“I Am the Light of the World”

John 8:12
11-24-2024



Introduction:

* ***Jesus Christ is the Light of the World!***

I. ***The Light of the World is a*** **PERSONAL** **LIGHT**
(“I”)

II. ***The Light of the World is a*** **PRESENT** **LIGHT**
(“AM”)

III. ***The Light of the World is an*** **EXCLUSIVE** **LIGHT**
(“the Light”)

IV. ***The Light of the World is a*** **EXPANSIVE** **LIGHT**
(“of the World”)

V. ***The Light of the World is a*** **ABIDING** **LIGHT**
(“he that followeth me”)

VI. ***The Light of the World is a*** **PROTECTIVE** **LIGHT**
(“shall not walk in darkness”)

VII. ***The Light of the World is a*** **LIFE-SAVING** **LIGHT**
(“but have the light of life”)

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Introduction:

The day I trusted Jesus Christ, the whole world lit up; everything was immediately bright; spiritual understanding now flooded my formerly spiritual dark soul.

The religion of the Lord Jesus Christ is a religion of light. One of the most splendid descriptions of our Heavenly Father is in the words of John: “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all” (I John 1:5). James says, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights” (Ja. 1:17). Note James descriptive name for God, “the Father of lights.” And the Lord Jesus declares that those who seek to do the will of God are the “children of light” (Jn. 12:36). Our Savior never said a more splendid thing about Himself than when He uttered that sublime declaration, “I am the light of the world” (Jn. 8:12, 9:5).

One rabbi said, “Light is the name of the Messiah” (cited by Matthew Henry commentary)

Daniel 2:22
He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

Luke 2:32
A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

The psalmist called Jehovah God his “light.”

Psalm 27:1
A Psalm of David.
The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Isaiah 60:19
The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.

For Jesus to be the Light, He must also be God!

Note: The “I AM” statements of Jesus in John.

The Need for (sun)light: If there was no sunlight, there would be no life at all (no plant life, no water cycle, no seasons, just darkness and coldness. The earth would be a lifeless, useless planet).

Places on earth where there is limited sunlight are depressing, less friendly.

At the Feast of Tabernacles, the Jews would light a huge candelabra in the Temple at night to remind the people of the pillar of fire that guided Israel in the Old Testament wilderness journey (Wiersbe, p. 320).

Here, Jesus perhaps uses this occasion to teach about His light.

The Old Testament prophets foretold of the Messiah being called "The sun of righteousness."

Malachi 4:2
But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

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I. ***The Light of the World is a*** **PERSONAL LIGHT**
("I")

In this verse, Jesus draws an analogy between Himself and the natural sun. The major difference between the two is that one light is a created object (Gen. 1:14-19) and the other is the personal Creator Himself.

The physical sun	The Son of God
--created on the fourth day (Gen. 1:14-19)	--eternal
--illuminates only half the day	--omnipresent: always available
--emits tons of irreplaceable energy everyday	--omnipotent: never any power loss
--too much exposure will harm you	--you can never get too much exposure (the more the better)
--will one day shine no more	--will shine forever Rev. 21:23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

The Light of the world is not an “it”; the light of the world is not a “thing”; not an impersonal force like electricity. The Light of the world is a Person.

Jesus does not merely give light—He is the light. He does not merely show you the way—He is the way.

II. *The Light of the World is a* PRESENT LIGHT

(“AM”)

Jesus does not say “I was” the light, as if He was a light that shone one day and then was extinguished. Nor does He say, “I will be” the light someday, off into the heavenly horizon. Rather, He says “I am the light” right now in the present.

But what about John 9:5 – “As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world” ??

The Light Incarnate was temporarily seen; however, after His death, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus sent His Holy Spirit who illuminates up to this very day all who come to Jesus (Heb. 10:32).

2 Cor. 4:6
For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

III. *The Light of the World is an* EXCLUSIVE LIGHT

(“the Light”)

The definite article “the” points to the exclusiveness of the Light.

Jesus did not say “I am a light...” but “the” one and only spiritual light with no rivals.

Jesus is not one light among many others; there are no other sources of light.

We (like the mood does for the sun) may reflect the Light (and therefore be called “the light of the world” – Mt. 5:14-16); but we are not the source of light, simply reflectors.

There is for our solar system only one sun; so Jesus is the only light for the human race.

Our society always looks at “the straight and narrow” in a negative sense; however, isn’t a straight and narrow road better than a crooked and confusing one? Which directions would you rather follow? The plain and simple given by Christ, or the confusion that the world offers.

IV. *The Light of the World is a* EXPANSIVE LIGHT

("of the World")

"The world" = the *kosmos*.

Jesus is the light who is available to everyone through the earth.

John 1:9
That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

Jesus is not merely the Savior of the Jews or the whites or the Americans; but He is the only source of salvation to anyone and everyone around the whole world. Regardless of skin color, culture, or geography, Jesus is an available Savior (an "equal opportunity" Savior to all races, to all kindreds, tongues and peoples).

V. *The Light of the World is a* ABIDING LIGHT

("he that followeth me")

We come now to the key phrase of the verse. On this phrase hinges whether or not the Light benefits you.

Although the Light is available to all and present for all, that Light is not attained by all, nor is the Light beneficial to all.

As the disciples followed Jesus, so must we, by faith.

The condition to benefitting from the Light is following the Light. Just as Israel followed the Shekinah glory light that led them in the wilderness as it would ascend over their Tabernacle and then move forward, providing direction and timing for them to move, so Jesus Christ (who was that glory cloud) leads His dear children along as they follow Him.

