



“Open Church – Open Bible”

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Sunday Church School

January 31, 2021

“Jesus the Light of the World”— John 8:12-27

Golden Text: John 8:12

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“John 8:12-27”

¹²Then 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."

¹³The Pharisees therefore said to Him, "You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true."

¹⁴Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from and where I am going.

¹⁵You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one.

¹⁶And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I *am* with the Father who sent Me.

¹⁷It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true.

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¹⁸ I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me."

¹⁹ Then they said to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also."

²⁰ These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come.

²¹ Then Jesus said to them again, "I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come."

²² So the Jews said, "Will He kill Himself, because He says, 'Where I go you cannot come'?"

²³ And He said to them, "You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.

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²⁴Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins."

²⁵Then they said to Him, "Who are You?" And Jesus said to them, "Just what I have been saying to you from the beginning.

²⁶I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him."

²⁷ They did not understand that He spoke to them of the Father.

TODAY'S AIM

Facts: to learn what it means that Jesus is the Light of the World.

Principle: as believers, we have the light of Jesus to guide and sustain us in our daily lives.

Application: to practice walking in the light of Christ, rather than in darkness.

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Every Gospel account, including the Gospel of John, records that Jesus' earthly ministry began very simply with the Lord calling individuals one by one to follow Him.

Initially, He called the twelve disciples, and soon after, more disciples would follow; growing to over 70 disciples (Luke 10:1-17)

- Before long, multitudes of people were following Jesus around from place to place.

Just as the number of His followers would increase over time, so too would His teaching become more specific and profound.

Our lesson today shows us how Jesus dealt with the Jewish religious establishment of His day.

LESSON OUTLINE

I. THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD—John 8:12-18

II. BLIND TO THE LIGHT —John 8:19-22

III. ABOVE AND BENEATH —John 8:23-27

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I. THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD—John 8:12-18

- As the former references to **water** (*John 4:13, 14; 7:37–39*) and to **bread** (*John 6:35*) were occasioned by outward occurrences, so this one to **light**
- The setting of our lesson is Succoth, the Feast of Tabernacles (7:2); and in “the treasury” where it was spoken (see on Jn 8:20) stood two colossal golden lamp-stands, on which hung a multitude of lamps
- Included were a water-drawing ceremony and a lighting ceremony, both reflecting on God’s care of Israel during their wilderness wanderings.
- During Succoth, there was also four large lamps in the temple’s court of women and there was a nightly celebration under their light with people dancing and holding burning torches in their hands while singing songs and praises
- Earlier, during the water-drawing ceremony, Jesus had claimed to be the fulfillment of that ceremony by offering ultimate satisfaction for anyone’s spiritual thirst (7:37-38)

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- So, amidst the blaze and the joyousness of this illumination, He proclaims, “I am the Light of the world”—plainly in the most absolute sense.
- This I AM statement follows this incident of the woman caught in the act of adultery.
 - Christ claimed to be God, for God is **light** speaking to **life, knowledge** and **holiness** (1 John 1:5); and **darkness** speaks of **death, ignorance, and sin**
 - Light **reproves sin** (John 3:20) and the **lost sinner lives in darkness** (Eph. 2:1–3) and will spend eternity in darkness (Matt. 25:30) if he rejects Christ.
- This second “I Am” statement recorded by John, Jesus claims to be “the light of the world” (8:12) who **frees people from spiritual darkness**.
- Trusting Him as Lord and Savior gives divine light, wisdom, and understanding that cannot be obtained any other way.
 - **John 9:5** As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.
 - **Matt 5:14-16** Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.
¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

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- For though He gives His disciples the same title, they are only “**light in the Lord**” (Eph 5:8); and though He calls the Baptist “**the burning and shining light,**” yet “he was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light: (Jn 1:8, 9).
- Under this magnificent title Messiah was promised of old (Is 42:6; Mal 4:2).

The Pharisees refused to accept this, claiming that Jesus was acting as His own witness and therefore it did not count.

Deuteronomy 17:6 and 19:15 say more than one witness is needed to convict anyone charged with sin, so they tried to discredit Jesus’ claim.

Jesus maintained that His witness was valid because only (v 14-15) He knew where He had come from and where He was going; they could know neither.

- The Pharisees thought Jesus was either a lunatic or a liar.
- Jesus provided them with a third alternative: **He was telling the truth.**
- Because most of the Pharisees refused to consider the third alternative, they never recognized Him as Messiah and Lord.

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Jesus said the Pharisees were judging solely on the basis of human reasoning, that is, “the flesh” (V 15).

- This was totally inadequate because they were limiting their thinking to what was earthly without leaving any room for spiritual truth.

