

I Am The Light Of The World

Super Sayings of the Saviour

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Just for a moment, I want you to look with me at verse 12, things that only Christ could say, the "Super Sayings of the Savior."

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.

Robert Louis Stevenson was a Scottish novelist, he was a poet, he was an essayist, and he was a travel writer. His most famous works are "Treasure Island, Kidnapped," and "Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. And Stevenson was born in the city of Edinburgh on the 13th of November in the year 1850, and as a little boy, Robert Louis Stevenson was intrigued by the work of the old lamplighter who went around the city of Edinburgh with a ladder and a torch setting the lights ablaze for the night. One evening in the city of Edinburgh, a young Robert stood watching with childish wonder and then his parents heard him exclaiming something like this, "Mommy, daddy, there's a man out there and he's punching holes in the darkness!" With one statement of childish wonder, Robert Louis Stevenson summed up the ministry and the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ came into the world and he accomplished many wonderful works and wonders yet his primary purpose was to punch gaping holes in the spiritual darkness that surrounded the world.

At the 1938 Empire Exhibition held in Bellahouston Park in the city of Glasgow, many groups of Christians combined to make the gospel known to a large number of visitors in that exhibition, and one of the spheres of witness was a kiosk on the Royal Mile where Bibles and New Testaments and gospel literature was displayed. In the large window of the kiosk was an open Bible, it was opened to John 8 and the verse 12 where Christ said, "I am the light of the world," and underneath were printed these words, "The only way out of the dark." The only way out of the dark.

I wonder tonight are you in spiritual darkness? I wonder tonight are you ignorant concerning your sin, your soul, concerning God, concerning eternity, concerning heaven, concerning hell? I wonder tonight do you need to be enlightened? Well, Jesus Christ

stands before you and he says, "I am the light of the world, light for the blind one, for the ignorant one, for the unenlightened one. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life."

I want you to notice here the context. The Lord Jesus spoke these words at a very specific time in the history of the nation of Israel. You see, for seven days every year, sometime between the middle of September and the middle of October, the Jews celebrated what they called the Feast of Tabernacles, and that was not only a time of thanksgiving for the harvest but it helped the nation to remember how God led them through the wilderness wanderings of 40 years. And so for seven days the entire nation went out into the street and they made booths, they made little huts of branches and so on to remind them of the experience of their spiritual ancestors as they traveled and lived in tents in the desert.

On the opening night of the celebration, there was a great menorah, a great candelabra with four bowls of oil that was set up in the temple ground in the court of the women, and then with great pomp and ceremony these four bowls of oil were lit and the light from this tremendous candlestick would light up the streets of Jerusalem. Of course, it was a reminder to the Jews of the pillar of fire that had guided them and directed them through the wilderness journey, and as the priest extinguished the candelabra in the court of the women on the last evening and the festival came to an end, our Lord Jesus Christ stood before the multitudes and he said, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

I want you to see the context here, then I want you to see the condition here seen in the words "light" and "darkness." Familiar as we are with light and darkness, it's no surprise to us that the words "light" and "darkness" are used as metaphors. Light usually symbolizes what is good, darkness usually symbolizes what is bad. Light and darkness are also used as metaphors in the Bible. Intellectually light refers to biblical truth, darkness refers to biblical error. Morally light refers to holiness and godliness, darkness refers to sin.

When Christ said, "I am the light of the world," what he was saying was the world lies in spiritual darkness. It was so in the world of the first century, it is so in the world of the 21st century. The world tonight of 2016 is a very dark place. Apart from all the happenings in Nice, apart from all the happenings in Germany, apart from all the happenings in Turkey, our world tonight is a very dark place. There are millions tonight and they're living in the darkness of witchcraft, of drugs, of alcohol, of violence and sin. That's the condition of the world. I wonder tonight is it your condition? Are you still in spiritual darkness? Are you still in the dark concerning your soul?

