

# Jesus Christ: The Light of the World

**Text:** John 1:1-14

## **Introduction:**

1. The Gospel John was written with the express purpose of bringing sinners to faith in Christ. John 20:30-31 “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: **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.”
2. It is so important that we remember who Christ is and why He came during this Christmas season. The opening verses of John’s Gospel bring us face to face with the truth of both of these things.
3. Light is a feature we are all familiar with at Christmas. There are lights all over our city in celebration of the Christmas season. It is estimated that more than 150 million light sets are sold each year in America at Christmas time with more than 80 million homes decorated with holiday lights. A family in the Hudson Valley in New York state have held the Guinness world record for the most Christmas lights since 2014. The current count is 687,000 lights! Sadly, at a time when much of the world is surrounded by lights, most reject the One True Light who came to rescue us from the darkness of sin.
4. Illustration: The comfort of light for children at night.
5. The passage of Scripture before us reminds us of three key truths concerning Jesus Christ. We will consider the first two briefly and then major on the third point dealing with Christ as the Light.

## **Jesus Christ is:**

### **I. THE WORD (Vs. 1-2; 14)**

He is:

#### **A. The Eternal Word (Vs. 1a, 2)**

1. “In the beginning” = John’s Gospel commences the same way as Genesis 1:1 – “In the beginning God...”. It does not refer to the beginning of God but simply announces His eternal existence.
2. “was the Word” = notice it does not say “was made the Word” as that would make Christ a created being with a beginning. Before the world ever was made, Christ was; He is the Eternal Son. He is called “the Word” which points to the fact He is the truth and the One who reveals God to us. We use words to express our inner selves. As the Divine Word, Christ reveals the eternal God to us in Human form.
3. Micah 5:2 “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; **whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.**”
4. Col. 1:17 “And he is **before all things**, and by him all things consist.”

5. John 8:58 “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, **I am.**”

#### **B. The Divine Word (Vs. 1b)**

1. **Christ was “with God”** referring to the fact of His being a distinct Person within the Godhead. This points to the truth of the Trinity that is found in Scripture. God is One and yet manifest in Three Persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
2. **Christ “was God”** meaning that He is equal with the Father and is God just as surely as the Father is God. He is of one essence with the Father.

#### **C. The Incarnate Word (Vs. 14)**

1. The incarnation is the doctrine that Christ, the second Person of the Holy Trinity, became man. Jesus Christ is the God-man – 100% God and 100% man.
2. The truth is stated well in the second article of the Church of England: “The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, and of one substance with the Father, took man’s nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin of her substance: so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and the manhood, were joined together in one Person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man.”
3. 1 Tim. 3:16 “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifest in the flesh**, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”
4. Isaiah 7:14 “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”
5. Luke 2:6-7 “And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.”

## **II. THE CREATOR (VS. 3)**

### **A. His Performance of all Creation (Vs. 3a)**

1. “all things” = Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things.
2. Col. 1:16 “For by him were **all things created**, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: **all things were created by him, and for him.**”

### **B. His Participation in all Creation (Vs. 3b)**

1. The truth is restated in another way so as to leave no doubt that Christ was involved in the entirety of creation.

2. The Creation was the united work of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We see all three Persons of the Trinity working in unison in Genesis 1.
  - a. "In the beginning God created" (Gen. 1:1) – The Father.
  - b. "And God said" (Gen. 1:3) – The Word.
  - c. "The Spirit of God moved" (Gen. 1:2) – The Spirit.
  - d. Note: The point is clear. If Christ was involved in creating everything, then He Himself cannot possibly be created! He is the Creator!

### III. THE LIGHT (VS. 4-13)

#### A. The Origin of the Light (Vs. 4-5)

1. Jesus is the source of Life (Vs. 4a) Jesus said in John 10:10 "...I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly." 1 John 5:13 "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may **know that ye have eternal life**, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."
2. Jesus is the source of Light (Vs. 4b-5)
  - a. The Radiance of the Light (Vs. 5a) The light "shineth in darkness". The darker the night, the brighter the light shines. The truth of Christ shines in a world full of spiritual darkness. There is...
    - i. The Darkness of Satan – 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*."
    - ii. The Darkness of Sin – 1 John 5:19 informs us that "...the whole world lieth in wickedness."
    - iii. The Darkness of Self – Eph. 5:8 "For **ye were sometimes darkness**, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light:" We have to come to terms not just with the darkness without (sin and Satan) but with the darkness of sin within each of us (Rom. 3:10, 23; 5:12).
  - b. The Reaction to the Light.
    - i. Sadly, sinful men in the main failed to 'comprehend' (grasp, understand) the light of Christ. Christ is still an enigma to the majority. Sometimes this is the result of ignorance but it is also a sinful choice people make.
    - ii. John 3:19 "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their **deeds were evil**." People tend to choose their sin rather than the Saviour.

