



John 8:12

I am the Light of the World

One of the greatest legal battles was once fought over a terrible automobile accident that involved a train at Blue Mountain. The accident happened on a dark rainy night as a fast moving car came down the mountain road, around a sharp curve, and ran head long into the train. Several people were killed in the accident.

In the fiery contested court battle the railroad flagman told precisely how he got off the train before it reached the railroad crossing and stood in the highway swinging his lantern back and forth to signal any approaching vehicle. This was his customary behavior whenever the train approached this notoriously bad intersection. On this particular night he had done precisely as he had been instructed, and as he had on many previous occasions.

Under determined cross-examination he consistently answered each question as to his procedures that particular night. Yes, he got off the train ahead of the crossing. Yes, he stood in the highway. Yes, he swung his lantern back and forth in a cross manner. He even jumped out of the way of the speeding automobile before it hit the train. The jury deliberated, and the railroad won because of the testimony of this flagman.

About a year later the flagman who had now retired from the railroad was fishing on one of the beautiful lakes. The attorney who had represented the families saw him and asked how the fishing was. The attorney said, "You were a witness at a railroad accident last year. You know, that was the best-fought trial I have ever had. I should have won that case. You were the best witness I have ever cross-examined. You were great. I lost that case because of your splendid performance. You were a determined and a perfect witness. "

The humble flagman squirmed a little and said, "Oh, man was I scared that day. I have never ever been so frightened in all my life. "

The lawyer replied, "No one would have ever known it. You were great the way you handled me. "

"Oh, I was scared," the man said. "I was so scared you were going to ask *that* question. "

"What question?" inquired the attorney.

"You know," the man replied. "I was scared you were going to ask, 'Did you have your lantern lit that night?' "

How many people go through this spiritually dark world without their lantern lit? Do have yours lit? Do you have the light of the Lord Jesus Christ dwelling within you? Is your lantern lit? Is it brightly trimmed?

FEAST OF THE TABERNACLES

Exodus 13:21-22 is the first reference in the Old Testament to the identity of the LORD God with the cloud of glory that led and protected Israel during her wandering in the wilderness for forty years. It was huge and striking in size and symbolized Jehovah's presence with His people. This great cloud of glory gave off light by night and illuminated the way for His people. By day the cloud led the nation and gave direction. From the cloud God spoke. The presence of God overshadowed them, and went with them in their wandering through the wilderness. The pillar of cloud and of fire was evidence of Yahweh's presence with His people.

This is the same cloud of glory that filled the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle and later in the temple in Jerusalem when the LORD came down and met with His people. The pillar dispelled the darkness of the night and any would be attackers. However, in time the glory departed from Israel. Much of the religious ceremonies that continued was only ritual. Religion was formal and empty.

Pouring of water

In Jesus' day the people commemorated the wilderness wandering at the Feast of the Tabernacles. Each morning during the eight-day feast the priests in procession went to the pool of Siloam and drew water in golden pictures. Upon returning to the temple they poured the water on the altar of sacrifice, and the people accompanying the priests sang and chanted the Hallel consisting of Psalms 113-118. With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation (Isaiah 12:3). It was a reminder of what God had done in the wilderness by providing water. Psalm 114:7-8 reads,

Tremble, O earth, before the Lord,
Before the God of Jacob,
Who turned the rock into a pool of water,
The flint into a fountain of water.

It was a marvelous picture of the spiritual water that the people would receive in the days of the Messiah. One day as the water was being poured, and the people finished singing, Jesus cried out for all to hear in the temple precinct these words in John 7:37-38, "Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 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. "

The great light

At the same great eight-day ceremony after sunset, two great oil fed lamps were lighted in the court of the temple. Maimonides said the lighting of the great menorah took place every evening during the feast when young priests

great menorah took place every evening during the feast when young priests climbed ladders and lighted the wicks, and the people staged a great torch dance. Others think it was observed only during the first evening of the feast.

The giant lamp in the temple suddenly cast its light over the city of Jerusalem and the darkness was penetrated. It was a reminder each year that during the wilderness wandering the pillar of cloud by day and the fire by night accompanied the people when they left Egypt until they crossed over Jordan into the Promised Land.