I want you to see the context here, I want you to see the condition here, I want you to see the claim here for Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior of the world, the Sovereign of the universe, he stands forth and he says, "I am." Of course, it's taken from the book of Exodus, "I am." You know, the name of Jehovah was so sacred to the Jewish people that Bible historians say it was only pronounced once a year when the high priest would go into the Holy of Holies and he would whisper the name of Jehovah. I want you to see

what Jesus Christ was claiming. I want you to see what Jesus Christ is saying. He's emphatically saying, "I am God." He is the eternal, unchanging God and when he stands before the multitudes and he says, "I am the light of the world," he's saying he's the shining light, he's the light of the world.

You know, many lights will burn up like a bit like Roman candles up like a rocket and up like a rocket and down like a rock never to be heard of again, but I want to tell you tonight that 2,000 years after he came, this light shines more brightly in human history than ever it did before. He's the shining light. Listen tonight, he's the seeking light. Do you know what you'll find tonight when you get saved? That he was seeking for you all the time. In fact, if Christ had never sought for me, I would never have come to Calvary at all. It was the working of God's Spirit in my life that brought me to the place called Calvary. He's the seeking light. He's the shining light. Thank God he's the saving light. I tell you, if he could save a woman taken in the very act of adultery, what problem are you to Christ tonight?

Now there are so many things that light does which Christ does for those who trust him, and I just want to take this word "light" tonight and borrow an idea from Dr. King and I just want to look at this word "light" tonight as an acrostic and very simply say this, first of all, the first letter stands for this: Christ leads. Christ leads. Do you know what he says in verse 12? "He that followeth me." As the light of the world, the Lord Jesus came to lead us by a straight path right into the presence of God. The word "following" here doesn't mean copying, it doesn't mean imitating, it doesn't mean walking in the footsteps, it means trusting, it means putting one's faith in another. "Following" is the same word as used in chapter 10 and verse 27 as the word "believing." To follow someone if you're blind requires trust, it requires confidence. To follow the Lord Jesus is to commit our lives fully and totally to him and to submit to him in every matter both of doctrine and practice. It means to bank all on Christ and follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

You remember when Israel were in the wilderness, they followed the pillar of cloud by day, the pillar of fire by night. Wherever the pillar of cloud stopped, they stopped. Wherever the pillar of fire stopped, they stopped. They moved on when that pillar moved and is that not how you must come to Christ? You must come to Christ in repentance and faith and then you must follow him the days of your life.

Dr. F. B. Meyer, that great saintly British preacher, was traveling on one occasion from Dublin to Holyhead on a very dark night and he was up in the bridge with the captain and as they were coming into Holyhead he said to the captain, "Sir, how do you find Holyhead Harbor on such a dark night with no star of the sky, no light protruding?" And the captain said, "Sir, do you see those three lights in the distance? Well, I just line up the ship directly with those three lights, one after another. I keep them in a straight line of vision. I follow them. I keep the ship in line with them and I enter the harbor."

Here's a man one evening and he's walking across the moors and darkness descends and a mist descends, and he's completely lost until he sees a light and groping his way after the light he reaches safety. If you've ever read "Pilgrim's Progress," you'll notice that on one

occasion Pilgrim was in great distress because of the burden of his sin. He seeks to escape but he doesn't know where and presently Mr. Evangelist comes along and he says to Pilgrim, "Do you see that gate in the distance?" And Pilgrim looks for the gate and he cannot see it and he says to Mr. Evangelist, "No, I cannot see it." And Evangelist says, "Pilgrim, can you see the light?" He says, "Sir, I can see the light." He said, "If you make your way to the light, beside the light is a gate and if you go through the gate you'll lose the burden of your sin and you'll make your way toward the Celestial City." How often the light leads to safety and to joy.

I wonder tonight do you realize that you're on the ocean of life, but by yourself you'll never find the harbor? Do you realize tonight that you're on the moors of life, but by yourself you'll never find the home? Do you realize tonight that you're on the journey of life, your burden was sin but you cannot find the way? But the Lord Jesus stands before you and he says, "I am the light. Come to me. Trust in me. I'll bring you safely home." Have you done that?

Light, Christ leads. Secondly very quickly: Christ illumines. He says, "he that followeth me shall have the light of life." You know, back before electricity came on the scene, a tight-fisted old farmer was taking one of his servants to task one night for carrying a lantern. The young boy was going out to see his girlfriend and he was carrying the lantern to see what she looked like. And you know, the old farmer was giving him a rough time. He said, "You know, when I went courting, I never carried one of those things. I always went in the dark." "And, yes," said the young hired servant, "look what you ended up with!"

