

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

INTRODUCTION

1. I would like to invite you to take God's Word and turn with me to John chapter 8.
2. It's been some time since we have been in our study of the Gospel of John.
3. This morning I want us to pick-up where we left off at verse 12.
4. So that we have the setting in our minds this morning, I want to begin reading at verse 12 through verse 20 which will be the text for our study.
5. Read John 8:12-20.
6. Jesus is the Light of the world.
7. That's the self-evident claim that Jesus makes in verse 12.
8. He has already claimed to be the living water and now He claims to be the light of the world.
9. The occasion for this statement is at the Jewish festival known as "The Feast of Booths" (John 7:1) or "The Feast of Tabernacles."

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

10. When Jesus made this statement, it was during the lamp-lighting ceremony.

11. In the Court of the Women where Jesus was speaking, four huge candelabra were lit.

It was at this occasion that Jesus declared to be the Light of the world.

12. But not everyone believed that claim as is evidenced by what follows in verses 13-20.

13. Verse 13 begins with *the accusation*.

I. The Accusation (v.13)

John 8:13 (NASB) So the Pharisees said to Him, "You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true."

A. Stated

It is no surprise for the Pharisees to react negatively to Jesus' claim.

In fact, their response was likely a mocking reference to Jesus' own words in **John 5:31 (NASB)** "If I *alone* testify about Myself, My testimony is not true.

So they said in **John 8:13 (NASB)** "You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true."

This challenge was a legal matter.

According to the Old Testament Law, every fact in a legal matter had to be established by the testimony of more than one witness.

Numbers 35:30 (NASB) 'If anyone kills a person, the murderer shall be put to death at the evidence of witnesses, but no person shall be put to death on the testimony of one witness.

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

Deuteronomy 17:6 (NASB) "On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.

Deuteronomy 19:15 (NASB) "A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed.

Matthew 18:16 (NASB) "But if he does not listen *to you*, take one or two more with you, so that **BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED.**

2 Corinthians 13:1 (NASB) This is the third time I am coming to you. **EVERY FACT IS TO BE CONFIRMED BY THE TESTIMONY OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES.**

1 Timothy 5:19 (NASB) Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses.

Hebrews 10:28 (NASB) Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on *the testimony of* two or three witnesses.

B. Defended

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

Can I get a witness?

Do you think Jesus was without any witnesses to who He was?

So many could testify to the truthfulness of His claims.

For example...

1. John the Baptist

The apostle John said in **John 1:7-8 (NASB)** ⁷ He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the Light, but *he came* to testify about the Light.

John 1:19-27 (NASB) ¹⁹ This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰ And he confessed and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." ²¹ They asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" And he *said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." ²² Then they said to him, "Who are you, so that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?" ²³ He said, "I am A VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE STRAIGHT THE WAY OF THE Lord,' as Isaiah the prophet said." ²⁴ Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

They asked him, and said to him, "Why then are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" ²⁶ John answered them saying, "I baptize in water, *but* among you stands One whom you do not know. ²⁷ *It is He* who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie."

What was John's conclusion about Jesus?

John 1:34 (NASB) "I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God."

John 1:36 (NASB) and he looked at Jesus as He walked, and *said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"

John 3:36 (NASB) "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

John 5:33 (NASB) "You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth.

2. The twelve

Nathanael, one of the disciples, said in **John 1:49 (NASB)** "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel."

Together they said in **John 6:69 (NASB)** "We

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God."

After Jesus and Peter walk on the water it says in **Matthew 14:32 (NASB)** When they got into the boat the wind stopped. And then **verse 33** says, And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "You are certainly God's Son!"

In **Matthew 16** Jesus asked the disciples who do they say He is and Peter answers in **verse 16** by saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

We have heard John the Baptist and the disciples-- definitely more than two or three witnesses. But listen now to...

3. The Samaritan woman

John 4:39 (NASB) From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all the things that I *have* done."

She said earlier that she perceived Him to be a prophet (4:20).

