

INTRODUCTION

1. We are returning to where we left off in our study last time in the Gospel of John.
2. Please take God's Word and turn with me to John chapter 8.
3. We are now looking at the next section, verses 12-21, though for this morning we will only look at verse 12.
4. But so that we have the entire story in our minds, I would like to read verses 12-21.
5. Read John 8:12-21.
6. The Bible teaches that Jesus is God.
7. That has been John's theme up to this point in his Gospel.
8. In chapter one when he began his Gospel, he stated plainly that Jesus was God when he said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."
9. In verse 14 he said, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."

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10. Jesus, according to John, is “the Light of men” (1:4) that “shines in the darkness” (1:5).
11. He is “the true Light which, coming into the world enlightens every man” (1:9).
12. In 1:29 and 34 John also refers to Him as being “the Lamb of God” and “the Son of God” but in our present text we are given another title.
13. John is not the only one to make statements like this of Jesus.
14. Jesus Himself said He was “the bread of life” (6:35), the Living water (7:37) and now as we will see in 8:12, “the Light of the world.”
15. As we stated on previous occasions, John’s purpose is to present Jesus to the world as the God-man and to call every person to “believe” in Him.
16. To illustrate this, John uses the term “believe” (pisteuo) “98 times” (Bible Works) in his gospel.
17. As we begin our study this morning, notice in verse 12...

I. The Setting (v.12)

As noted in our previous study, John 7:53-8:11 was not part of John's Gospel but was added by scribes.

The story in 7:37-52 is not interrupted but continues in verse 12.

John indicates that to us by saying, "Then Jesus again spoke to them..."

The word "again" indicates that Jesus spoke once more to the people at this same Feast of Tabernacles¹ mentioned in 7:2, 10.

Verse 21 says this occurred "in the treasury" at the temple which was also known as the court of the women.

Josephus says the treasury likely was located adjacent to the Court of the Women.²

The first Temple court was the Court of the Gentiles; the second was the Court of the Women.³

¹John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997, c1997). Jn 8:12.

²Josephus, *Jewish War* 5.200.

³*The Gospel of John : Volume 2*, ed. William Barclay, lecturer in the University of Glasgow, *The Daily study*

William Barclay tells us, “It was so called because women might not pass beyond it unless they were actually about to offer sacrifice on the altar which was in the Court of the Priests. Round the Court of the Women there was a colonnade or porch; and, in that porch, set against the wall, there were thirteen treasure chests into which people dropped their offerings. These were called *The Trumpets* because they were shaped like trumpets, narrow at the top and swelling out towards the foot.

The thirteen treasure chests all had their allotted offering. Into the first two were dropped the half shekels which every Jew had to pay towards the upkeep of the Temple. Into the third and fourth were dropped sums which would purchase the two pigeons which a woman had to offer for her purification after the birth of a child (Leviticus 12:8). Into the fifth were put contributions towards the cost of the wood which was needed to keep the altar fire alight. Into the sixth were dropped contributions towards the cost of the incense which was used at the Temple services. Into the seventh went contributions towards the upkeep of the golden vessels which were used at these services.

Sometimes a man or a family set apart a certain sum to make some trespass- or thank-offering; into the remaining six trumpets people dropped any money which remained

Bible series, Rev. ed. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 2000, c1975). 10.

after such an offering had been made, or anything extra which they wished to offer.”⁴

Now John records...

II. The Declaration (v.12)

Jesus says, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”

The first declarative statement that Jesus made at the feast was on “the last day” when He declared to be Living Water.

He said in 7:37, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.”

Now as we look at 8:12, He make a second. He says “I am the Light of the world.”

Notice the first part of verse 12. Jesus says He is the...

A. “I Am” (v.12a)

⁴*The Gospel of John : Volume 2*, ed. William Barclay, lecturer in the University of Glasgow, The Daily study Bible series, Rev. ed. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 2000, c1975). 10.

This is a statement of equality with God.

“ego eimi” are the two words in Greek.

Ego is emphatic and means, I and I alone, I and no other.⁵

It is reflective of the LXX in Exodus 3:14 where God says to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.”

This rendition of the divine name in Greek is paralleled elsewhere in the Old Testament. In several places “I am” (literally Hebrew “I [am] he”) is used as a divine name. Isaiah 43.25 is a striking example.

There the Hebrew reads “I, I am he, who wipes out sin.”