You see, the light illumines. What was wrong with these Jews to whom the Lord was speaking was this: they didn't understand him. He says in verse 43, "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word." Is it any different today? Folk don't understand the character of God. They don't understand the value of their soul. They don't understand the reality of eternity. They're in spiritual darkness. If only they would but come to Christ for as the light illumines, Christ shows to us the lot of our condition. What's your condition before God tonight? My friend, is it not that of a sinner undone and lost? Have you ever gone into a room in your home, you ladies will know what I'm talking about, and you think that room's perfectly clean and you pull up the blinds and the light comes streaming in and it shows you the dust that's sitting on the furniture, on top of the table, the dust that's so thick that you could write your name upon it. It was the light that showed it up. You see, until Christ comes and illuminates your darkened mind, you'll remain as you are.

You know, these Jews thought they were alright. They said, "We're the sons of Abraham." They pulled back their shoulders, they stuck out their chest, they said, "There's no sin in our heart. There's no dust in our soul. There's no iniquity in our life." I wonder is that you tonight or has the Lord opened your eyes that you see yourself as you really are? A little boy once heard his Sunday school teacher say that Jesus Christ was the light of the world and after class he went up to his teacher and he said, "If the Lord Jesus

is the light of the world, I wish he would come to our house. It's awfully dark where I live."

Are you in spiritual darkness tonight? Maybe you're here and like Nicodemus you're very religious but you're not saved. Maybe you're here tonight and you're like the woman at the well, you're living in sin. Maybe you feel there's no way out of the darkness. Perhaps tonight you're like Judas, you've had tremendous privileges but Satan is controlling your life. You know, the moment we discover that Satan entered into the heart of Judas, we read this, "He went out and it was dark." I wonder is it night in your soul?

The Lord Jesus illumines. He shows to us the lot of our condition and then he shows to us the where of our position. You know, to have dust in our hearts tonight, to have sin in your life, places you in a very dangerous position. Indeed, the Lord Jesus spoke of these Jews in verse 21 as dying in your sins. Some years ago before modern transport, a gentleman went one day to a distant town on horseback. He conducted his business and he made his way back to his own town, but as he was coming home there was a tremendous mist come down and darkness come down, and he was riding along on horseback and he didn't really know where he was riding. There wasn't a light in a nearby home. There wasn't a star in the sky. It was complete darkness and then suddenly the thunder began to clap and the lightning began to appear, as as the flash of lightning illuminated his path, he saw that he was riding along just on the very edge of a precipice and any moment he can fall into the darkness below.

I wonder tonight do you realize that's where you are? You're on the very precipice tonight. There is but a step between you and death and, my friend, if you tumbled over into the precipice, you'd tumble into the fire of hell itself and the Lord Jesus is standing before you tonight and he says, "I am the light of the world," and there's the light he illumines. He shows us the lot of our condition. He shows us the where of our position. He shows us the who of our salvation. He says, "he that followeth me shall have the light of life."

Little boy forgot his lines in a Sunday school presentation one evening. His mommy was in the front row and she was gesturing to him and she was prompting him, but his mind was gone blank and she leaned forward and she whispered the clue, "I am the light of the world," and the child beaming with great speech, he stood up and he shouted out, "My mother says she's the light of the world!" Well, the little fellow was sincere but he was sincerely wrong, and could it be tonight I'm speaking to someone and you're looking for the light in the wrong places?

These Jews were followers of the law, the Pharisees, the priests, and the scribes, but they walked in darkness. Think of those today and they're following Confucius and Buddha and Mohammad and Krishna and they're walking in darkness and the end of the road is the darkness of death, but the person who follows and trusts Christ, the end of the road is the light of life. And whom are you depending on this evening? And what are you depending on for eternity? I wonder has the Lord pulled back the curtain of your mind and showed you tonight that salvation is not found in a creed, it's not found in a church,

it's not found in a ceremony, it's found in Christ, "neither is there salvation in any other for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

Listen, as the light tonight he illumines, as the light tonight he leads, as the light tonight he illuminates, as the light tonight he gladdens. He says, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness." That is, he shall no longer live in ignorance. He shall not grope in doubt and uncertainty. He shall know the way to heaven. He shall know where he's going. How a little light brightens up the darkness. Oh, it may be just a tiny light but maybe just a twinkling star, but it brightens things immediately.