4. Martha

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

Listen to her statement before Jesus raises her brother Lazarus from the dead in **John 11:27** (NASB) She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, *even* He who comes into the world."

You also had...

5. Those who witnessed His raising of Lazarus

John 12:17 (NASB) So the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, continued to testify *about Him*.

We have as witnesses: John the Baptist, the twelve, the Samaritan woman, Martha, and those who witnessed His raising of Lazarus.

Consider...

6. Jesus' works

John 5:36 (NASB) "But the testimony which I have is greater than *the testimony of* John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish—the very works that I do—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

John 10:25 (NASB) Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me.

Jesus said of...

7. The Scriptures

John 5:39 (NASB) "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me.

The greatest witness is...

8. The Father

Jesus says in **John 8:17-18 (NASB)** ¹⁷ "Even in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men is true. ¹⁸ "I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me."

There is no contradiction between Jesus' statement here and the one in John 5:31.

He was not the only witness who could verify His claims.

Even Luke wrote in **Acts 1:1-4 (NASB)** ¹ The first

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach, ² until the day when He was taken up *to heaven*, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen. ³ To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over *a period of forty days* and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. ⁴ Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," *He said*, "you heard of from Me.

The apostle John even stated later in **John 20:30 (NASB)** Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book.

After hearing their accusation, John now records...

II. The Answer (vv.14-19)

John 8:14-19 (NASB) ¹⁴ Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. ¹⁵ "You judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone. ¹⁶ "But even if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone *in it*, but I and the Father who sent Me. ¹⁷ "Even in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

is true. ¹⁸ "I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me." ¹⁹ So they were saying to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also."

Notice again what Jesus says in verse 14 in response to the Pharisee's issue of Jesus testimony:

He says, "Even if I testify about myself, my testimony is true."

The demand for two or three witnesses was a means for establishing the truth in a court of law.

Jesus' testimony of Himself was true because He is truth (John 14:6) and because He was sent from the God who is also truth (Rom.3:4).

In response to their accusation in verse 13, Jesus gives 3 pieces of evidence to support His self-testimony as truth.

Each of these evidences is related to His deity.

First He speaks about...

A. His Divine Origin and Destiny (v.14)

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

The Pharisees were ignorant of both. But not Jesus—for He knew where He came from and where He was going and was always conscious of His heavenly origin and destiny.

In **John 16:28 (NASB)** "I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; I am leaving the world again and going to the Father."

Because of His self-knowledge and divine omniscience, His testimony was thoroughly confirmed.

1. The disciples were fully aware of this

The apostle John said in **John 2:23-25 (NASB)** ²³ Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing. ²⁴ But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, ²⁵ and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.

The disciples said in **John 16:29-30 (NASB)** ²⁹ His disciples *said, "Lo, now You are speaking plainly and are not using a figure of speech. ³⁰ "Now we know that You know all things, and have no need for anyone to question You; by this we believe that You came from God."

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

When Peter was questioned about his love for Jesus, Peter said in **John 21:17 (NASB)** He said to him the third time, "Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus *said to him, "Tend My sheep.

2. The opponents of Jesus didn't have this knowledge of Him

In fact they did not know where He came from or where He was going.

John 7:41-42, 52 indicates they were unaware of His birthplace, let alone His heavenly origin.

John 7:41-42 (NASB) ⁴¹ Others were saying, "This is the Christ." Still others were saying, "Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He?" ⁴² "Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?"

John 7:52 (NASB) They answered him, "You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee."

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

Jesus further exposes their ignorance in verse 15 when He said, “You judge according to the flesh.”

They judged by earthly standards—as sinful men in a fallen world.

They not only understood nothing of His heavenly origin, but even what they thought they knew about Him was incorrect.

Their judgment of Him was limited, superficial, and wrong.

They were proud, self-righteous, and arrogant and failed to understand His claims and their implications.

