives. Then the clarity and brightness of God's life within us are dimmed. Ask Him to reveal to you any impurity in your life so you can remove it and live clean in a dirty world.

Dear Lord, reveal any impurities in my life so that I can seek Your forgiveness and live clean in a dirty world. (Into His Presence)

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### **CHRIST OUR LIGHT - F B Meyer - Our Daily Walk**

**"I am the Light of the World: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."-- Jn 8:12.**

IT WAS the Feast of Tabernacles when our Lord uttered the words of our text, and it is supposed they were lighting the two great candelabra, which commemorated the fire-cloud that led the desert march. It was in direct allusion to the fiery pillar that our Lord used this metaphor. What that was to Israel, He is to His Church.

The wilderness was a trackless waste to Israel. The people absolutely depended on the cloud to show their path, and to find a resting-place at night. When it gathered itself up from the Tabernacle on which it brooded, the people must strike their tents and follow. However desirable the site of their camp, they must leave it; however difficult the desert paths, they must traverse them; however uninviting the spot where it stopped, they must halt there, and remain as long as it tarried. To linger was to run the risk of wandering aimlessly in the desert till death supervened. Only where the cloud rested did the manna fall, the water flow, or the Divine protection avail.

There are resting-times in our lives. God graciously arranges green pastures and quiet waters, and makes us to lie down. His voice sounds amid the turmoil of our existence, and bids us come aside and rest awhile. But often we fret against enforced rest, we persist in hurrying to and fro, and give way to bitter repining. When the cloud stays, remain where you are. When you do not know what to do, stop still until some indication points your path.

There are times for action. The trumpet is heard with its summons, to which we must give immediate attention. When the sleeper refuses to arise instantly at the whirl of the alarum, he soon becomes so accustomed to it that it does not disturb him. So we shall gain keenness of hearing when we accustom ourselves to instant obedience. The peace and usefulness of our earthly life will be in direct proportion to our appropriation of the Lord Jesus for all the demands of our pilgrim condition. Nay, more, for as in the train, the electric light comes on before the dark tunnel is entered, and lingers after it is passed, so the presence of Christ will precede and follow times of special need. "I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight" (Isa 42:16).

### **PRAYER**

O send out Thy light and Thy truth, and let them lead me and bring me at last to my Father's house in peace. AMEN

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### **JESUS, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD- F B Meyer - Our Daily Walk**

**"I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."-- Jn 8:12.**

THE STAR Sirius is so far away from our little earth, that its light, travelling at the rate of 186,000 miles per second, has to travel for eight long years before it can reach our eyes; and yet it is so bright that, when its ray shines down the telescope, the eye of the astronomer is dazzled as though by the sun. But if the light of a single created world is thus in the physical sphere, what shall we say of Him of whom we are told "God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all?" Yet we may live and work in that search-light, and have fellowship with Him!

Present-tense cleansing. Years ago in my congregation there was a sweep who was a friend of mine. On Sundays he sang in our choir, and his face shone with the love of God. But if I happened to call at his home close on his return from work, his face was begrimed as to be almost unrecognizable! Yet even then there was one part as clear and bright as on the Sunday! The pupils of his eyes set in pearly white! It seemed as though these were impervious to the soiling-touch of the smoke-dust. And why! Because Nature, which is the glove on the hand of God, has provided eyelids, eye-lashes, and above all, tear-water, so that whatever be our

environment, the eye is kept washed and clean. Is not this an illustration of what the Apostle meant by the "Blood of Jesus Christ cleansing from all sin?" It is the same truth as our Lord taught, when, having washed the disciples' feet, He said that he who had bathed in the morning needed only to wash his feet.

The ultimate purpose of the soul, therefore, should be to walk in the Light as He is in the Light. God covers Himself with light as with a garment. It is an emblem of purity and love and joy. And our life is meant to be like that, even when we are compelled to spend the hours of the day in the company of those who know not God, and perhaps blaspheme His Name. That Light may shine in heart and face, and fall on those around. That fellowship and communion with Him may be unbroken! The song of the Lord may rise in our hearts without a jarring note! It seems incredible and impossible, especially when one is conscious of so much sin and failure! Nay, it is not impossible, if once we have learnt the secret of this present tense---"the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

## **PRAYER**

Fill me with Thy light and joy, O Lord, that I may have wherewith to give to my home and friends, and to the dark world around me. Keep me from hiding my light under the bushel of my own anxieties. AMEN.

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## **Obedience to the Light of Christ - Stephen Olford - BORROW - The Way of Holiness**

"If we walk in the light" (1:7). Though scholars differ on the interpretation here, all are agreed that light is God's self-revelation. In the final analysis, when we talk about obedience to the light of Christ, we are talking about following the Lord Jesus who 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). Are you walking in the light? Is your obedience up to date? Have you obeyed every word that has come to you through the pulpit or in your own quiet time?

The longest known revival in history took place in Rwanda and Uganda, Africa. When a Christian met another Christian and sensed his inner glow waning, the first question asked was, "Are you walking in the light, my brother?"

But not only is there this obedience to the light of Christ, there must be

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## **Don't Fear the Light**

Four members of a family in Haiti cowered at home during the February 1998 solar eclipse and were found dead the next day by what officials said was accidental poisoning. Police say the four died of an overdose of sleeping pills taken to alleviate their anxiety. But suffocation was also suspected because the family had plugged all openings to their home to block out the sun. Thousands of Haitians hold the superstition that an eclipse will blind or kill them.

As tragic and unnecessary as this event was how much more so is it tragic and unnecessary that millions of people are still afraid of the Light of Life, Jesus Christ.

"In Him (Jesus) was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it." John 1:4-5

—Joel H. Sarrault. From the files of Leadership. See: John 1:4-5; Acts 26:18; 1 Peter 2:9.

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## **Transformed!**

Far away in the distant hills, North of India, a remote tribe who had never heard of Him were living in the deepest darkness of sin. Lawless head-hunters, in their mountain fastnesses they slew without mercy, their fiendish lust for killing not satisfied till they had decorated their huts with the heads of their fallen enemies. But into those utter depths of heathen darkness there came the Light—the Light of the Gospel of Christ, and everything was changed. Missionaries braved the terrors of the mountain fastnesses and the fierce enmity of the head-hunters. Taking their lives in their hands, they turned the Searchlight of God's Holy Word and God's truth upon the blackness of sin. Hearts were broken, sin confessed and put away—men who had loved to slay and kill came to the foot of the Cross for pardon and redemption from their sins. No longer "Head-hunters" there are today, thousands of men and women in these distant Lushai Hills, who, once walking in darkness, have seen the Great Light, they are following Him, and according to His promise they have the Light of Life. —Gospel Graphic

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## **LIGHT**

Police in an East Chicago neighborhood had to turn off a streetlight after a resident said she saw an image of Jesus in the shadow the light cast on a nearby tree. After the first reports, people flocked to the area in hopes of seeing the shadow, which could only be seen after dark, when the streetlight was illuminated.