An artist was on one occasion painting the picture of a house and it was a house in a wintry twilight, and the leaves were outside the house, the trees and the leaves were heavenly leaden with snow and everything looked dark and dreary and lonely, and then with a touch of his paintbrush, he just put a touch of yellow, he put a touch of light in the window and the effect was magical. The whole scene was changed by that gleam in the midst of the gloom.

Listen tonight, when the Lord Jesus comes into a life that's filled with darkness and sin, he always brings gladness. He's the light. Do you think it's unhappy tonight, you think a person is unhappy because he's a Christian? Do you think that it's unfulfilling? Do you think that it's unsatisfying? I mean, how can you be unhappy tonight when your sins are forgiven? How can you be unhappy tonight when you have peace with God? How can you be unhappy tonight when the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ has been lit upon you? How can you be unhappy tonight when heaven is your home? How can you be unhappy tonight when you've escaped the jaws of hell? How can you be unhappy tonight when your destiny is secure? What a tragedy to think that Jesus Christ can make you happy as the light of the world he gladdens.

Did the Lord Jesus not say that very thing in this very chapter? Speaking to the Jews he said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day. He saw it and was glad." Getting on for 2,000 years, Abraham had been given just a little vision, a dim vision of when the Savior would come and, you know, that far off glimmer was enough to make him rejoice and make him glad.

I tell you tonight, it's not Christ that takes the joy out of living, it's the devil. Remember the prodigal? "Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me." Here's a young man and he's starting out for the far country and he thinks he knows it all, and he wants to live independently of God. He could hardly walk fast enough to where he was going, and when he got to the far country, he blew it all on riotous living. I wonder is that you tonight? He was letting the good times roll. He was saying, "Man, it's great. There's plenty of beer to drink and plenty of pills to pop and there's free sex, and I'm having a blast and a ball in this old world!" Have a look at him. The bubble burst. Have a look at him tonight. He's hungry. His clothes are old and ragged. His hair is unkempt. His eyes are hollow and fearful.

Take a good look at him, sinner, tonight. That's what sin does. That's what Satan does. Sin will not only take you down to the pigsty but when it gets you down there, it'll strip you, it'll ruin you, it will wrack you. Sin will take you further than you want to go. It'll cost you more than you want to pay. It'll keep you longer than you want to stay. If you're determined to sow your wild oats, you'll never reap strawberries. I'll tell you, it all looks so promising but it all ended up so poorly. That's the way it is with the devil tonight. Thank God it doesn't end up that way with the Christian. I wonder tonight is the prodigal a picture of you? Satan dangles the carrot of drink but he doesn't show you the carnage on the roads. Satan waves the carrot of sex but he doesn't show you the lives that are blasted by AIDS. Satan dangles the carrot of heavy rock music but he doesn't show you the suicides. Do you know something tonight? The world will never satisfy the longing of your soul. Friends all around me are trying to find what the heart yearns for by sin undermined. I have a secret. I know where it's found, only through treasures in Jesus. Upon Jesus is all the world needs today blinding men's strife for sin darkens their way. Oh, to pull back the curtain, the grim curtains of night. One look at Jesus and all will be light.

He's the light of the world and as the light he leads, as the light he illumines, as the light he gladdens. Listen, as the light he heals. He says, "If you follow me you'll have the light of life," that is, you'll have living light, you'll have spiritual light independent of time and space, not affected by sickness or death, a light of life that burns on that can never be quenched. Do you know what Christ said to these Jews? "If any man keep my saying, he'll never see death," that is, he'll never experience eternal separation from God, eternal torment in hell. You see, by healing our sin, as John was singing about, he saves us from that death when we trust him. He heals us spiritually because he's the light.

