

“I am the LIGHT OF THE WORLD”

John 8:12 [9:5]

This is one of several “*I Am*” statements made by Jesus. In these “*I Am*” sayings, Jesus is providing us with a “self-portrait” of who He is and why we should trust Him. Jesus first says who He is—“***I am the light of the world...***” Next, why we should trust Him—“*he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*”

➡ **SETTING:** The temple (8:2, 20). The Jews have been celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles (7:2, 37). This feast commemorated the forty years Israel wandered in the wilderness living in tents.

➡ Jesus linked Himself to Israel coming out of Egypt and journeying through the wilderness:

- As “*the Lamb of God*” (1:29), He is linked to the Passover Lamb that redeemed Israel out of Egypt.
- As the “*Bread of life*” (6:32-35), He is linked to the manna that fed Israel in the wilderness.
- As the “*living water*” (7:37-39), He is linked to the water from the Rock in the wilderness.
- As “*the light*” (8:12), He is linked to the pillar of fire that lighted the way of Israel through the wilderness.

During the Feast of Tabernacles there were four 75 foot tall candelabras that burned brightly and illuminated the entire area surrounding the Temple.

These candelabras **reminded** Israel of the a pillar of fire that lead them through the wilderness (Ex. 13:21).

Now, Jesus stands in the Temple near one of those candelabras, and declares, “*I am the Light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness...*” As Israel followed the pillar of light through the wilderness, Jesus is “*the light of the world*” for us to follow today.

➡ **The CHARACTERISTICS of Light.** No one fully understands exactly what light is.

- 1) The DUAL nature of light—For 300 years scientists have debated whether light is particle or a wave. Today scientists conclude it is BOTH—even though they admit that is “impossible.” They call it a “wave” when it does what a wave is expected to do, and they call it a “particle” when it does what a particle is expected to do. According to all the present evidence, light is not part particle and part wave, but it is ALL wave and ALL particle, ALL at the same time.
 - Jesus Christ has a DUAL NATURE—He is not part man and part God—Jesus is all God and all man all at the same time.
- 2) Light is invisible—God is light and therefore is invisible (1 Tim. 1:17). Dr. M.R. DeHaan, MD, in *The Chemistry of Light*¹ writes:

No one has ever seen pure light. No one has ever seen sunlight. The things which we really see are the objects which the light reveals... “*God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.*” We cannot see God. Only as we see the light reflected in the Person of Christ do we see Him.

 - The only way we know light exists is by the manifestation of light through mists and dust particles in the atmosphere.
 - Likewise, God is known by the manifestation of Himself in the Person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is “*the image of the invisible God*” (Col. 1:15). Jesus said, “*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.*”
- 3) The SPEED of light. Light travels 186,282 miles per second. It is the universal, absolute standard of speed. Einstein’s equation $E=MC^2$, theorized that everything—even time itself—is relative to only one existing constant: The speed of light.
 - Jesus, the Light, is the absolute standard by which all other things are measured and judged.
- 4) **Light is essential for life.** “*I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*” John 1:4—“*In him was life; and the life was THE LIGHT of men.*”

¹ M.R. DeHaan, *The Chemistry of the Blood*, Zondervan, 1974, p. 60.

- Whatever we eat ultimately came from the energy of the sun's light. By the process photosynthesis, green plants convert light energy into stored energy. When we eat the plant, we are consuming the energy that was once light.
- The Lord Jesus Christ is "*the light of life.*" No Jesus—No Life.

I. **Christ's CLAIM —*I am the Light of the world...***

- Jesus is the light of the **intellectual** world— *In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge* (Col. 2:3)! The world will never solve it's problems apart from Jesus. The world says the answer to unwanted pregnancies is abortion... The answer to murder is gun control... The answer to peace on earth is disarmament... None of these answers solves the problem. When you leave Jesus out of your problem, you'll still have a problem.
 - Jesus is the light of the **social** world—Think of what this world would be like if Jesus never came. Everything worth having in this world was made possible by Christ's coming.
 - Jesus is the light of the **musical** world—How many wonderful songs and pieces of music would we miss if Jesus had not come.
 - Jesus is the light of the **religious** world. Religion is reliance. What (or who) you rely on for salvation is your religion. Your religion is no stronger than what/who you are relying upon.
 - **Is Jesus the light of YOUR world?**
- A. The light speaks of **the PRESENCE of God.**
1. God told Moses His name is "*I AM THAT I AM.*" When Jesus says "*I AM...*" He is claiming deity for Himself (v. 58).
 2. The pillar of fire over the tabernacle assured Israel that God's presence was among them (Ex. 33:9-10). Jesus was saying He was presence of God among them (John 1:14).
- B. The light speaks of **the PURITY of God.**
1. Light is the symbol of purity and holiness. Light is the absence of darkness—"*God is light, and in him is no darkness at all*" (1 John 1:5).