Police responded when the situation got out of hand the following Saturday evening. East Chicago police Chief Angelo Machuca called an emergency meeting early Sunday morning to recommend the city turn off the light in the interest of public safety. The mayor agreed, and extinguished the light to diffuse a crowd of more than 250 people who had gathered in the area.

Machuca said neighbors had called to complain about blocked cars and visitors gathering around the light until 5AM. He said, "It

came to the point where I had to ask for help from the (Lake County) Sheriff's Department." Though the visitors were well behaved, the local police did not have the manpower to maintain regular patrols and control the crowd. Police were also concerned about access for emergency vehicles because the street was so clogged with cars and people.

Machuca said the light would remain off until authorities find a solution. East Chicago's Public Relations Director Damian Rico says the city respects all religious beliefs, but insisted public safety was their top priority.

—[Http://www.thetimesonline.com](http://www.thetimesonline.com), Light won't shine at site of vision, July 11, 2005. Submitted by Jim Sandell.

John 8:12 NASB "Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life.'"

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### Light of Life, Seraphic Fire

Light of life, seraphic fire;  
Love divine, thyself impart;  
Every fainting soul inspire;  
Enter every drooping heart;  
Every mournful sinner cheer,  
Scatter all our guilty gloom;  
Father! in thy grace appear  
To thy human temples come.

Come, in this accepted hour,  
Bring thy heavenly kingdom in;  
Fill us with thy glorious power,  
Rooting out seeds of sin:  
Nothing more can we require,  
We will covet nothing less;  
Be thou all our heart's desire,  
All our joy, and all our peace.

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### A B Simpson - The Light of Life

Christ is the Light of life; not merely a teacher of truth in the abstract, but a practical and personal Guide. The light He gives is the light of life, that is, light that men can live by, shining on the path of duty, perplexity and trial, illuminating and cheering every step of Christian life. The essential condition is humble obedience. And the reason they could not understand it was because they were not willing to submit themselves to His will and direction.

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### Charles Roll - The I Am of Indispensability

Then spake Jesus again unto them saying, I Am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life (John 8:12).

Light is the finest figure of truth and is a word to which Christ made seven references in John 8. Light also stands to represent holiness and spiritual knowledge. Therefore, our Lord's claim to be the Light of the world means much more than the light in the physical universe which emanates from the sun. Christ is the "light of the world" (8:12); "the light of men" (1:4); "the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (1:9); "the light of truth" (Psalm 43:2); "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" (2 Corinthians 4:6); "a light to the Gentiles" (Isaiah 49:6). All suchlike features of Him are affirmed in the Scriptures.

From the time Sir Isaac Newton discovered the spectrum and found that white light consisted of numerous colorful rays perfectly blended in one, the way was opened for an endless investigation to be made concerning the constituents of light, and what wonderful discoveries have since been made. Our blessed Lord was fully aware of all the rays that would be discovered; He is fully aware of all those that are still unknown to man; and with a perfect consciousness of every feature involved declared emphatically, "I Am the light of the world," and assured to all who would follow Him, the light of life. This not only includes an understanding of origins and destiny, but of the greatest knowledge of all, "the knowledge of God," for God is light. No clearer radiance ever shone, as this Gospel proves, to give the true import of the sacrificial lamb (1:29), the sacred temple (2:13-16), the serpent of brass (3:14-16), the Sychar well (4:5-15), the Savior of the world (4:42), the sheep gate (5:2-9), the sea of Galilee (6:1-27), the sustaining manna (6:31-51), the symbolic feast (7:37-39), the Siloam pool (9:4-7), the Shepherd of Israel (10:1-30), the sepulcher of death (11:35-44), and the secret source of life (15:1). These types were incorporated in Old Testament literature by One who had a perfect knowledge of what they typified.



Christ is the Substance of all shadows, the Subject of all signs and the Sum total of light transparent and radiance translucent. What a clear light He throws upon the path of life by His unfaltering submission, His unfailing service, His unflagging strength, His unfainting supplication, and His unflinching sacrifice.

The brilliance of His radiance has illumined the centuries, introducing the reality of personal Godhead, interpreting the Scriptures of truth, instructing the greatest saints, impelling the noblest service, and inspiring the sweetest songs. What ratification He has given of the veracity of prophecy by virtue of His words and works. With what solemnity He draped the relative sanctity of marriage and the personal responsibility of child care. How vividly the records of national history and regal personalities were flashed upon the screen by the lightrays of His teaching. The reality of eternity has dawned as clear as day by virtue of His disclosure of things to come. The revelation of Deity shone forth in brightest splendor by His unveiling of vital holiness and portrayal of the Father. The radiance of glory reached high noon in presence of the transfiguration of His victorious majesty. The rewards for loyalty in service glistened like costly gems of rare value when He described the divine recompense for devoted labor. The sacredness of marriage assumed new dignity in the light of this beloved Bridegroom.

No one else has extended the range of man's reasoning powers, nor opened a wider field to his thinking capacity in breadth, length, depth, and height than Christ. What interesting insight He has given into the material things of the universe, what an intimate understanding of physical powers and their potentials He has opened to the mind, what important factors He has imparted to man's knowledge of moral standards, what information He has furnished concerning spiritual virtues and ethical values, and what infinite realities He has unveiled in relation to celestial conditions.

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### **John Piper -How Can We Be Sure of Light's Triumph?** (See full sermon [Triumphant Light](#))

John gives three reasons.

#### **1. The Light Is the Life of the Son of God**

First, consider Jn 1:4: "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." This means that the light that shines in the darkness is the light of LIFE (John 8:12). The life of the Son IS the light of the world. The first reason the light will triumph over the darkness is that it is life. It is living light. What does that mean?

Well, if the life of the Son of God IS the light that shines in the darkness (which is what Jn 1:4 says), then there are at least four things we can say about this light.

1. First, the **light of life** has energy and power because the life of the Son has energy and power.
2. Second, the **light of life** has purpose and motion. It is not static like a lamppost or a lighthouse on the shore. It plans and moves. It shines now here, now there. It is alive with the life of the Son.
3. Third, the **light of life** grows and expands. That is the way the life of the Son of God is. His life is a fountain of life (Psalm 36:9). Once the rays start coming out of this light, they extend farther and farther and farther.
4. Fourth, the **light of life** begets offspring. John 12:36, "Believe in the light, that you may become sons of the light."

So the first reason the light shines in the darkness and the darkness does not overcome it is that this light is living—it has energy and purposefulness and growth and reproduction. It is not a static thing, like a stoplight that might be ignored. The light that shines in the world today is the very life of the Son of God. (See full sermon [Triumphant Light](#))

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### **[Brian Bell](#) - Outline: Jesus Gives...**

- The Light of LIFE
- The Light of LEADING ([for exposition of this point see sermon](#))
- The Light of LIBERATION! ([for exposition of this point see sermon](#))

**Background:** the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles. Timing: day after, final day of the feast. Setting: the Temple Treasury (located near the Court of the Women, so named because the woman could enter this part of the Temple). Backdrop: On the 1st evening of the feast there was a ceremony called The Illumination of the Temple. It took place in the Court of the Women...When the dark came...four great candelabra were lit and, it was said, they sent such a blaze of light throughout Jerusalem that every courtyard was lit up with their brilliance. [William Barclay; Gospel of John; Vol.2. pg.11.](#)

1. This magnificent light was a reminder of God's pillar of fire that guided & protected Israel through the wilderness.
2. It is with this strong visual backdrop Jesus makes this next claim, vs.12.
3. Jesus desires to guide His followers: His words being a lamp to our feet & light to our path. His life being a

lamp to our feet & light to our path.