The prophet Isaiah wrote in 9:2,

The people who walk in darkness
Will see a great light;
Those who live in a dark land,
The light will shine on them.

Just as Jesus is the new manna sent down from heaven, the water from the rock, He is also the cloud, the light of God's holy presence among His people. I'am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life (John 8:12).

Jesus stood in the courtyard of the temple at the Feast of the Tabernacles and shouted, I'am the light of the world. What that column of fire was for Israel in the Old Testament Jesus is for the whole world. The LORD God was with His chosen people. Jesus is God with us.

The cloud of glory symbolized God's presence with the people, which had long departed from Israel. Now, in Jesus' day, the Holy of Holies was empty and Jesus stood and shouted, I'am the light of the world. I am God with you. I am God with His people. Jesus Christ is God with you. He is the glory and presence of God among men.

JESUS IS THE I AM

Jesus said, I'am the light of the world, and we are reminded, God is light. It is His nature to be pure and holy. It is what He is in Himself in His eternal attributes. Therefore, when Jesus said, I'am the light of the world He was declaring to the world His absolute deity. Again it was Jehovah, the I AM announcing that He alone is God. I'am is emphatic in verse twelve. It is the style of deity (cf. 6:35; 8:58). The Word who had been with God in the beginning was now incarnate on earth.

Jesus once again uses the emphatic *ego eimi*, meaning I and I alone, I and no other. I'am the light of the world. Jesus was using language that only God could use. It would be blasphemy for anyone else to use such language.

When the Pharisees jumped on Jesus after He made this dogmatic I'am statement Jesus gave a strong testimony, You will die in your sins, for unless you come to believe that I am (what I say) you shall die in your sins (v. 24). Again Jesus connects Himself with the I'AM THAT I AM of Exodus 3:14. Unless you believe on Him you will die in your sins.

The I am 'formula

In verse twenty-eight Jesus again uses the I'AM formula as He speaks of His coming death. So Jesus said,

In verse twenty-eight Jesus again uses the I'AM formula as He speaks of His coming death. So Jesus said, When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He*, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me (8:28). The I'am is in the same sense as in verse twenty-four. I (and I alone) am what I tell you, namely I am from above; I am not of this world (v. 23).

Verses 24, 28 and 58 lead to a grand climax. The present tense, I'am predicates absolute existence for the person of Jesus Christ. Before Abraham came into being (before he was born, before he came into existence), I AM (v. 58). Jesus existence as a person is constant and independent of any beginning in time. He is eternal through the ages.

I'am ≙ I exist. Jesus testifies to the divine, eternal pre-existence of His person. He, and He alone is the Light of the world. He reveals Himself as no other possibly can. He is the I AM, and it is His light that shines and penetrates the darkness of this world.

In John chapter nine, Jesus in a miraculous deed clearly demonstrated that He is the Light of the world, who bestows the light of life. Those who reject Him remain in their sins. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world (9:5). The blind man testifies, whereas I was blind, now I see (v. 25). His conviction and faith rise to a climax as he sees the true light of Jesus when he declares, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Jesus (v. 38). Jesus is the I AM. He is worthy of our worship. Jesus used the name of the burning bush, and linked it with the symbol of perfect revelation of the great I AM.

The magnificent affirmation

Abraham was overjoyed in his lifetime to see the day of Christ and saw it and rejoiced. The whole redemptive work of Christ is probably in mind. Abraham looked forward to the day of the Messiah and rejoiced in it.

The climatic point of John chapter eight is this superb declaration of Jesus before Abraham was born, I am (v. 58). John begins His Gospel by proclaiming the pre-existence of the Word. Jesus eternally existed with the Father in heaven. His verily, verily (for certain, for certain) marks this out as an important and emphatic statement. Before Abraham came into existence, I am. Abraham had a definite beginning in time as contrasted with the eternal I'am. Jesus did not say, I'was. He said emphatically, I'am. It speaks of His eternity of being. With these words, I'AM Jesus makes his boldest declaration about Himself.

The declaration I'am must have its fullest meaning and significance. It is the emphatic style of deity. No one would ever speak of a human being in this manner. The Old Testament translators of the Hebrew into Greek rendered Exodus 3:14, I'AM THAT I AM in the form we have here, I'am (*ego eimi*).