He pointed out that His judgment was on a completely different level (John 8:16-18); and it was not His purpose to judge then.

He had told Nicodemus, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (3:16).

- Jesus continued His defense by adding, “And yet if I judge, my judgment is true” (8:16).

Remember, the law specified more than one witness was needed for a charge to be leveled; and His judgment was true, for He was not alone as a witness.

- He was a witness, and His Father was a witness, so their testimony was valid by there being two witnesses to His mission.

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While we tend to criticize the Pharisees for their lack of spiritual insight, we must face the fact that such ignorance is the norm for all humanity.

- Unbelievers cannot comprehend spiritual truth.
- At the same time, many believers seem to have a very shallow perception of who Jesus is and what He did for our salvation.
- There is a great need for sound teaching in our churches today!

II. BLIND TO THE LIGHT —John 8:19-22

- When the Pharisees asked Jesus where His Father was, He charged them with being ignorant of both Himself and His Father.
- Their question had most likely been intended as an insult against the legitimacy of His birth, so He felt no need to honor it with a direct answer.
- They were ignorant to the truth that there are two births: from above, being born again by God’s Spirit, and from this world, being born of the flesh.
- And there are two ways to die: the **sinner dies in his sins**, but the believer **dies in the Lord** (Rev. 14:13); and Faith in Jesus Christ makes the difference.

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- Since God the Father is not visible, how could He be an effective witness?
- Jesus said that if they had known Him, they would also know the Father.
- In a later conversation with His disciples, Jesus was asked by Thomas how they could know **the way** to His Father’s house (14:5).
- Jesus’ response was, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him” (V 6-7).
- Jesus had previously mentioned that He was leaving (7:34), but the Pharisees and chief priests had misunderstood, asking where He was planning to go in order to hide from them (7:35).
- They still could not understand what Jesus was saying. Now they reasoned, “Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come” (8:22).
- They continued to think only in earthly terms without the least flicker of spiritual understanding.

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III. ABOVE AND BENEATH

—John 8:23-27

- This section opens with the quintessential the human dilemma: we are by nature from “beneath”; that is, we are earthly, while Jesus is from above, that is, heavenly.
- This was the problem for these Pharisees; and Jesus aptly drew this contrast between them: “Ye are of this world; I am not of this world.”
- His origin was His Father, while theirs was fallen human nature; thus, they would die in their sins, since they refused to acknowledge His Messiahship
- This truth is so important that Jesus used the phrase “shall die in your sins” three times (once in V 21 and twice in V 24).
- “To ‘die in your sins’ means to die with the burden of one’s own sin and its penalty enforced by a righteous God (Rom. 6:23).
- **Physical death** separates the spirit from the body; **spiritual death** separates the spirit from God”
- Once that final separation occurs, separation occurs, there is no second chance.

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Once again, the Pharisees interrogated Jesus about who He was; and even with all the miracles He had performed and all the teaching He had done, they still did not get it!

- It seems incredible that these religious ‘experts’ should ask, ‘Who are You?’
- He had given them every evidence that He is the Son of God, yet they had deliberately rejected the evidence.
- Our Lord’s reply may be expressed, ‘I am exactly what I said!’ (I AM He)
- In other words, ‘Why should I teach you new things, or give you new proof, when you have not honestly considered the witness I have already given?’”
- This message had originated with His Father: “He that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him” (vs. 26).
- Jesus Christ is the Light of the World and those who cannot see His light are in a realm of darkness, which is Satan’s domain (II Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2).
- But John gives us plenty of reason to hope in the light that Jesus offers for eternal salvation.



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“ADVANCE YOUR KNOWLEDGE”



1. What made the timing of Jesus' proclamation of Himself as the Light of the World significant?
2. How can a person be delivered from darkness? What does it mean to follow Christ?
3. How did Jesus prove that His own witness was indeed valid? What did He say about His own judgment as opposed to the Pharisees?
4. What did Jesus warn the Pharisees about their unbelief?
5. Why was it amazing that the Pharisees still asked Jesus who He was?
6. What did Jesus charge the Pharisees with when they asked where His Father was?
7. What contrast did Jesus draw between His destination and that of the Pharisees?

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At this point, we would all do well to pay close attention to Jesus’ analogy when He states that He is the Light of the World. With this statement, Jesus is drawing upon the truth that light is an essential element for life to occur.

A. Study all the ways light is beneficial for life

We have seen that because of their envy and personal animosity toward Jesus, they stubbornly rejected believing in His claims.

- What other prejudicial presuppositions hinders one trust in Christ’s words

As we continue in our study in John, make it an objective to dig deeper into Jesus claims concerning His deity

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