## II. LIGHT OF THE WORLD!

### A. THE LIGHT OF LIFE! (Jn 8:12-20)

B. (John 8:12) I am the Light of the world - The 2nd of the I Am statements.

C. So the verbal sword fight between Jesus & the Pharisees begins.

1. Jesus starts the fencing match with vs.12.
2. Note: Jesus claims to be the light of the world not a light!
3. Though the claim is exclusive, the offer is inclusive - an offer any and all could respond to.

D. As the Light of the world, Christ claimed to be God, for God is Light.

1. God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. 1Jn.1:5
- a) Darkness speaks of death, ignorance, & sin; Light speaks of life, knowledge, & holiness.1

E. Wait, how does "light" lead to "life"?

1. Because once you have the light, there is no more groping in darkness, but now you can see the right way to go! a) Example: Water caves in Belize. Only some had flashlights & could see the way.

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### David Cooper - The Light of the World    Text: John 8:12

G.K. Chesterton once said, "There is only one thing certain about man—that man is not what he was meant to be." The Bible says, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Sin basically means "to miss the mark; to deviate from God's plan; to depart from God's will."

The result of sin is a darkened world. We stagger in spiritual darkness without a sense of direction, lost in our way and frightened by our own spiritual condition. The Bible uses the analogy of darkness to describe the effects of sin and alienation from God (Proverbs 4:18, 19; John 3:19; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 4:18; 1 John 2:11).

Hell itself is described as a place of outer darkness (Matthew 25:30). Most children are afraid of the dark. Most crimes are committed in the dark. Darkness itself can be a frightening experience. Myles Donnelly, who escaped from the 78th floor of the South Tower in the 9/11 tragedy, said, "It sounds an awful thing for a grown man to say, but I think I am afraid of the dark again."

In the midst of a world of darkness shines the light of Christ. The coming of Jesus into the world and into our lives is the entrance of light. Light is a form of radiant energy consisting of electromagnetic waves of various lengths. The eye responds to these different wavelengths, converting them to colors. The human can distinguish 8 million colors. Light travels at the speed of 186,000 mps, which is 670,615,600 mph. It takes the light of the sun, which is 92,800,000 miles away, eight minutes to reach Earth.

As incredible as it may seem, it takes the light of the closest star to Earth, Proxima Centauri, 4.25 years to reach Earth. We have learned to harness the light rays of radio waves, X-rays, ultraviolet and infrared waves to enrich our lives. Light controls evil by providing protection—crime lights, streetlights. Light directs a lost traveler, such as a lighthouse or, as we say, the light at the end of a tunnel. But the most important quality of light is its life-giving power. All green plants derive their growth from light and, in turn, provide food and oxygen for animals and mankind.

The first act of Creation was the emergence of light (Genesis 1:1-4). Once light came, life followed. Light refers to the spiritual life. Jesus proclaimed, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12; 9:5). What does that announcement mean to us?

#### I. The Setting

A. He made this announcement at the Feast of Tabernacles. This annual festival, which lasted for seven days every fall, commemorated the exodus of Israel from Egypt and the wilderness experience.

B. Jesus made this statement while in the Temple area known as the Treasury, where people brought their gifts. The Treasury was part of a larger court known as the Court of Women. At the close of the first day of the festival, a dramatic ceremony took place in this court. Four great candelabra were prepared for lighting. When evening came the people flocked to the court for the candle-lighting ceremony. At dark, as four youths of priestly lineage were given the signal to light the candelabra, suddenly the darkness was dispelled.

C. It is said that every street and court and square in Jerusalem was illuminated by the light. On one particular night, as the light illuminated the city, Jesus lifted His voice: "I am the light of the world!"

## II. The Significance

What did the candelabra mean to the people?

- A. The light reminded them of the pillar of fire that guided and protected them in the desert.
- B. The light represented the Shekinah glory of God that appeared as a luminous, glowing, radiant mist in the Tabernacle, and later at the dedication of Solomon's temple.
- C. The light spoke of the coming of Messiah, of whom Isaiah said, "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned" (9:2). Jesus was declaring Himself as Messiah when He said "I am the light." He was the One who would guide and protect His people. He is the glory of God revealed among us, who takes up His residence in our hearts and fills us with God's glory. And He will deliver us from the darkness of sin, guilt and fear.

## III. The Spirituality

What does this mean to us spiritually?

- A. A light for the world. The word world, which is kosmos in Greek, speaks of both the earth (Psalm 24:1) and humanity in rebellion to God (1 John 2:15-17). Most important, it means the world in need of salvation. "God so loved the world" (John 3:16).
- B. A light to be followed. The call of Christ is "Follow me" (Matthew 4:19). To follow means to go the same direction, to be a close companion, to surrender our will to Him. We are to follow the Light of the World if we are to live with direction and purpose. If you were lost in the woods at night and had a flashlight, you would simply walk in the steps of path the light would make in front of you. The beam of light would form a path of light for you to follow in the darkness. We don't need to fear the darkness of this world or get lost in it. All we need to do is follow Christ, the Light of life.
- C. A light to be experienced. Jesus is "the light of life" (John 8:12). When Paul met Christ on the road to Damascus, he was blinded by the brilliant light in his vision of Christ. Light had shone into his life, and the darkness was gone.

At the end of World War II, King George VI delivered an address to the British Commonwealth on Christmas Eve in a palace in London. He challenged Britain's leaders to faith: "I said to the man at the Gate of the Year, 'Give me a light that I may walk safely into the unknown.' He said to me, 'Go out into the darkness, and put your hand in the hand of God, and it shall be to you better than the light, and safer than the known.'" At the time he spoke these words, his listeners knew he was dying of cancer. There was an anchor to his own soul in the time of need (Ravi Zacharias, *Can Man Live Without God?*, p. 53).

Closing: He is the Light of the World!

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### **Sermon by Brian Bill - John 8:12-30 The Light Of The World** February 13-14, 2016

[Bring up flashlights, candles, nightlight, lantern, spotlight, construction lights, etc.]

This little nightlight is not very bright but it gives just enough light to dispel the darkness in the middle of the night. On the other extreme, some spotlights claim to be one million times brighter than a single candle. Their light is so bright that they come with a warning to not look directly into the beam.

As we continue in our sermon series, "Metaphors of the Messiah," we're focusing this weekend on the second "I Am" statement of Jesus: "I am the Light of the World." Several people told me last week's sermon was excruciating to sit through because of the smell of fresh bread filling the room. We've been learning that whenever we come face-to-face with Jesus, an agonizing decision has to be made. When Jesus disrupts, some will desert Him and others will declare their allegiance to Him.