The Septuagint translates the first part of this statement by using the Greek expression “I am” twice.

The Septuagint actually reads “I am I am who wipes out sin” and the second “I am” becomes the equivalent of the divine name.⁶

⁵R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961). 593.

⁶Barclay Moon Newman and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Gospel of John*, Helps for translators;

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In the Gospel of John “I AM” is used by Jesus in three different ways. (1) It appears as a simple statement of identity in 4:26; 6:20; 18:5. (2) Most often it is followed by a predicate nominative (6:35, 51; 8:12; 10:7, 9, 11, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1, 5). (3) In several places it is used absolutely (8:24, 28, 58; 13:19).⁷

We are familiar with its use followed by a predicate nominative. There are seven in John’s Gospel.

Jesus said...

1. I AM the bread of life (6:35, 48, 51)
2. I AM the light of the world (8:12; 9:5)
3. I AM the door of the sheep (10:7, 9)
4. I AM the good shepherd (10:11, 14)
5. I AM the resurrection and the life (11:25)
6. I AM the way, truth, and the life (14:6)
7. I AM the true vine (15:1)

The second part of verse 12 says Jesus is...

B. “The Light of the World”

UBS handbook series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993], c1980). 124.

⁷Barclay Moon Newman and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Gospel of John*, Helps for translators; UBS handbook series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993], c1980). 124.

1. This is a metaphor with Old Testament allusions

The glory of the very presence of God in the cloud led the people to the promised land (Ex. 13:21–22) and protected them from those who would destroy them (Ex. 14:19–25).⁸

- a) **Exodus 13:21 (NASB)** The Lord was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night.

The word of God, the law of God, is a light to guide the path of those who cherish instruction...

- b) **Psalms 119:105 (NASB)** Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.
- c) **Proverbs 6:23 (NASB)** For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; And reproofs for discipline are the way of life.

2. This highlights Jesus' role as Messiah and Son of God

⁸D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991). 337.

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- a) **Psalms 27:1 (NASB)** The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life; Whom shall I dread?

This is the first time in Scripture that light is used as a metaphor for God (see John 1:4, 9; 8:12; 1 John 1:3; Rev. 21:23), although in many texts He is associated with the light (4:6; 18:28; 43:3; 84:11; Isa. 10:17; 60:1, 20; Mic. 7:8).⁹

The Lord is defined as David's "*light*" and "*salvation.*" As light God is the revealer (John 1:4–5), and as light God is also holy (1 John 1:5). Since the Lord is David's light, in His presence the darkness of his enemies and the darkness of his fears are expelled.

However, God is not just the holy revealer. He is "*salvation.*" The word used here includes the ideas of "deliverance" and "rescue" and is the same word from which the name of Jesus is derived.¹⁰

⁹Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Worshipful*, 1st ed. (Colorado Springs, Colo.: Cook Communications Ministries, 2004). 109.

¹⁰Donald Williams and Lloyd J. Ogilvie, *The Preacher's Commentary Series, Volume 13 : Psalms 1-72*, The

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Salvation is only possible in Jesus Christ.

- b) **Acts 4:12 (NASB)** "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

Isaiah tells us that the servant of the LORD was appointed as a light to the Gentiles, that he might bring God's salvation to the ends of the earth.¹¹

- c) **Isaiah 49:6 (NASB)** He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

The coming eschatological age would be a time when the LORD himself would be the light for his people.¹²

Preacher's Commentary series (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Inc, 1986). 221.

¹¹D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991). 338.

¹²D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991). 338.

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- d) **Isaiah 60:19-22 (NASB)** "No longer will you have the sun for light by day, Nor for brightness will the moon give you light; But you will have the Lord for an everlasting light, And your God for your glory.²⁰ "Your sun will no longer set, Nor will your moon wane; For you will have the Lord for an everlasting light, And the days of your mourning will be over.²¹ "Then all your people *will be* righteous; They will possess the land forever, The branch of My planting, The work of My hands, That I may be glorified.²² "The smallest one will become a clan, And the least one a mighty nation. I, the Lord, will hasten it in its time."

Perhaps Zechariah 14:5b–7 is especially significant, with its promise of continual light on the last day, followed by the promise of living waters flowing from Jerusalem—this passage probably forming part of the liturgical readings of this Feast.¹³

- e) **Zechariah 14:5-7 (NASB)** You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake

¹³D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991). 338.

in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the Lord, my God, will come, *and* all the holy ones with Him! ⁶ In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. ⁷ For it will be a unique day which is known to the Lord, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light.