To "follow Him" implies 2 things:

1) He must take the initiative and lead (His sovereign direction)

2) We must submit and follow (our submissive obedience)

His light accompanies us; is right there available on a daily basis.

Following is the required response to the light. Christ is not asking us to admire or "like" the light or to be fascinated with the light, but to follow the light. We can talk about the light, study the light, etc., all that we want, but we must follow it!

Christ reveals the truth about marriage, interpersonal relationships, parenting, church polity, etc. Follow Him!

Here, Jesus did not say to "<u>believe</u>" in the Light, but to follow the Light.

He did not say to <u>recognize</u> the Light and know all about it, but to follow the Light.

Don't be content to simply know about Christ. Follow Him!

How closely are you following Jesus?

"It is our duty to follow Him, to submit ourselves to His guidance, and in everything take directions from Him, in the way that leads to happiness. Many follow false lights that lead them to destruction; but Christ is the true light" (Matthew Henry).

VI. *The Light of the World is a* <u>PROTECTIVE</u> LIGHT

("shall not walk in darkness")

"Darkness" – "Darkness" in the Bible is a picture of lostness and sin; that is, spiritual blindness and ignorance and moral corruption and wickedness

The concept of "Darkness" in the N.T.

Secretive Sins are called "Darkness"
1Co 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness.

Spiritual Ignorance is called "Darkness"
2Co 4:6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
Eph 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:
Eph 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

1Th 5:4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.
1Th 5:5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

Satanic Forces are identified as “Darkness”
Eph 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.
Col 1:13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

Hatred is called darkness
1Jo 2:9 He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.
1Jo 2:11 But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

Hell is called darkness
2Pe 2:4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;
2Pe 2:17 These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.
Jude 1:6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.
Jude 1:13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

God is the opposite of Darkness
1Jo 1:5 ¶ This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

We have been called out of darkness
1Pe 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:
1Jo 2:8 Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

To “walk in darkness” means to be aimless, without direction, to wander through life stumbling over obstacles and traps placed by the enemy of your soul!

Light gives direction; it reveals the best way to walk.

Psalm 119:105
Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Light is a revealer (cp. 3:19 – "Light is come into the world, but men love darkness...")

Christ's sinlessness (light) reveals our sinfulness (darkness).

Christ reveals right from wrong, just as a physical light shows a distinction between darkness and light.

To "walk in darkness" means to live a lifestyle trapped in sin, with no victory over the impulses and desires of the world, flesh, or devil. ----Being with wrong people, in the wrong places, at the wrong time.

Light provides safety – pitfalls can be avoided; light shows the real from the unreal (ILLUS: of walking in a dark auditorium and bumping into things and getting hurt).

In following Christ, we see the true way. Note: Christ will never lead you to a place that will hurt you.

Light is available now! We don't have to live by trial and error; bumping into things in the dark and getting hurt, and ending up at the wrong destination.

Note: Jesus did not say, "In order to follow Me, you must stop walking in darkness," but rather, "If you follow Me, you will not walk in darkness.

VII. *The Light of the World is a* LIFE-SAVING LIGHT
("but have the light of life")

Just as "life" depends on "light" for its very existence and sustenance, so our life depends on Christ's light for us to have the eternal and abundant life that Jesus brings.

Being in the presence of the Light brings life (ILLUS: a lifeless, droopy plant suddenly surges to life when sunlight reaches it).

Why does every man need light?

1) Apart from light, man is in the darkness about God (His nature and character) and His plans

2) Apart from light, man is in the darkness about God's way of salvation

3) Apart from light, man is in the darkness about God's purpose for his or her life

If you want “light” as to which way to go with your life, you had better come to Jesus for it.

Jesus is the Light who illuminates our minds to the nature and character of God, the way of salvation, the way to abundant living. We need His light to survive spiritually, just as we need the sun’s light to survive physically.

CONCLUSION: “He that followeth me shall in no wise walk in darkness—in ignorance, wickedness, misery; but shall have the light of life—He that closely, humbly, steadily follows Me, shall have the divine light continually shining upon him, diffusing over his soul knowledge, holiness, joy, till he is guided by it to life everlasting.” (John Wesley)

Alexander the Great was regent of Macedonia at the age of 16, a victorious general at 18, king at 20—and then he died a drunkard before he was 33, having conquered the then-known world. His father was Philip of Macedonia, also a military genius, who invented the famous “Greek phalanx.”

While Alexander was still in his early teens, Philonicus the Thessalonian offered to sell Alexander’s father, Philip, his horse, Bucephalus, a trained but vicious horse. Philip took his son along to see the horse go through his paces, but the stallion proved so unmanageable that none of the men could even mount him. Alexander noticed that he seemed to be afraid of his own shadow, so he quieted the horse by turning his head toward the sun! Then Alexander mounted the horse and let him run freely for a while. Soon, by keeping him headed toward the sun, he got him under control.

Millions today are “afraid of their own shadow”—the shadow of their evil deeds, the haunting shadow of their own guilty conscience and the shadow of hundreds of fears and failures. But let some faithful Christian point them to Christ, and their shadows immediately fall behind them, for Christ is "the light of the world""(Jn. 8:12), and all who follow HIM “shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” The closer one walks to Him the more light he has; and the farther one gets from Christ, the deeper are the shadows. And he who is so foolish as to walk away from Christ in unbelief, walks ever deeper into the shadows that will eventually plunge him into the eternal darkness.