In each of these magnificent metaphors, the phrase "I Am" hearkens back to when God appeared to Moses in the burning bush. When Moses saw the "flames of fire," he wanted to get a closer look but was told to remove his sandals because God's presence had made the ground holy. After Moses is informed that he will lead God's people out of Egypt, he wants to know what to say when people ask about God's name. God answers in Exodus 3:14: "I AM WHO I AM."

"I Am" is God's covenantal name. This title was so sacred that it was only uttered by the high priest, and then only once a year on the Day of Atonement. It literally means, "I am who I am," and signals the truth that nothing else defines who God is but God Himself.

Every time Jesus uses one of the "I AM" metaphors, He is emphatically stating that He is Yahweh. This is a staggering statement of His sovereign supremacy. Just as the bush burned brightly and cast light all around, so too, Jesus is the light of the world, and a consuming fire that should stop us in our tracks because we are on holy ground. When Jesus used the phrase, "I AM" He did so on purpose and those who heard Him did not miss the obvious connection He was making.

This riles up the Pharisees and they interrupt Jesus ten times in John 8 alone. They take umbrage at His outrageous utterances and ask Jesus a pointed question in verse 53: "Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you make yourself out to be?" Jesus pushes them further than they were intending to go when he declares in verse 56: "Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad." They don't know how to respond to this scandalous statement

so they turn to sarcasm in verse 57: “You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?”

They're probably chuckling to themselves at the absurdity of this statement and then they're bowled over because Jesus isn't finished yet. Look at verse 58: “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.” Verse 59 tells us that they picked up stones to slay him, but Jesus slipped away.

## **Light Background**

Please turn now to John 8:12: “Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’” Jesus is not saying that He is holding the light, or that He has the light, or that He's the way to the light. [Hold up various lights]

Instead, He is unequivocally stating, “He is the light.” As we go through these Messiah Metaphors, it's important to understand some background information. Let's begin by looking at the properties of light.

### **1. Light reveals.**

Light enables us to see things that were there all along but because of the darkness we could not see them [Use flashlight to reveal the ugly scar on my face]. Darkness conceals and light reveals. Without light we can't see anything. It was C.S. Lewis who said, “I believe in Christ like I believe in the sun. Not only because I see it, but because by it all things are seen.” Ephesians 5:13: “But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible.” By the way, that's why some people avoid coming to church. They really don't want Christ to shine His light on the way they've been living.

### **2. Light gives life.**

Light is necessary for life itself. It sets our biological clocks, triggers in our brains the sensations of color, and supplies the energy for things to grow. Have you heard of SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder)? Winter is a tough time because the sun often disappears and depression can set in. I have an extended family member who deals with this. Interestingly, only about 1% of Floridians have SAD, while 10% of Alaskans struggle with it. I'm told that one of the best treatments is using bright light therapy [turn on lantern].

In John 1:4 we read this about Jesus: “In him was life, and the life was the light of men.” While some of us struggle with Seasonal Affective Disorder, all of us have Sin Affective Disorder, which is indeed SAD, but we should be GLAD because the light of Jesus frees us from our sins.

### **3. Light scatters darkness.**

In Scripture, darkness is often a metaphor for sin, spiritual blindness, and death. John 1:5: “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

### **4. Light gives warmth.**

Did you know that one small candle, properly reflected, will raise the temperature of an igloo from below freezing to over 45 degrees? [Show construction lights and explain the heat they generate] In the Bible, warmth is often equated with the comfort of God. Ecclesiastes 11:7: “Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun.”

### **5. Light provides guidance.**

It's difficult to walk in the dark, isn't it? Light can help us see where we're headed. Psalm 43:3: “Send out your light and your truth; let them lead me.”

## **Light in Scripture**

Let's look now at how light is portrayed in Scripture. Those who heard Jesus declare that He is the light of the world would have had these passages running through their minds.

- Genesis 1:3-4: “And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.” The first thing God created was light in order to dispel darkness.
- After God appeared to Moses and revealed His name as the “I AM,” He did an amazing thing. He turned the lights out on the Egyptians, literally. Exodus 10:21-23: “Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, a darkness to be felt.’ So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was pitch darkness in all the land of Egypt three days...but all the people of Israel had light where they lived.”

- After illuminating the Israelites with an unforgettable display of luminary brightness, God then promised to lead His people for forty years with bright light at night and a smoky cloud during the day. They never had to be afraid of the dark because the Shekinah fire of God's holy presence was always with them. They didn't need any night-lights [hold up] because the lights were always on! Check out Exodus 13:21: "And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night." His listeners would be shocked to realize that Jesus was equating Himself with the pillar of holy fire.
- One of the names of the coming Messiah was "light." We see this in Daniel 2:22: "He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him."
- God Himself is referred to as light in 1 John 1:5: "This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." When Jesus declares Himself to be the light of the world, He is declaring His deity.
- God's first act was to create light and His final crescendo will be splashed with light as His work of redemption culminates. Revelation 21:23-24: "And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it." Revelation 22:5: "And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever."

Now let's see the context in which Jesus made this startling claim.

**1. Light in the Gospel of John.** The word "light" is used 24 times in John's gospel. In the prologue, we read in John 1:9: "The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world."

**2. Wilderness Metaphors.** As we learned last week, when Jesus declared Himself to be the bread of life in John 6, the people remembered the manna that was supplied for 40 years.

In John 7, Jesus attends the Feast of Tabernacles. Part of this celebration involved the pouring of water onto the ground, commemorating the water that came out of the rock in Numbers 17. While people are watching the water splash on the stones in the Temple, Jesus stood up and said in a loud voice in John 7:37: "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink."

And, now in chapter 8, Jesus asserts that He is the light of the world, hearkening back to the pillar of fire that led God's people in the desert. Jesus deliberately associated Himself with these three wilderness images in three consecutive chapters in order to establish His identity. He is the bread of life, the water of life, and the light of life.

### **Feast of Tabernacles**

In order to fully grasp the impact of Jesus' statement, we need to understand the Feast of Tabernacles. God inaugurated this annual feast to help the Israelites remember that for 4 decades they wandered in the wilderness before they were finally brought into the Promised Land (see Leviticus 23:40-43). There were two distinctives about this celebration that made it different from all their other annual feasts.

1. For 7 days the entire nation camped out in booths or tents made of branches and foliage to remind them of the hardships their ancestors had endured in the wilderness.

2. On the opening night of the celebration, four gigantic candelabras standing 75 feet high were lit, gloriously illuminating the entire Temple and much of Jerusalem (this is not to be confused with the ever-burning lampstand or menorah that was in the tabernacle according to Exodus 25). Each candelabra for the Feast of Tabernacles had four branches supplied by golden bowls filled with 10 gallons of oil. These flames lept toward the sky.

Throughout the week the light burned brightly as the religious leaders praised the Lord and sang songs of joy while the people watched and waited. Musicians played harps, lyres, cymbals and trumpets. This festival was to remind the Israelites of the glory of God, dwelling among them and how God's Shekinah brightness had once filled the Temple. This celebration also focused on the promise of God to send a light, the Anointed One, the Messiah, who would deliver them from darkness and despair.

Sacrifices were offered and Scriptures like Isaiah 9:2 were read: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwell in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone."

