

WE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

I. JESUS AS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

A. JESUS' USE OF THE PHRASE—SPEAKING TO THE PHARISEES—vv 12-29

1. His statement of divinity

- During the Feast of Tabernacles
- After lighting of huge lamps in the Women's Court (Temple Treasury)

Jn 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.*

2. **Third** statement claiming His divinity—after:

- Jn 4—I AM He—the Messiah—to the Samaritan woman
- Jn 6—I AM the Bread of Life

3. He confirmed this truth by 2 witnesses—Himself and the Father—**vv 14-18**

4. He reiterated His divinity **three** times to the Pharisees

a. **I AM from above**—**v 23**

Not of this world—not like you from below

b. **I AM He**—**v24**

- Like the Christ/Messiah—revealed to the Samaritan woman
- Here—more explicitly Savior—you must believe in me to be saved!

c. **I AM He**—whom you will lift up—**v28**

- Like the serpent raised in the desert
- What He said to Nicodemus—when referring to God sending His Son
- Reiterates that His Father has **sent** Him
- Implication—I am the One **sent**—to save you from your sins

B. JESUS' USE OF THE PHRASE APPLIED TO 'BELIEVERS'—vv 30-58

1. **Next scene**—spoken to those Jews who *believed*—see **vv 30-31**

2. But it is not enough just to believe

James 2:19-20—19 *You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe and tremble.* **20** *But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?*

3. It is not enough to know *about* the Light—we must walk **in** the Light

Jn 3:19-21—*This is the verdict, that the Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come into the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth come into the Light so that it may be seen plainly that what he does is done of God*

4. Five times—Jesus states divinity—**vv 34-58**
 - a. In contrast with the Jews who ‘believed’ in Him
 - b. He unmasked their shallow belief and lack of discipleship
 1. I speak the things I have seen with My Father—**v 38**

But **you** do the things of your father—**v 38**
 2. I came from the Father—He sent me—**v 42**

But **you** are of your father the devil—**v 44**
 3. He who is of God hears God’s words—**v 47**

But **you** do not hear them because you are not of God—**v 47**
 4. My Father is who glorifies Me—**v 54**

But **you** have not come to know Him—though I do know Him—**v 55**
 5. References to Abraham
 - If you are Abraham’s children, do the deeds of Abraham—**v39**
 - Father Abraham rejoiced to see Me—**v 56**
 - Before Abraham was born, **I AM**—**v 58**
5. The marks of **true discipleship**—beyond mere belief—stated twice
 - a. First time—you must continue in My word—**v 31**
 - If you **abide** [meno]—in My word
 - If you **sojourn** with it—**do not depart** from it—walk daily with it
 - b. Second time—keeping My word ends in salvation—not death—**v51**
 - If you **keep** [tereo]—My word
 - If you **guard** it—and **observe** it—**attend to** and **take care** of it
 - c. This points back to the original declaration—charge—and promise—**v12**
 - **Declaration**—I AM the Light of the world
 - **Charge**—he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness
 - **Promise**—but will have the Light of life

II. JESUS CALLED TRUE FOLLOWERS—THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

1. He already had *explicitly* given His disciples this charge—in Sermon on the Mount

Mt 5:14-15—*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.*

2. No contradiction—He is the Light—but we **also** are the light!

a. **Next scene**—John 9—healing of the man born blind—near Siloam’s Fountain

b. Jesus put time limits on His physical/present mission as Light of the world

Jn 9:5—*While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*

c. Here He *implied* He would pass on this responsibility to others

d. Later—beginning of Passion Week—He delegated this mission to His true followers—who walk in the Light

Jn 12:-35-36—*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. While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light.*

3. Purpose—to glorify God—goes back to Sermon on the Mount

Mt 5:16—*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.*

a. This parallels what He said to Nicodemus

Jn 3:21—*But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.*

b. This is one of the **purposes** of our salvation—to glorify God

1 Pe 2:9—*But you’re are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.*

III. HOW JESUS’ CHARGE APPLIES TO US TODAY

1. Individually

- He still calls *each* of us to be salt and light in the world
- “This little light of mine—I’m going to let it shine”

2. Corporately

a. Peter’s words (race/priesthood/nation)—says this is **collective**

b. John’s vision says this body is the **church**

Rev 1:20—identifies the 7 golden *lampstands* as the 7 churches

c. Implications

1. Amplifies light—‘lampstand’ with many candles, not just one

- ‘candlestick’ (KJV) = candelabra w/ many candles
- Same word used for ‘menorah’ in the Septuagint

2. Christian discipleship is not a solitary or rogue venture

- It is bound up in fellowship and unity
- This produces a synergy of light—sum greater than parts

3. Products of our being ‘Light of the World’

a. **Unified diversity** produces synergy

- The church lampstand holds *each* of our *individual* candles
- Some are shorter (older) and some are longer (younger)
- We bring *all* our lights here—to worship Him together
- *All* are needed to bring *full* glory and praise to Him

b. **Diffusion** of God’s light should penetrate and permeate this land

- We take God’s light to many places across the land
- Think about all the places God’s light has traveled this week!
- Natural light cannot penetrate barriers—leaves shadows
- God’s light can go anywhere—even the shadowlands!

c. Speed of God’s light

- The speed of natural light is 186,000 miles per second
- God’s light moves as the fast human step and voice

IV. APPLICATION OF BEING LIGHT OF THE WORLD

A. QUESTIONS

- Where did God put your light stand this week?
- How did your light shine?
- Did you put it on a candlestick—or under a basket?
- How can we use our light?

B. EXAMPLES—TYPES OF LIGHTS

- **Regular house light bulb**—be a light at home
- **Reading lamp**—teach someone something
- **Night light**—help someone to feel safe and secure
- **Christmas lights**—celebrate joy in someone else’s life
- **Flashlight**—show someone the way
- **Camp-light**—or **Motel 6**—we’ll keep the light on—make someone feel at home away from home

- **Candle**—help someone in an emergency
- **Scented candle**—create a pleasant environment for others
- **Tapered candle**—romance—love someone unconditionally
- **Chafing dish candle**—[cooking] help provide someone's needs
- **Fireplace lighter**—provide comfort and warmth for someone
- **Bible**—a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path

Scripture Readings—How God is our Light

Ps 4:6b-8—*Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O Lord! You have put gladness in my heart, more than when their grain and new wine abound. In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for You alone, O Lord, make me to dwell in safety.*

Ps 18:28—*For you light my lamp; the Lord my God illumines my darkness.*

Ps 27:1,4—*The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life; whom shall I dread? One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. To behold the beauty of the Lord and to meditate in His temple.*

Ps 36:7-9—*How precious is Your loving kindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings. They drink their fill of the abundance of Your house; and You give them to drink of the river of Your delights. For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light.*

Ps 37:4-7—*Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will do it. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light and your judgment as the noonday.*

Ps 74:16-17—*Yours is the day. Yours also is the night; You have prepared the light and the sun. You have established all the boundaries of the earth; You have made summer and winter.*

Ps 148:1-5a 13—*Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; Praise Him in the heights! Praise Him all His angels' Praise Him, all His hosts! Praise Him, sun and moon; Praise Him, all stars of light! Praise Him, highest heavens, and the waters that are above the heavens! Let them praise the name of the Lord, for He commanded and they were created. Let them praise the name of the Lord, for His name alone is exalted; His glory is above earth and heaven.*