They were no different than those whom Paul addressed in **1 Corinthians 1:21 (NASB)** For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not *come to* know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

When He says in verse 15, “I am not judging anyone,” He meant either He did not judge superficially like them or He has not judged anyone yet since **John 3:17 (NASB)** "For God did

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

It is true He will judge every person in the future.

Acts 17:30-31 (NASB) ³⁰ "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all *people* everywhere should repent, ³¹ because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

The second support for the credibility of Jesus' testimony is based on...

III. His Divine Nature Shared with the Father (v.16)

In verse 16 Jesus continues by saying "But even if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone *in it*, but I and the Father who sent Me."

By claiming to be one with the Father in judgment, He was claiming essential quality with Him.

He already made this claim in **John 5:17 (NASB)** But He answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working."

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

Verse 18 records the response of the Jews which says, “For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.”

Jesus could say this because He was of the same nature as God.

He said in **John 10:30 (NASB)** "I and the Father are one."

As a final vindication that His self-witness was true, Jesus rebutted the Pharisee’s false allegation that He was His only witness (v.13) by stating that in perfect agreement...

IV. The Father and the Son Bear Witness to the Truth of Jesus’ Claims (vv.17-20)

He says in verses 17-18, “Even in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men is true. I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me.”

Deuteronomy 17:6 (NASB) "On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

So in accordance with the Law, Jesus provides the two witnesses: Himself and the Father.

He called on God as witness to the validity of His claim but that did not satisfy the Pharisees.

In accordance with their judgment according to the flesh, they asked in verse 19, “Where is Your Father?”

Were they asking to see Joseph, who likely had died by this time, to prove Jesus had an earthly father?

In light of verse 41, were they intending to insult Him as illegitimate?

R.C.H. Lenski says, “Their “where” question has a mocking tone. If God is, indeed, the father and Sender of Jesus, and if this God is to be the second witness, with his testimony to corroborate that of Jesus concerning himself, then let Jesus present this Father, that he may be interrogated as a witness, so that these Pharisees may see whether his testimony agrees with that of Jesus. A silly shrewdness lies back of this question: the certainty that

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

Jesus cannot produce this second witness in the way they intimate.”¹

John Calvin adds, “There can be no doubt whatever, that it was in mockery that they inquired about *his Father*...the reason why there are so many in the present day who, with daring presumption, despise Christ, is, that few consider that God has sent him.”²

So by their question, they rejected Him.

But Jesus doesn't let them hide behind such a question. He responds in verse 19 by saying, “You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also.”

John got what He was saying because He stated in **1 John 2:23 (NASB)** Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.

¹ R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961). 607.

² John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries: John*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; Calvin's Commentaries (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1998).

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

Jesus reproaches them with the ignorance in which they flattered themselves. They inquired about *the Father*; and yet when they had the Son before their eyes, *seeing, they did not see*, (Matthew 13:13.).³

Remember what Jesus said to Philip in **John 14:8-9** (NASB) ⁸ Philip *said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." ⁹ Jesus *said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *can* you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

John interjects in verse 20 that “These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come.”

George Murray points out “That no one seized Jesus at this point indicates a desire to do so”⁴ but as the apostle John states the right “hour” would be determined by God Himself.

³ John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentaries: John*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; Calvin's Commentaries (Albany, OR: Ages Software, 1998).

⁴ George R. Beasley-Murray, *Word Biblical Commentary : John*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002). 130.

The Light of the World (Pt.2)

John 8:12-20 (Preached 1/10/10) © 2010

Dr. Steve Hereford, Pastor-Teacher

CONCLUSION

1. Jesus is “the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life” (v.12).
2. Do you believe Jesus’ testimony of Himself?
3. Are you proclaiming it to others?
4. As a believer, you know these self-evident truths about Jesus are true and you bear witness with the Father.
5. If you’re one who has never responded to Jesus’ claim, I would like to encourage you to do so this morning.
6. Come to Jesus now and be delivered from your sin and given “the Light of life.”
7. Let’s pray.