The exquisite imagery of this celebration culminates on the final day of the feast as Jesus declares: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." We know that Jesus makes this statement on the last day from John 7:37. What's amazing about His timing is that as the celebration wraps up, all the lights are extinguished. The reason

that all the lights are put out is that in their minds, God has not yet sent the Savior. The Temple has grown dark. The tents are torn down. And then Jesus stands up next to the magnificent Menorahs and declares that He is the Messiah!

One more point. John 1:14 says, "...the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Jesus "tabernacled" among us, which is exactly what they were celebrating in the feast of booths.

## Application

We started broadly so that we could narrow in and understand the meaning of this metaphor. Keeping in mind the properties of light, the Scriptural survey, the context, and the background to the Feast of Tabernacles, let's now apply this verse to our lives. Here are some truths that come to light (no pun intended).

Look again at John 8:12: "Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'"

### 1. Repetition.

The first thing to notice is that **"Again Jesus spoke"** to the people. Aren't you thankful that God doesn't just give us one chance? He spoke to both the sexual sinner and the lost legalist in the same chapter and is ready to do it again and again and again. Jesus loves to give us chances. I had to hear the gospel many times before I responded. But we don't have unlimited opportunities. At some point it will be too late for you. Twice in this chapter, in Jn 8:21 and in Jn 8:24, Jesus tells the Pharisees that they "will die in their sins." I can't think of anything more tragic than that. It's no accident that you're here today. This could be your last chance to put your faith in Christ.

### 2. Revelation.

Perhaps you're not sure if Jesus is really who He says He is. Friend, I don't know what else you could be waiting for. What more evidence do you need? When Jesus said, **"I am the light,"** He is claiming to be both God and Savior. He has perfectly fulfilled the prophecy found in Isaiah 42:6-7: "I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness."

### 3. Redemption.

Notice what comes next, **"...I am the light of the world. Whoever..."** Jesus came for the whole world. Interestingly, the word "world" occurs only 15 times in the first three gospels and 77 times alone in the Gospel of John! We must never lose sight of the importance of taking the gospel to the nations. I love that phrase, "whoever." Anyone can come to Him. He died for the sins of everyone. No matter what you've done, you can be forgiven. John 12:46: "I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness."

At the end of the service next weekend we're going to participate in a "global hymn sing" with thousands of churches around the world. Keith and Kristyn Getty have reintroduced a song called, "Facing a Task Unfinished" to shine the spotlight on the importance of taking the gospel to the nations. Pastor Chad and I will be talking about this on Moody Radio this Wednesday morning. I posted the song on the EBC Facebook page and have also included a link on the Sermon Extras tab on our website so you can learn it this week.

Friend, do you need to be forgiven? Don't run away from the light! Come to the light and be forgiven. Colossians 1:13-14: "He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

### 4. Response.

Salvation is not automatic. It doesn't work by osmosis just because you're in church today. It's for whoever "follows." To follow the Lord Jesus means to believe and receive or literally, "to follow together along a way." Have you done that yet? John 1:5 says that by nature we try to extinguish the light because it hurts our eyes. The problem with that is we will then stumble around in the darkness of our sins. The only way to have light is to follow the light.

This past Monday night I was invited by Edgewood member Nels Lindell to speak to the brand new Fellowship of Christian Athletes group at Blackhawk College. Incidentally, I've also spoken to another Christian group on campus called, "The Conversation." Seven guys from the baseball team came and three of them responded and decided to follow Christ! Some of them are in our services this weekend. Here's a picture. The whole reason this group got off the ground is because of the prayers of Nels. These groups are shining the light of Christ in a dark place.

This gave me a renewed vision for the impact Edgewood can have on college campuses around the Quad Cities. God is doing

some great things in our Ignite Singles Ministry. Last Sunday I attended their class and was really impressed with Robert Sanders' teaching and the large group discussion that focused on application. Things are also going well in our student ministry under the leadership of Chris and Jamie Rogers – over 50 students came to the Super Bowl party! I can't wait to onboard our Youth and Young Adults Pastor to bring even more focus and leadership so that we can reach more students and singles. Our search consultant will be presenting a list of candidates to the Deacons and Pastoral team this Thursday night.

## **5. Result.**

Once you respond and decide to follow Christ you "...will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." This literally reads, "He shall surely not walk in darkness." Darkness is a metaphor for disaster, death and destruction, along with sin and its consequences. Do you see the word "have"? We don't just get to see the light, we can have the light.

You can live in the light or despair in the dark. John 12:35: "So Jesus said to them, 'The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.'"

A boy once heard his Sunday School teacher say that Jesus was the light of the world. After class, he went up to his teacher and said, "If Jesus really is the light of the world, I wish He'd come hang out in my house. It's awfully dark where I live."

Is it dark where you live? You can change that by embracing the light of life.

## **6. Repent.**

Have you been slipping spiritually? Have you been defaulting to the dark instead of living in the light? If so, it's time to turn the lights on. Listen to Ephesians 5:8: "For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of the light."

## **7. Reflect.**

One of our purposes as His followers is to shine His light in a dark world. Matthew 5:14: "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden." Someone put it like this: "I'd rather light a candle than curse the darkness."

Last Sunday after the service an Edgewood member was so pumped about what he learned about Jesus being the bread of life that he told his parents all about it. He then went and told a neighbor. On Monday he shared with one of his employees. He's living out our value of going with the gospel – to his family, his neighbors and to his workplace. How about you?

I heard another amazing story this week.

Kendall, a first-grader, got saved in November, and has been reading Anchor for the Soul. She can't put it down (By the way, we've given away around 4,000 of these gospel books and are getting ready to publish it in Spanish – several EBC members are reading the manuscript right now to check for errors).

Recently Kendall asked her mom (Kara Fitch) if she could bring the book to school so she could read it on the bus. When she started reading it, one of her friends became curious and so they started reading it together. A few days later, another friend became interested and started reading it with the other two. One day both of these girls said to Kendall, "We want to know how to have Jesus in our lives." So this little 7-year-old told them. They both prayed right there on the bus and asked Jesus to save them! She came home and told her mom, "They asked me how to get to heaven. I told them and they did it."

Kendall and her sister Kailey are following Christ and will be baptized soon. Their parents, Tim and Kara Fitch, are living on mission and equipping their daughters to shine the light of Jesus in our dark world.

If you're stirred by this and want to do a better job of letting your light shine, here are some growing and going ideas.

1. If you're a mom, consider going to the Hearts at Home conference in Peoria April 22-23.
2. If you're single and looking to connect with others, there's a bowling and laser tag night at the QC Entertainment Center this Saturday night.
3. If you're divorced, check out Divorce Care on Wednesday nights.
4. If you're in high school and want to learn how to let your light shine on your campus, block out April 8-9 for Dare to Share in Chicago.
5. Participate in our shoe drive for gypsy children in Romania.
6. There's an event this Saturday focusing on biblical womanhood.
7. And I want to challenge every man at Edgewood to attend the Iron Sharpens Iron Men's Conference on

Saturday, April 16th at Harvest. I'm hoping for 100 men to go! Guys, we need to step it up. Former NFL quarterback Jeff Kemp and Moody grad Mark Jobe whose church in Chicago has over 20 locations, will be speaking.