You know, for many years now we've been told that certain diseases can be successfully treated by exposure to the light. The general tone of the body can be increased by the action of ultraviolet rays. It is estimated that there's a 20% increase in mortality where the sun doesn't get through and hit our body. Sure, they were telling us that on Thursday last if you were listening to the news. Do you know what they're telling us now? We have to go on vitamin, what? ["D."] You're all awake. You have to go on vitamin D. Why? Because we're not as we move into the autumn and as we move into the winter, we're not getting enough sun because there are properties in the sun that produce in our body vitamin D and we've got to take a tablet now to give us this vitamin D. Listen, the Lord Jesus tonight in just the same way there's a saving power tonight in the Lord Jesus. It's Malachi who tells us that he's the son of righteousness, that he's going to arise with healing in his wings.

He heals. Ah, but first he had to go to dark Calvary. You remember at Christ's birth there was a supernatural light that changed the midnight sky. Do you remember what Christ did? There was a supernatural darkness that changed the midday sky. The Bible says, "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour," and when Christ died on Calvary for our sin, it was as if the universe went into mourning and as God pulled that panoply of darkness across the sky and the Lord Jesus descended into the darkness, he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" There he is in

the midst of the darkness, forsaken by God, without a smile, without a drop of comfort. The agonies of hell going over his soul, taking the place of guilty hell-deserving sinners, enduring the punishment that was my lot, the Redeemer left alone with the sinner's sin. And then on the third day, thank God he arose with healing and saving power in his wings and he's the light of the world to all who will trust him. At Calvary he stepped into the darkness that you might step into the light. At Calvary he endured the wrath of God that you might enjoy the love of God. At Calvary he endured hell that you might enjoy heaven. Come to the light tonight. It's shining for thee. Sweetly the light has dawned upon me. Once I was lost but now I am free.

The light of the world is Jesus. As the light he leads, as the light he illumines, as the light he gladdens, as the light he heals, as the light he tests. How often to find out if something is genuine we hold it up to, what? The light. If some boy gives you a 20 pound note, and I'm not looking at some of you, but if some of you boys give somebody a 20 pound note, they might take it and hold it up to the light. What are they doing? They want to see if it's genuine. I gave a 20 pound note to a woman the other day and she looked at it and I said, "What are you doing?" She says, "I'm looking for the number." I says, "What number?" She says, "The number that's fake." She says, "You know there are fake 20 pound notes about." And so often we take something and we hold it up to the light. It's a sure test of its reality.

And these Jews to whom Christ was speaking were claiming to be the children of God. How do we find out that they were really the children of God? What did they think of Christ? Oh, he's the test. He's the touchstone. What were they going to do with Christ? Well, they took up stones to cast at him. They rejected the Lord Jesus, the light of the world. Now listen to me very carefully: the test of whether you're a genuine Christian is not your church background, the test is not do you belong to the Baptists, the Brethren, or the Free Peace, the test of whether you're a born again Christian tonight, it's not your Christian background, it's not your church membership, it's not your religious life, it's not your good works, the test of whether or not you are a Christian tonight is Christ. What do you think of Christ? What have you done with Christ? Have you received him or rejected him? You know, there are only two ways of dealing with the light, you can pull down the blinds, you can shut up the windows, you can lock the door, the other way is just to throw everything open and let the sunlight come streaming through. And there's only two ways of dealing with Christ tonight, the light of the world, you can either let him in or keep him out. What will you do then with Jesus which is called Christ?

The end of that Jewish feast, he stood before the nation of Israel who rejected him, he says, "I am the light of the world," and as the light of the world tonight he leads, he illumines, he gladdens, he heals, he tests. I'm sure you've heard of that famous painting by Holman Hunt that's "The Light of the World," and the artist pictures Christ, thorn crown, carrying a lantern in his left hand knocking at a door with his right hand. It's said that after completing the picture, Holman Hunt showed it to some friends who praised it and then one of them said to him, "Holman, you've no handle on the door." And Holman Hunt said to him, "My friend, you forget the handle is on the inside." Tonight Christ is knocking on the door of your life and he's able to dispel your darkness and bring you

light and life and love. To refuse his entrance is to continue in spiritual darkness, it's to enter eternal darkness hereafter. My friends, hell is no joke tonight. The Bible calls it outer darkness. The choice is yours. The time is now. Your question is: what shall you do with Jesus which is called Christ?

Let's pray.