#### B. The Proclamation of the Light (Vs. 6-8)

The Apostle John now makes reference to the ministry of John the Baptist who was a torch bearer for the truth of Christ:

1. The office of the messenger – “to bear witness of the Light”.
2. The objective of the messenger – “that all men through him might believe”. God desires the salvation of all people (1 Tim. 2:4; 2. Pet. 3:9).

### **C. The Illumination of the Light (Vs. 9)**

1. The Character of the Light (Vs. 9a)
  - a. Christ is described as “the true light”. Christ is the authentic and genuine light. He is not “a light” amongst many possible options. He is THE LIGHT. 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.”
  - b. Beware of the false lights of the devil to lure you into a trap!
    - i. 2 Cor. 11:13-14 “For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into **an angel of light.**”
    - ii. Illustration: Plunderers in the early days of England who used to send out false lights to lure unsuspecting ships onto the rocks so they could loot them.
    - iii. Beware of the false light of religion. There are many who have claimed to have received light from God but in reality, they are Satan’s messengers, sent to deceive the unsuspecting into believing a lie.
    - iv. Beware of the false light of human philosophy (e.g., atheism, humanism etc...).
2. The Coverage of the Light (Vs. 9b)
  - a. The light is available to all.
  - b. The light shines upon all. Mankind has been given light and is accountable to God for that light. There is:
    - i. The light of Creation.
    - ii. The light of Conscience.
    - iii. The light of Christ.

### **D. The Rejection of the Light (Vs. 10-11)**

1. The world knew Him not. Imagine, the creature not knowing its Creator! But such is the hardness of the human heart.
2. His own received Him not. There is a sense where the whole world rejected Christ but the Jewish nation in particular rejected their Messiah.
3. How tragic that so many reject Christ the true light, choosing instead the darkness of their sins or clinging to the false lights of philosophy and religion which in the end only lead back to darkness.

### **E. The Reception of the Light (Vs. 12-13)**

Observe three key words:

1. Receive – receiving is the opposite of rejecting. We are at the time of year when people very often give gifts. God offers you a gift this Christmas, the gift of eternal life, the gift of His Son Jesus Christ. You have a choice, will you receive or reject that gift? Illustration: “People always say that it's the thought that counts when it comes to gift-giving...until you've left the room, at which point they start working out when they can return a dud for something they actually want. According to research from Optoro (a company that helps retailers process and resell returns), shoppers return nearly \$70 billion worth of purchases during the holiday season... In 2013, the *Daily Mail* reported that 42 percent of women returned holiday gifts from their husbands (who should theoretically have at least *some* insider gifting knowledge). The same study reported that 17 percent of recipients planned to donate an unwanted present, 13 percent planned to regift one and 10 percent would simply throw the bad gift away. A GameStop survey indicated that 98 percent of their customers had received at least one holiday gift that they'd rather return.”<sup>1</sup> Some people reject Christ's offer of salvation outright. Some smile and pretend to receive it like some people do with unwanted Christmas gifts all the while rejecting it in their hearts.
2. Believe – means to trust, to rely upon. You need to believe the Gospel, that Christ died for your sins, was buried and rose again (1. Cor. 15:1-4).
3. Become – when you receive Christ as your personal Saviour, you become a child of God, you enter His family. Are you a part of the family of God? You have to be born again in order to enter God's family and that is what's discussed in the next verse.
  - a. How one is NOT born again.
    - i. It is not of human descent – “not of blood”. Salvation is not passed down from parent to child through the bloodstream.
    - ii. It is not of human desire – “nor of the will of the flesh”. A person does not have the power in his own flesh to produce the new birth. We are not saved “by the efforts and exertions of our own natural hearts. Nature cannot change itself.” (Ryle) You need to be willing to let God save you but He is the one who does the saving.
    - iii. It is not of human design – “nor of the will of man”. No man can save me and make me God's child whether it be a priest who claims he can forgive me or a charismatic preacher who says he can lay his hands on my and give me the Holy Spirit or a parent who has me baptized as a baby.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.newsweek.com/list-most-returned-holiday-gifts-each-year-407115>

- b. How one IS born again – “but of God”. God does the work when we come to Him in repentance and faith.

**Conclusion:** Will you receive or reject Christ this Christmas?