1 Peter 2:9: "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

### Growing and Going

Let's milk this metaphor a little more as we look at some things that could be keeping us from fully shining for Christ.

1. Stop covering your light [put a box over lit lantern]. Are you doing something that is snuffing out the light of Christ in your life? Matthew 5:15-16: "Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

The whole purpose of shining our light is to give glory to God. This past Tuesday night I had the joy of presenting a check to Pregnancy Resources in the amount of \$51,555 for the Mobile Ultrasound Van. Thanks for living out your light as you gave so generously. The people at the training even stood up and applauded. I simply pointed to heaven and said, "All glory to God."

2. Make sure you're plugged in [try to turn lamp on that is not plugged in]. Some of you are not shining simply because you've unplugged from your power source. You can't grow if you're not plugged into God. In addition, one of our core values is to gather with God's people. Hebrews 10:25: "Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

3. Get recharged daily [hold up dim flashlight]. Is your light growing dim? The only way to burn bright is by getting recharged and rejuvenated by daily time in the Word of God. Psalm 119:105: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

4. Use these metaphors to help you remember. Whenever you eat bread or see bread or smell bread, ask yourself this question: "Am I finding my satisfaction by feeding on Christ?" And when you see the light of the sun (be patient; it's coming) or when you turn on a light, ask this question: "Am I plugged in to Christ and am I shining for Him today?"

We're going to turn off some of the lights and ask you to come forward if you are ready to follow Jesus Christ. Have you asked Christ to be your forgiver and leader? Are you a believer but you've been doing some things in the dark? It's time to bring it into the light.

Closing Song: "The Great Light of the World."

Sometimes at night am afraid  
I cover my eyes,  
Cover my shame  
So here in the dark  
Broken apart  
Come with your light

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### George Brooks - "I Am The Light Of The World" John 8:12

"Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life"" (NASB).

When the various necessities of life are considered, one absolute necessity for both plants and animals is light. Light is important because it has within it life and energy. Light and life cannot be separated.

Light is an excellent symbol of whom Jesus is and what he came into the world to do. When Jesus came into the world, the world was filled with the darkness of sin and the darkness of ignorance of God. Jesus came into the world as the Sun of Righteousness (Malachi 4:2). He also came into the world to give a clear explanation of God's character and conduct.

#### I. The Problem.

The words of Jesus in this text are much more significant than they appear at first glance. To gain some significance from this passage, we need to focus on the things surrounding these words.

First, in John 8:1-11 a man and a woman are seen walking in moral darkness. They were caught in the act of adultery. Some Pharisees caught these two persons walking in their moral darkness but they only brought the woman to Jesus that he might condemn her for her moral darkness.



But rather than Jesus condemning the woman for walking in moral darkness, he condemned her accusers. He did so by telling the one who was among them without sin to throw the first stone at the woman. After the accusing Pharisees left, Jesus said to those who were assembled in the temple, "I am the light of the world." This meant that he was the Source of light for those who walked in moral darkness.

There were some others who walked in darkness in this narrative. The Pharisees walked in spiritual darkness. They heard Jesus say "I am the light of the world." Jesus came into the world to give a visible explanation and evaluation of God. But the Pharisees believed the words of Jesus were false because he bore witness of himself (8:13).

According to Jewish teachings, there needed to be two witnesses for a statement to be considered true. But despite the teachings and beliefs of the Pharisees, it did not alter the fact that Jesus is the light for those in spiritual darkness.

There was also a man who appears in the ninth chapter of John who was born physically blind. Jesus healed this man to prove his power as the light of the world. He did this to create belief in himself. It would have been of little value to the world for Jesus to be the light of the world and no one believes him to be what he said.

## II. The Proclamation.

"I am the light of the world."

Jesus is the light that will never go out. He forever shines that he might lead sinners out of the darkness of death and into the light of life. He is the unique light because there has never been and will never be another just like him. Jesus is God's monogenes. This means that Jesus is the only one of his kind. He is God's only begotten Son.

Other prophets and religious leaders have claimed to be equal or superior to Jesus. But Jesus put himself in a class all by himself. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world." Others have been called lights, but Jesus is the light.

Light is a symbol of purity and holiness. The Apostle John said about God, "God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5, NASB). God, through Jesus Christ, is absolute purity and holiness personified.

Because Jesus is light, he could live among men of sin and not become contaminated. Light remains pure because of its nature. The purity of Jesus was not because of the absence of sin, it was because of his supreme excellence.

Jesus is the inexhaustible light. John said, "...The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it" (John 1:5, NASB). The word "comprehend" is a word that literally means to overpower or extinguish.

## III. The Proposal.

"I am the light of the world; he who follows Me..."

Jesus did not come into the world to light up a small corner. He is the universal light. But the proposal here is also made individual. Jesus gives light to the world collectively. But he offers light to us individually. Jesus said, "He who comes to Me."

John said concerning Jesus, "There was the true light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man" (John 1:9, NASB). We need to know that Jesus does not force himself on anyone. We always have two options. We can accept Jesus or we can reject him.

Since the world is in a state of spiritual and moral darkness, there is a need for Jesus, the light. Jesus is not for a few people only, he is for all people. He shines for the good of all. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life" (NASB).

It is true that all people do not accept Jesus as the light of the world, but he is still the light of the world whether we allow him to shine on us or not.

## IV. The Promise.

"I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life."

To follow a leader, the follower must have trust and confidence in the leader. All who follow Jesus are assured that they will not walk in darkness, but they shall have the light of life.

As the light of the world, Jesus brings God near man, and makes God real to man. He makes God personal and living. Jesus said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:9, NASB).

The Apostle John said, "No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him" (John 1:18, NASB).

Light is useful because it is a symbol of joy.

Light is useful because it contributes to safety.

Light is useful because it gives guidance.

Light is useful because it dispels darkness and darkness is a source of fear.

David said, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life; whom shall I dread" (Psalm 27:1, NASB).

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## **He That Followeth Me Shall Not Walk in Darkness John 8:12 - Burris Butler - Sermon Outlines on Christian Living**

### **Introduction**

- A. These words of Jesus were spoken as ceremonial lamps were being trimmed and as the sun came over the Mount of Olives: "I am the light of the world."
- B. "Let there be light."

### **I. Light Has Many Important Qualities**

- A. Light reveals what was hidden.
  - 1. Paul speaks of the "mystery" of the gospel.
  - 2. Examine John 14:9.
- B. Light shows things in their true perspective.
  - 1. Things in the dark appear to have strange and hideous shapes.
  - 2. Light takes away the terror by showing things as they are
- C. Light cleanses.
- D. Light heals. (Malachi 4:2)
- E. Light guides. (Psalm 119:105)
- F. Light is the source of life itself.

