

Jesus Said...

“I am the light of the world”

John 8:12

When you enter a dark room and turn a light on, where does the darkness go? In the presence of light it vanishes. This is why Jesus said, “I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” (John 8:12). In the natural world we can have twilight. But in the spiritual world darkness and light are totally opposite.

The first four books of the New Testament contain the teachings of Jesus—telling His friends and those who opposed Him who He was. He used many different ways to show that He was God in the flesh. In showing His hearers that He was the anointed one of God, the Jews’ Messiah, and the Lord and Saviour of the whole world, He often used natural things around Him as illustrations. We have His parables of the Sower, the Good Shepherd, the fish and the net, the vine and the branches, and many more. When Jesus said, “I am the Light of the world,” He was showing that as the earth needs the natural sun, the people on the earth need the true spiritual light that only He can give.

Why did Jesus use light as an illustration to show who He was? He did this because darkness is characteristic of the sinful condition of the world. Jesus said, “We (the Christians) know we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wicked-

ness" (1 John 5:19). The Old Testament prophet Isaiah spoke of a time before Jesus' coming as a period of darkness covering the earth and heavy darkness covering the people (Isaiah 60:2).

Why is the world in darkness and wickedness? The total cause of this is *sin*. The darkness of sin entered the world when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden by listening to the devil and rejecting God's holy plan for them. Since they sinned, all of their descendants have a sinful nature which has the tendency to turn from God toward a life of sin and darkness. Isaiah 53:6 says, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way." In another scripture the Bible says, "There is none righteous, no not one" (Romans 3:10). The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." As the result of this sin and rebellion against God, spiritual darkness and ignorance are everywhere.

We know how difficult it is to live in physical darkness. To do our duties, we must have enough light to see where we are going and what we are doing. You may have had the opportunity to tour a cavern. What a breath-taking experience it is when the guide tells you he will show you the cave in "natural color," and then turns the lights off, and there you stand in total darkness. It is an awesome feeling of helplessness that settles over you. When this happens, you want to know where the guide is. He is the only one that will turn on the light and lead you out again.

The life of darkness, not under Jesus' control, is a much blacker darkness than any other. This darkness also has greater consequences. Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death." No one can tell how dark the blackness of sin really is. It is a life of unrest and confusion. This points up the condition of the life of sin under the devil's control.

While the life of sin is a horrible circumstance, the natural drawing of the sinner's life is toward a

continuing deeper and stronger bondage to the devil. Mankind in this state is rejecting the love-call of God and Jesus His Son. Jesus Himself said, when talking about people not accepting His love, "Men loved the darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reprov'd (exposed)" (John 3:19-20).

There are many people who have never heard of Jesus. These people are living in darkness. What a pity it is that there are millions living in spiritual darkness, who will live and die not knowing that Jesus came as the Light of the World. There are others who are living in willful disobedience to God. They have heard the Good News of Jesus but are rejecting Him as Lord of their lives.

Living in darkness and unbelief in Jesus carries with it a death sentence. Jesus says in John 3:18, "He that believeth on Him (Jesus) is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

But remember, Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." Only Jesus could say this, because He came to the earth as God the Son, in human flesh, to live a perfect life and then be sacrificed, shedding His blood on the cross for the sins of the world. Jesus came as the Saviour of the world, but for His sacrifice to be effective for you, you must accept Him as the controller of your life. God offers Jesus to you as a gift. But for a gift to be owned, it must be accepted. The latter part of Romans 6:23 says, "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

How is Jesus the Light of the World? How can He be your Light? When a person accepts Jesus' teachings and believes that He is the Son of God risen from the dead and is sorry for his sins and repents of them, then Jesus becomes his Light.

Study I Peter 1:18, 19. In I Peter 2:9, Peter says to Christians, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar (special) people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness unto His marvelous light." As the Light of the world, Jesus is still the Light of every saved soul. He is to be the Light of the whole world—yet His light rays are able to enter each individual heart that is open to Him. When the Light of Jesus comes to the believer, he moves from the shady to the sunny side of the street. Jesus enlivens and excites the Christian with the brightness of His Light.

As the Light of the world, Jesus reveals many things to us. He shows us God's original plan for the individual that the life of sin has overshadowed. His Light reveals the hidden beauty of God's purpose in each life. We know it is possible to trip up in the Christian life. But the Light of Jesus guides us. David wrote, "Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105). This light gives us a clear sense of direction and guidance for our lives.

But for the sinner, the light reveals something else. By looking to Jesus, the sinner can see himself as he really is, lost and in the darkness of sin.

Scientists tell us that light is the fastest thing known to man. It travels 186,000 miles in a second. Space and time do not slow it down or affect it in any way. In the same way Jesus is not hindered by time or space. As God, He is everywhere, present with all His people all of the time.

The Light of Jesus is the same as light from any source, in that the nearer we are to the source, the brighter the light appears. This is especially true as we learn to know Jesus better and grow more in our relationship with Him. The writer of the Proverbs said, "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Proverbs 4:18). To the Christian the Light of Jesus is so precious. But in contrast,

the sinner living in darkness does not know what the Light is. "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the Light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Corinthians 4:4, 6).

Jesus offers Himself as the Light of the whole world. This light can never be extinguished, but it can be refused. Jesus is the Light of the world. He is available to all. He said in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

As natural light provides energy and purity for the natural world, the Light of Jesus also provides spiritual energy and purity. "For in him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

Jesus, Light of the world, is the fullness of all true wisdom and knowledge. All true intellect and reason come from His light. James 1:5 says, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him."

Do you have the Light of Jesus shining in you? If you do, praise God! If you don't, why not? Jesus wants to be your light. You as an individual are so special to Him that He is calling you "out of darkness into his marvelous light." If you open your life to Jesus the Light, He will come in and save you from a life of sin and an eternity in hell. You must first realize that you are a sinner living in darkness away from God's plan for your life.

Spiritual darkness is so dark and the spiritual light is so bright and wonderful; how can anyone refuse the light and remain in darkness?

Someone may say he doesn't need the Light of Jesus to be saved. Some people think they will not go to hell if they don't take Jesus as their Saviour. "God is light, and in him is no darkness

at all. If we say we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:5-9).

—Raymond P. Brunk



If you have any questions, or if you need further help, feel free to contact the person whose name appears below.

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