2. The Bible likens sin and death to darkness. Hell is called “*outer darkness*” (Mt. 8:12; 22:13), because God is not there and there is no life there.
 3. When Jesus bore the sins of the world at Calvary, there was darkness over all the land for three hours.
- C. The light speaks of **the PATH of God** (Num. 9:15-21; 10:11-12).
- Jesus is the light that guides our way. When He leads us to move in a certain direction, we should move. We don’t move until He moves.

II. **Man’s CHOICE— ...*he that followeth me*...**

- A. Follow—“...*followeth me*” means to believe on Christ (cf. 12:46).
- B. Decide—You must decide to follow Christ. If a man rejects the Light, he is left in darkness.
- Read John 3:19-21—Rejecting the light is not an intellectual problem—It is a moral problem.
- C. **Everyone is following a light.** The question is—Which “light?” The “TRUE LIGHT...” (John 1:9) or a FALSE light (2 Cor. 11:14).

I recently heard a story of two friends who went out fishing one night in a lake in Hawaii. Before wading out into the water, they set a lantern on the edge of the shore so they would be able to find their way back in the darkness.

After fishing for a few hours they decided to head back to shore. However, as made their way towards the light, the water was getting deeper and deeper. They became disoriented and confused. Why was the water getting deeper as they waded towards the light?

Meanwhile, one of their buddies had come down to the shore looking for them. He he could not see them so he began to call out to them. They heard his voice, but it was coming from behind them. They turned and answered, “Where are you?” He called back, “I’m here on the shore.” “But the shore is in front of us where the light is.” Their friend on the shore answered back,

“No, that light you are following is a dock light on the other side of the lake.”

While they were busying fishing they didn't notice the fuel in their lantern ran out and they were following the wrong light.

There are two lights in this dark world. Jesus said, “*I am the light of the world...*” but, Satan is also called “*an angel of light*” (2 Cor. 11:14). One light leads to GOD, the other leads away from God deeper into sin.

Which light are you following?

III. **Light's CONTRAST—...*shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life...***

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When the bulbs were tuned on, a light would shine out of the manger, to represent the baby Jesus.

In the middle of the play someone accidentally turned off the wrong switch and the light bulbs went out in the manger. Immediately the ten year old playing Joseph yelled, “Hey, Somebody turned off Jesus!” Sadly, that’s what is happening today—The world is “turning Jesus off!”

SUMMATION: Notice in John 9:5—Jesus is only *“the Light of the world”* as long as He is in the world. Today He is seated in heaven at the Father’s right hand. The only way Jesus is in the world today is in the lives of Christians.

Today, followers of Christ are *“the light of the world”* (Mt. 5:14-16). As Christians follow Jesus they *“have the light of life.”* Christians reflect Christ’s light as the moon reflects the light of the sun on this dark planet.

- Paul wrote Christians are to *“shine as lights in the world”* (Phil. 2:15). Ephesians 5:8—*“For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.”*

This old darkened world has only two sources of TRUE LIGHT: (1) Christians, and (2) The Bible (Ps. 119:105, 130). To receive God’s light, people must come to one of these “lights.”

The problem is, too many Christians are not walking *“as children of light.”* Sin has darkened their light. They have “turned off Jesus.” They are not shining, but they are hiding their light (Mt. 5:14-16). The light must be put on a candlestick for it to do the most good (cf. Rev. 1:20).

We sing that little S.S. chorus—“This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.” Amen! Don’t hid it under a bushel, but put it on a candlestick and shine for Jesus!

Do you have the Light of the world in you today? Are you shining the light. Do people see the light in you? Is Jesus the light of YOUR WORLD?