### **II. Our Simple Duty Is to Follow Jesus**

- A. The New Testament furnishes us with examples.
  - 1. Jesus called Simon and Andrew: "Follow me" (Matthew 4:19).
  - 2. Jesus called James and John and they "followed him" (Matthew 4:22).
  - 3. Levi left the receipt of custom upon hearing Jesus' words: "Follow me" (Mark 2:14).
  - 4. Jesus extends the invitation to all men: "Follow me" (Matthew 16:24).
- B. We are to follow: His example; His teaching; His commandments; His leading.
- C. We follow all, and all the way, if we would be saved.

### **III. To Follow Jesus Is to Walk in the Light 1 John 1:5–2:10—Antithesis.**

- A. "If we walk in the light ... the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin."  
"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."
- B. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive."  
"If we say that we have not sinned, we make him [God] a liar."
- C. "And hereby we do that we know him, if we keep his commandments."  
"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar."
- D. "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light."  
"He that hateth his brother, is in darkness."

### **IV. We Can Respond to the Light in Various Ways**

- A. We can follow its leading.
- B. We can walk away from it.
- C. We can close our eyes to it.
- D. We can become blind.

## Conclusion

- A. In a real sense as we walk in the light, we become the "light of the world."
    - 1. Christ is light; we are reflection.
    - 2. He is effulgence; we are refulgence.
  - B. The world is in darkness.
  - C. The world's only hope is in Jesus, the light of the world, and in those who walk in the light
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## John Butler - Divine Power John 8:12 - [Sermon Starters](#)

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world, he that followeth me shall not walk after darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

This is one of the great verses in the Bible. In it we learn of Divine power which in spite of all that man does will overcome all evil and God's will will be done anyway. Note three wonderful truths from this text.

### FIRST—THE IMPREGNABLE WORD OF GOD

**"Then."** This one word is so encouraging. The enemy of Christ and of God had tried with all their might in their clever scheming to silence Christ. But when the dust clouds of all the opposition has cleared, Christ is still standing and speaking. It reminds us of Acts 12 which begins with Peter in prison, put there by Herod in an attempt to stop the Word of God, but an angel got Peter out of prison. Later Herod gave a speech and was acclaimed a god but before the chapter ends he is eaten with worms and "The word of God grew and multiplied" (Acts 12:24). You cannot silence the Word of God. It is impregnable, unconquerable, eternal.

### SECOND—THE IMMEASURABLE GRACE OF GOD

**"Again"** Though His ministry was rejected time and again, Christ spoke **"again"** to the people and gave them another opportunity to turn to Him and be saved. Sin may be great but grace is greater. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20). We cannot measure the greatness of grace. Thank God for the grace that gave us more opportunity to be saved even though we had rejected Him.

### THIRD—THE INCOMPARABLE SON OF GOD

"I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."  
Three wonderful truths are stated about Christ here.

1. **The Deity of Christ.** "I am." These two words are an abbreviation of the name of God given to Israel back in Exodus 3:14—"I am that I am." It says Jesus is God.
  2. **The diadem of Christ.** "Light." This word declares the Messiahship of Jesus Christ. The prophet Isaiah spoke prophetically of the Messiah when he said, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light, they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined" (Isaiah 9:2). The world sits in darkness, but when Christ comes back to reign and rule as Israel's Messiah, He will turn the lights on.
  3. **The deliverance in Christ.** "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have have the light of life." Darkness promotes death. Light gives life. Life dies in the dark. If you want things to have life and grow, they must have light. Sin brings great darkness to man. (Ephesians 5:8). Christ overcomes the darkness with His light of life (II Corinthians 4:6).
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## F B Meyer - THE LIGHT OF LIFE

"I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."--John 8:12.

ON EITHER side of the temple court stood a huge golden candelabra. On the first and on each succeeding night of the week of the Feast of Tabernacles, these were lit, and became two immense globes of flame, pouring a brilliant flood of light over temple and city and the deep shadows of Olivet. And it was probably to these that our Lord alluded, when He spoke of Himself as the Light of the world.

Of course it would be quite legitimate to compare Him to the glorious orb of day, "of this great universe the eye and soul." What the sun is to the world of nature, Jesus is in the world of the invisible and spiritual. By Him all things consist in harmonious rhythm and order. From Him come all tides of life and beauty, which go to make us truly blessed. And his influence is exerted so noiselessly and quietly, that we can only compare it to those waves of transparent beauty, which break in their untainted loveliness on the world

around; but no ear catches the music of their ripple or the throb of their tides. However, it will be better to turn away from this seductive comparison, in order to apprehend exactly what was in his heart when He said, "I am the Light of the world."

The Feast of Tabernacles commemorated the march of the pilgrim hosts through the desert, fed by manna for their food; supplied with water from the smitten rock for their thirst; guided by a pillar of cloud which had at its heart a torch of fire, though this was only apparent when night had veiled the glaring light of the sun, and it brooded tranquilly over the camp. Our Lord compared Himself to the first of these symbols in the sixth chapter; to the second in the seventh: and to the third in this. He declares that to all the pilgrim hosts of men, He is what the cloud with its heart of fire was to that race of desert wanderers.

Let us form a clear conception of that wondrous symbol, which God took not away from his people; the pillar of cloud, in which He went before them by day to lead them in the way, and the pillar of fire to give them light, to go by day and night (Exod. 13:21; Num. 9:15-23).

## **I. AS TO ITS NATURE.**

In appearance it was probably like one of those white cumulus clouds which sail majestically and slowly through the blue of a summer sky; like some aerial snow mountain, which is to the heavens what the iceberg is to the seas. We have seen such in the process of being manufactured from the mists that lie low at morning in Alpine valleys; and at night we have watched them as they came to anchor, or were stranded on some rocky peak. The one point of difference lay in the Shekinah fire that shone in the heart of the pillar of cloud. It was always there, though only visible when daylight was gone. But that fire in the heart of the cloud was prophetic of our Lord's Deity, enfolded and enshrined in his humanity. The Word was made flesh and tabernacled among men, who knew not what He was, save when on the night of the Transfiguration the glory that dwelt in Him became evident, bathing his form in waves of light and fire.

And it was his consciousness of this marvellous union of the Divine and human elements, though the Divine was so carefully and constantly veiled from ordinary eyes, that enabled our Lord to speak of Himself as the source of spiritual illumination to all the inhabitants of this million-peopled world. There was no egotism, or self-assumption in his claim. It was the literal truth. He bore record of Himself, because He could say nothing less; and He knew whence He came and whither He went.

And there is a consistency between his claims and his powers which has stopped the mouth of objectors and critics. Though this assertion has stood upon the page of Scripture for eighteen hundred years, in a world quick to detect conceit and expose its hollow pretensions; yet no infidel has ever thought of assailing Him in this, which is the weakest and absurdest assertion ever made, if it be not the deepest, truest, and most sacred. Is there not a secret conviction in the heart of men that Jesus is well able to be this which He professes to be? Does not his universal influence--which is confined to no one type of man, but touches equally European and Asiatic, the shivering Esqui-maux, and the enervated South Sea Islander--prove that He is more than man, and that in his human nature there burns the fire of Deity? Nay, as the darkness has grown thicker over the world, and one light after another has died out, leaving Him shining in brilliant and glorious loneliness, has there not been abundant witness borne to the fire which is in the heart of the cloud?