Jesus Christ, the Light of the world is one with the Father in the unity of the Godhead. It is the supreme claim to deity with the great formula of the great I'AM. He is the LORD God incarnate.

The apostle John wrote, And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth (1:14). The Light of the world is our complete, full and perfect revelation from God. Just as light needs no authentication, the Light of the world validates Himself. Nobody needs to label or describe light; it speaks for itself. The reality of Christ makes its impact on human life and verifies His claims by the transformation that it affects. The risen Christ is His own best witness.

Have you seen His glory?

Have you found the LORD God in Jesus Christ?

Have you found the LORD God in Jesus Christ?

The cloud led the people in the wilderness until they crosses over the Jordan River into the Promised Land in Canaan. In the person of Jesus Christ we have the full and complete revelation of God to man. He is all the light we need to bring us into God's holy presence. The only one who can ever reveal the perfect likeness of God is His own Son. He leads us to the Father.

The presence of the cloud was an ever-present witness that God was with them. He was always near. He is the protector for everyone who comes to Him. He has His hands around and under us.

Jesus is the light in the Gospel of John (1:4-9, 12; 3:19; 9:5; 12:46). Jesus is the divine light —the holiness of God. Light is the emblem of holiness and righteousness. Christ is the wisdom, righteousness and sanctification and redemption from God.

In the opening section of John chapter eight we see the Light of the world indicating the righteousness of God before the Pharisees who drug a woman in before Him. How powerful that holy light shone when He said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. Her accusers were cut to the core with convicting power of God. The holiness of Jesus Christ as the Light of the world smote their sin-darkened hearts. The power of the light cut to the core and they departed one by one. "Go and sin no more," were the words of a righteous God. He did not say go in peace and sin some more.

Jesus is the unique light of the world in the midst of depraved and corrupt mankind. He came and lived the one perfect life which still convicts sinful man. Isaiah 42:6 reads, "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. In 49:6 the prophet quotes the Lord, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth. In deed, Jesus is the sun of righteousness (Malachi 4:2).

CHRIST IS THE LIGHT TO A MORALLY AND SPIRITUALLY DARK WORLD

Jesus shines brightly in a spiritually dark world. The light conquers the opposing power called darkness. "Light triumphs over darkness. John opens his gospel with the deity of Jesus Christ and therefore the light of His essential character and attributes (1:4-12). The apostle tells us the Logos is the light. Jesus said, "the light is come into the world, and those who believe on Christ come to the light and those who will not believe shun it (3:18-21).

The contrast is straightforward: divine truth; clear as light, as opposed to ignorance, unbelief and depravity. It is righteousness of Christ as opposed to depraved unrighteousness of the sinner.

The Light is our guide

The LORD guided the people of Israel in the wilderness by the cloud and the pillar of fire. When the cloud moved the people moved. When it stayed still, they camped (Numbers 9:17-23).

Jesus is the one who gives the believer guidance. When we are in fellowship with Him He leads us and we move when He moves. When He abides we abide with Him.

Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. "

To follow the light is to believe

In John 12:46 Jesus said, "I have come *as* Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness. Following Christ is possible only as we believe on Him. Are you following the Light? Jesus is the Light, the only Light into the presence of God. You will no longer be walking in spiritual darkness if you will follow Him. The one who does not follow or believe in Christ still remains in darkness.

The Light is our protection

God in the wilderness protected Israel with the cloud covering. The wilderness of Sinai is one of the most inhospitable places on the earth where the daytime temperatures reach 150 degrees, and then it falls to below freezing at night. God provided shelter from the heat by day with the cloud, and warmth at night with the pillar of fire. When the evening came upon them the cloud protected Israel. The people would have died without God's presence. He provided light by night and shade by day.

The Lord Jesus Christ protects us in the palm of his hands. He is our Shepherd, provider and keeper.

The unbelieving world is walking in spiritual darkness. That is the spiritual state of the unbeliever. Jesus said, "He that follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life. "

The world is in spiritual darkness, and Jesus Christ is our only hope. He alone is the light of life in a world of spiritual darkness.

The great claim of Jesus provoked the unbelieving Pharisees to rage. Chapters eight and nine tell of this vigorous opposition to Jesus.

WALKING IN THE LIGHT

What is it like to walk in the light?

