

Pt 2 The Life and Light of Men - Gospel of John Sermon Series

A sermon series in the Gospel of John, by Pastor Byron Chesney at Porchlight Baptist Church www.pbcknox.com

We spent quite a bit of time last time talking about Jesus being the Word, the Logos, or the personification of God. We focused most of our attention on the first 3 verses of Chapter one. But before we read our text this morning I want to back up and say a few things that I should have said last Sunday in the introduction to the Book of John.

As we said last time, the purpose for the Gospel of John is **so that ALL men might believe on Jesus and be born again**. But, the key verse in this Gospel is **John 20:31** *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

Interestingly enough, John never uses the word “faith,” the way the other Gospel writers do. Matthew mentions it 12 times, Mark 5 times, and Luke 12 times. Instead, John uses the word “believe,” when it comes to Christ. In fact, you will find some form of the word believe 98 times in John’s Gospel and hardly any in the others. So, John emphasizes the need to believe in the Lord Jesus and trust Him in your everyday life as opposed to a single confession of faith.

Most people believe that John was the 2nd to last Book of the Bible that was written, with Revelation being the last one. It is also believed that John was the last Apostle still living at the time it was written. By this time 3rd and 4th generations of Christians were around and it was clear Christ was not returning any time soon as they had thought. So, John also lays down the groundwork for present day believers still awaiting Christ’s return.

The Book of John tells us about 7 miracles of the Lord Jesus:

1. Turning water into wine – John 2
2. Healing the Nobleman’s son – John 4
3. Healing the impotent man – John 5
4. Feeding the 5000+ - John 6
5. Walking on Water – John 6
6. Giving sight to the blind man – John 9
7. Raising Lazarus from the dead – John 11

The Book of John tells us of 7 Messianic claims from Jesus. I like to call these the “**I Am** Statements”

1. **I Am the Bread of Life** – John 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, **I Am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.**
2. **I Am the Light of the World** – 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.**
3. **I Am the Door** - John 10:9 **I Am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.**
4. **I Am the Good Shepherd** - John 10:11 **I Am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.**
5. **I Am the Resurrection and Life** - John 11:25 Jesus said unto her, **I Am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:**
6. **I Am the Way the Truth, and the Life** - John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, **I Am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.**

7. **I Am the True Vine** - John 15:1 **I Am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.**

These 7 **I Am** statements are Jesus’ claims to deity. If there was any question as to whether Jesus was the promised Messiah, all one has to do is point to these claims. This is one of the reasons the Pharisees believed him to be blasphemous.

So, now let’s read the first 5 verses of Chapter one with an emphasis on verses 4 and 5 which deals with Christ being the life and light of men.

John 1:1-5

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

Here we see two of those Messianic claims given of Jesus being the life and Jesus being the light.

The Life

It’s obvious that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit were all present and active during the creation of everything. John ties creation directly to the Word, which we know to be Jesus, and says that all things were made by him, and nothing was made without him. We are also told in **John 5:26** **For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;**

Also, the Bible says in **John 5:21** **For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.**

That word “quickeneth” means “**to make alive.**”

Therefore, Jesus can say in **John 14:6... I am the way, the truth, and the life”**

Jesus says that he is the life. It’s more than just our human existence of being alive and breathing – it’s also eternal life, an everlasting existence.

Remember the most famous verse in all the Bible, **John 3:16** **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.**

It says, “**everlasting life,**” meaning an eternal existence. The Bible tells us in **Hebrews 9:27** **And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:** It is the “**after this**” part we need to be concerned about. Those who are saved will have eternal life but those who are not saved will have eternal damnation. Jesus is the ONLY means for eternal life and to avoid eternal damnation because He is “**the life.**”

The Light

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

Now we see that not only is Jesus the life of men, but he is also the “**light of men.**” Of course we are aware of what light is. It is what allows us to see. If you wake up in the middle of the night and have to go to the bathroom, it is dark, and you stumble around and run into things because there is no light.

But light is not just the absence of darkness, but spiritually it is the enemy of darkness as we see here in verse 5 of our text: **5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.** The “darkness” in this case is not referring to the world being absent of the sun’s light, it is referring to the ignorant, wicked, evil people of world being absent of God’s light.

In our modern English, the word “comprehended” means **understood**. So when we look at this, we want to read it as if the world didn’t understand that Jesus was the light. But that’s not the case here. The word “comprehended” in the Bible has more of the meaning of “admitted,” “accepted,” or “received.” So, you could say verse five like this: **5 And the light shined on the wicked world; and the wicked world would not receive it.**

In the Bible, light refers to Biblical truth, holiness, purity, and the Gospel. Darkness refers to falsehood, wickedness, sin, hell, and a relationship with Satan. The world and unbelievers are often said to be in “darkness.”

We talk about being blind and after we are saved our eyes are open. **“I once was lost but now am found, twas blind but now I see.”**

That’s the same comparison of darkness and light. Whenever someone has not heard the Gospel, they are in darkness. When the Gospel is heard it is a beam of light being shined in the darkness.

The Old Testament prophesied about the Light that would come.

Listen to what it says in **Isaiah 60:1-5**

- 1 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.
- 2 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.
- 3 And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.
- 4 Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side.
- 5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

This is a foretelling of the Messiah that was to come. Of course we know that Jesus was the Messiah that was promised. In fact, John gives Jesus the title of **the Light** four times down in verses 7, 8, and 9. Look at it starting in verse 6:

John 1:6-11

- 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.
- 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of **the Light**, that all *men* through him might believe.
- 8 He was not **that Light**, but was *sent* to bear witness of **that Light**.
- 9 *That* was **the true Light**, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.
- 10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.
- 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

Notice the word Light in all those cases is capitalized, meaning it is a title or name.

Also, look at verse 11 again: **11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.**

That goes along with verse 5 which said: **5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.**

Remember, **comprehended** means **received**. So, Jesus’ own people would not receive him, instead they rejected him and remained in darkness.

The truth is you must “receive” Jesus to be saved. Look at it down in verse 12: **John 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:**

That word “receive” means “to take for one’s self.” So, there’s nothing unbiblical by saying “**you must receive Christ as your Savior to be saved.**” Because, if we do not receive him “**take him as our Savior,**” then we are rejecting him.

Okay, we will stop here this morning and pick back up in verse 6 next time.