"Yes, Jesus is God; in Him the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily, and it is because of this that He is able to fight and guide the generations of mankind. The Life has ever been the Light of men. Not to believe that degrades the character of Christ below contempt, and leaves us face to face with an insoluble problem of how to account for his influence upon the world.

## **II. AS TO ITS FUNCTIONS.**

The work of the fire-cloud was threefold --to lead, to shield, and to illumine.

It led.--The wilderness was a trackless waste to the hosts of Israel, and they were absolutely dependent on the cloud to show their path, and to find out a resting-place each night. On this point the Divine commands admitted of no doubt or question. When the cloud gathered itself up from the Tabernacle on which it brooded, the hosts must strike their tents and follow. However desirable the site of the camp, they must leave it. However difficult the desert paths, they must traverse them. However uninviting the spot where it stopped, they must halt there, and remain just so long as it tarried.

It might be a Marah, without palms, or wells, or shelter; but thither they must go, and there they must remain, though many days should elapse. It might be an Elim, with palms and wells of water, and everything that could render a residence desirable to the tired travellers; but they must be gone from it when the cloud started, though they had enjoyed it for but a brief spell. The cloud might be taken up by day or by night; but there was no choice, except to follow, or to wander in a trackless waste and die. For the manna fell and the water flowed, and the Divine protection was enjoyed, only where the cloud rested.

It shielded.--For, probably, when the people had pitched their tents on some exposed and scorched plain, it unfolded itself like a vast canopy, its base resting on the Tabernacle which stood in the midst of the camp, whilst its fleecy folds were spread out so as to

screen the furthest extremities of the camp from the overpowering heat of the noontide sun.

It gave light.--Whilst the camp was hushed in deep slumber it watched over it like the eye of God. The people had no need of the sun by day, or of the moon by night; for the Lord had become their everlasting Light, and the days of their mourning might have been ended. There was a sense in which there was no night there, and they needed not candle or beacon-fire or torch; for the Lord God gave them light. Following the cloud, they had no need to abide in darkness; they already possessed the light of life.

All this the Lord Jesus is willing to be to us. In Him all the fullness dwells. In his many-sided nature God has made all grace to abound, that we, having all-sufficiency in all things, should be abundantly filled and satisfied out of Him. In days of doubt He will be our Guide; in days of trial our Covert and Shade; in days of darkness our Light. Nay more, as in the Pullman carriage the electric light comes on before the tunnel is entered and lingers after it is left, so special manifestations of the presence of Jesus will precede and follow times of special trial.

The peace and blessedness of our earthly pilgrimage will be in direct proportion as we appropriate Jesus in these various aspects of his character and work. Too many of us reserve Him for special times and purposes, as we keep our capital sacredly sealed from use in the bank; too few of us use Him as the spending money which we carry in our pockets and employ for every trifling need.

The needs and trials of life are probably intended by God to compel us to search for and discover the fullness of Jesus. It is probable that men would never have discovered the treasures of the natural world had it not been for the pressure of hunger and want; and it is certain that many of us had never known what the Lord Jesus can be to the human soul but for the failure of everything beside, which drove us to Him. Our Father sometimes gives us a glimpse of perfect bliss through some earthly channel; and then as suddenly closes it up, that we may be forced to take the freshly realized thirst to the only fountain which can really appease it.

When we first enter the kingdom, God gives us a whole Christ for the supply of our infinite requirements; but at first we catch only a glimpse of the lower shelves of his Divine sufficiency, and perhaps suppose that they are all. But as we help ourselves to these and grow, the veil slowly uplifts, and we see other and higher shelves; and gradually our faith becomes stronger, and taller, and more able to help itself to the added wealth which it perceives to be its own in Christ Jesus.

There is no need for us then to spend our lives in this world, desolate and forlorn, lacking the blessedness and power which others so evidently possess, and bemoaning the barrenness of our lot; there, right before us, is Jesus in all his glorious fullness, waiting to take the shape of our need, as water of the pitcher that carries it. It is for us to claim Him, and make ours by faith any special side of his being which our circumstances specially demand as necessary. When we have learnt this lesson, we can look with equanimity on frost and thaw, on autumn and winter, on the dying Cherith and the blighted grain; our sources of supply lie far away in the nature of God, who is the perennial fountain, the unwaning day, the unending summer of love. The differences which obtain among Christian men are very largely due to the different ratio in which they have learnt to appropriate Christ--not by a rush of emotion, but by a naked faith. Rutherford said truly, "There are curtains to be drawn aside in Christ that we never saw, of new foldings of love in Him; I despair that ever I shall win to the far end of that love, there are so many pines in it."

### **III. AS TO THE CONDITIONS.**

"He that followeth Me." We must put Christ first. He must hold the position of Leader and Guide, Primate and King. Our one question must ever be, Which way is He taking? and we may generally ascertain this as we endeavour to answer one of the following questions :

- (1) What is the law of Christ?
- (2) What is the will of Christ?
- (3) What would Christ do under these circumstances?

If we are not sure, we must wait till we are; but knowing, we must follow at all costs. Oh to keep just behind Him--not running on in front, or lagging behind! They say that lambs are taught to follow at the heels of a shepherd, by his dropping for them savoury morsels, such as they like; and we may well follow hard after Him whom we love, and who loves us, upheld by his right hand, because of the inestimable benefits which will accrue.

We cannot follow Jesus except we leave all--our own judgment and wisdom, our schemes and preferences, our predilections and fancies; but if we dare to forsake them, and step right away from the boat, we shall win an abundant compensation. Was Paul a loser, who suffered the loss of all things that he might win Christ?

Follow Jesus, Christian! keep Him always well before thee in every path of duty; in every sphere of service; in every attack, like Jonathan's, on the stronghold of the foe. Tread no track where his footprints do not appear. But when thou descriest them, plant in

them thy feet, defying aught to separate thee from Him.

Shall not walk in darkness.--Not in the darkness of ignorance and error; not in the darkness of perplexity and confusion; not in the darkness of joylessness and depression. If any man dares to follow Christ so far as he knows, deliberately sacrificing his own will and way to his, it is simply marvellous how the mists will roll up, the night clouds disperse, and the perplexities which had beset the soul give way as brushwood before the tread of the sportsman. Endeavour to please Christ absolutely; and you will know almost immediately what He wants to be done, and how. You may not be able to see more than a step in advance; but dare to take that step, and you will see the next and the next. "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light."

But shall have the light of life.--Light is essential to life. Without light flowers would be colourless, even if they grew; animate and inanimate creation would fail; and the world would hasten back to primeval chaos, out of which light came. And equally necessary is it for the inner life to be sustained and nourished by communion with, and obedience to, the Lord Jesus. Apart from Him it is doomed to wither. In Him, through Him, and by Him alone, can it thrive. There is no doubt about this. Begin even now to believe in and follow Him, though it may involve death and the grave; yet, as surely as the soul follows Him, acting up to all its present convictions of duty, it will emerge into a clearness of vision and a vigour of life which shall vindicate its choice for ever. Let Jesus be your pillar of cloud and fire!