We follow the light of the Lord Jesus Christ when we commit ourselves to Him as our only Lord and Savior. To follow Jesus is to believe and trust Him. Like the children of Israel who followed the light in the wilderness, we must follow Jesus Christ. For the believer it is a permanent spiritual attachment. Everyone who follows Him shall not walk in darkness. He will no longer be lost in the deadly darkness and perish in the world's wilderness desert of depravity.

We are drawn to the light; it is not drawn to us. The Light causes us to follow Him.

Jesus is the light; He gives life. He is the Light that disperses life to the person who lives in Him, and partakers of His life become light, walking as light in the dark world. The life He gives is eternal.

Believers are reflected light

The believer of Jesus Christ is the reflected light of the Lord Jesus. He is the light of the world and He said His followers are to be light in the world (cf. Eph. 5:8; John 12:35-36). The light of life is the spiritual, divine light that is possessed only by the follower or believer in Jesus Christ. Jesus emphasized: "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life. "

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16).

For the Christian the light of Christ actually penetrates him and shall become his personal possession. Our light is His light, a reflection of His light working in and through us.

The figure breaks down as all do when communicating spiritual reality.

This light of life is the spiritual life, abiding union with God who is the essence of life.

Darkness and death go together; moreover light and eternal resurrected life also go together.

God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all. He sent His Son who is the light of the world to give light and eternal life to each person who believes on Him. Each believer is a light shining out in a world of sin, depravity and spiritual darkness.

SOME ABIDING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

When you "see the light" of who the "Light of the world" is you can only fall at His feet and worship Him as the great I AM THAT I AM.

Jehovah with us! The LORD God with us! Hallelujah! The LORD God reigns. The apostle Paul reminds us that every man, woman, child will bow and worship the Lord Jesus Christ. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:8-11).

This is why it is imperative that we preach Jesus Christ as Lord. If you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same *Lord* is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Romans 10:9-13).

Jesus said, "You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for *so* I am" (John 13:13). He is the same from everlasting to everlasting. The only conclusion you can come to is where Jesus is there is God. There God lives, speaks, calls, asks, acts, decides, loves, chooses, forgives, judges, rejects, hardens, suffers, dies. Nothing bolder can be said, or imagined. Jesus is God. He is the great "I AM THAT I AM."

When you encounter the Light of the world you experience the deep penetrating power of His light that reveals sin.

It is not strange that when the Light convicted the Pharisees they picked up stones to kill Him. He always penetrates our wicked hearts and reveals our depravity. When He reveals our true selves we cry out,

Woe is me, for I am ruined!
Because I am a man of unclean lips,
And I live among a people of unclean lips;
For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts (Isaiah 6:5).

Jesus said the Holy Spirit, would continue to do just what He does.

And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged (John 16:8-11).

One of the finest examples of this great truth applied to the human heart is the testimony of the apostle Paul in Acts 9:1-6. He saw the Light and it cut him to the core and he cried out to God. As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? And he said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do (vv. 3-6).

The arrogant Pharisees stumbled in their spiritual darkness. In effect they said, I don't see it that way. You are just talking about yourself. ”

When we have experienced the holy presence of the Light of the world living within us we are a changed people.

When the Jesus Christ comes into our lives the moment we believe on Him He changes our lives, and we respond to Him as our Lord. Our response is, Lord, what would you have me do? It is our responsibility to share the Light. The prophet Isaiah said, Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us? Then I said, Here am I. Send me! (6:8).

When we walk in the Light we live a victorious Christian life.

It is impossible to live the Christian life without walking in His light every day. Jesus promises the believer the light of life. The light which radiates from our lives is a life in communion with God. Are you walking in that light every day? The apostle Paul encourages the believer to walk in the light:

Therefore do not be partakers with them; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light (Ephesians 5:17-13).

If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us ” (1 John 1:6-10).

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When we appropriate Jesus as the Light of the world He gives us life.

He is the Light of life that disperses eternal life to all who believe on Him. The person who lives in him, and partakes of His life becomes light, walking as light, in a dark world.

Have you seen the Light? Jesus Christ is the only source of eternal life. He alone imparts spiritual life. Do you want to be freed from spiritual darkness?

If you need help in becoming a Christian here is [A Free Gift for You](#).

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