III. The Analogy (v.12)

By claiming to be **the Light of the world** Jesus was clearly claiming to be God (cf. Ps. 27:1; Isa. 60:19; 1 John 1:5) and to be Israel's Messiah, sent by God as the "light to the nations" (Isa. 42:6; cf. 49:6; Mal. 4:2).

A. Jesus Christ Alone Brings the Light of Salvation to a Sin-Cursed World

To the darkness of falsehood He is the light of truth; to the darkness of ignorance He is the light of wisdom; to the darkness of sin He is the light of holiness; to the darkness of sorrow He is the light of joy; and to the darkness of death He is the light of life.

1. He said in **John 3:19-21 (NASB)** "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. ²⁰ "For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. ²¹ "But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."

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2. He stated again He is the Light of the world in **John 9:5 (NASB)** "While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world."
3. In **John 11:9 (NASB)** Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world."
4. **John 12:36 (NASB)** "While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light." These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself from them.
5. **John 12:46 (NASB)** "I have come *as* Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness."

The analogy of light, as with Jesus' earlier use of the metaphor of living water (7:37–39), was particularly relevant to the Feast of Tabernacles.

The daily water-pouring ceremony had its nightly counterpart in a lamp-lighting ceremony.

In the very Court of the Women where Jesus was speaking, four huge candelabra were lit, pushing light up into the night sky like a searchlight.

So brilliant was their light that one ancient Jewish source declared, "There was not a courtyard in Jerusalem that did not reflect [their] light" (cited in F.

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F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983], 206 n. 1).

They served as a reminder of the pillar of fire by which God had guided Israel in the wilderness (Ex. 13:21–22).

The people—even the most dignified leaders—danced exuberantly around the candelabra through the night, holding blazing torches in their hands and singing songs of praise. It was against the backdrop of that ceremony that Jesus made the stunning announcement that He is the true Light of the world.

But unlike the temporary and stationary candelabra, Jesus is a light that never goes out and a light to be followed.¹⁴

- B. The One who Follows Jesus will Not Walk in the Darkness of Sin, the World and Satan and will Have the Light that Produces Spiritual Life

When Jesus says in John 8:12 “he who ***follows*** Me,” the word “follows” (akoloutheo) means “to follow Him as a true disciple.”

¹⁴John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : John 1-11* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2006). 334.

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John uses this word occurs “19 times” in his Gospel (Bible Works).

1. **John 1:37 (NASB)** The two disciples heard him speak, and they *followed* Jesus.
2. **John 1:43 (NASB)** The next day He purposed to go into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "**Follow** Me."
3. **John 10:27 (NASB)** "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they *follow* Me.

Paul called for unbelievers to come to the Light—the Lord Jesus Christ!

4. He said in **Ephesians 5:14 (NASB)** For this reason it says, "Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And **Christ will shine on you.**"

This is the promise of the Gospel—that if you “follow” Jesus Christ by laying down your life for Him, you “will not walk in darkness, but will have the Light of life” (Jn.8:12).

IV. The Promise (v.12)

A. Following Jesus Christ is the Result of Salvation

John 10:27 (NASB) "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

B. Following Jesus Christ is the Requirement of Salvation

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1. **Matthew 8:22 (NASB)** But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and allow the dead to bury their own dead."
2. **Matthew 10:38 (NASB)** "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.
3. **Matthew 16:24 (NASB)** Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.
4. **Matthew 19:21 (NASB)** Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go *and* sell your possessions and give to *the* poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

CONCLUSION

1. Are you following Jesus Christ?
2. Have you come to Jesus who is the Light of the world?
3. In our next time together, we will see those who rejected Jesus and walked in darkness. I hope that's none of you!
4. If it is, I plead with you to surrender your life to Jesus Christ.
5. Repent of your sin!

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6. Repent that you have never loved the Lord Jesus Christ with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.
7. Repent that you have used His holy name as a filthy four-letter curse word.
8. Repent that you are a liar, thief, adulterer at heart!
9. **Acts 17:30-31 (NASB)** "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."
10. Jesus Christ on a Roman cross took the penalty of your sin.
11. Romans 6:23 says, "The wages of sin is death."
12. He took on Himself your "death."
13. **Romans 5:8 (NASB)** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
14. Turn to Him today before it's too late.
15. Let's pray.