

Light of the World

Seven times in the book of John, Jesus says "I am ...". These statements are not metaphors about Jesus, but rather Jesus stating that He is God. Each statement reveals part of God's character and who He is in us, making it possible for us to say, "I am new."



INTRODUCTION

The concept of light is a universal religious image. God, the Creator of light itself, sent His Son to be the ultimate Light of the World. His light changes our lives and illuminates our darkness. When we understand the impact of Christ's love upon our lives, we are forever changed!

STARTER QUESTION

Take a moment to consider how children associate with light vs. darkness. How does this correlate to the spiritual metaphor of light and darkness? How does Jesus, the Light of the World, shine His light into our lives and how does He want to shine His light through us to others?

INTO THE WORD

1. Read 2 Corinthians 4:4 and 6. What is the significance of "god" in verse 3 versus "God" in verse 6? How do we ensure that we are not being blinded to the truth of God?
2. John 8:1-12 is the account of a woman who was caught in adultery and experienced Jesus shining His light into the darkness of her life and her surroundings. Jesus set this woman free from centuries of bondage and set a new precedent for the treatment of sin. Jesus' balanced answer was exactly what freed this woman. What other examples do we see in God's Word or in our own lives that provide a new precedent of freedom and deliverance? Additionally, what is the most Christlike way to deal with someone who—like the woman brought to Jesus—can easily be found guilty?
3. Jesus our Light shines the truth in His Word into our lives. When Jesus says in John 8:32 that "the truth will set you free", what does He mean by that? When we look at Jesus' statement, "I am the Light of the world," what characteristics of Jesus remind us of light?

APPLICATION

4. In today's sermon, we learned that whoever follows Jesus will "have the Light to walk away" from our sins and temptations. However, Christians struggle with repeated sins as much as anyone. Why do you think that is? How do we apply the above truth despite our inclination toward sin?
5. We learned about the Feast of Booths in today's lesson. Did you find it interesting that the fire in the Temple during the feast of booths was in the court of the women? Why do you think that this is? Additionally, how does Jesus use His surroundings and the cultural traditions in that day to help tell His story - "I am the Light of the World"?
6. In hindsight, how did Jesus the Light and the Truth set both the adulteress woman and the blind man free? By comparison, how can those guilty of sin and/or those born with physical disabilities find the same freedom today?

PRAYER

Dear God, we want to see You and Your Son, Jesus, as the ultimate Light in our lives. We want to behold You in all your glory. Teach us to see Your wonders, Your deliverances, and Your perspective in our lives. As we behold You and see all You are doing in our lives, teach us how to reach our lost and dying world. Let us not cast the first stone but pursue others the way Christ pursues us! We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

SUGGESTED ANSWER GUIDE / MORE FOOD FOR THOUGHT FOR SELECTED QUESTIONS:

Question 1:

Satan has many ways to blind people to God's truth.

- Make sure that when we read the Bible, we are not taking verses out of context. Warren W. Wiersbe says, "Many false teachers today handle God's Word in deceptive ways. You can prove anything by the Bible, provided you twist the scriptures out of context...If people treated other books the way they treat the Bible, they would never learn anything."
- Acts 17:11, 1 John 4:1-3, 1 Thess. 5:16-22 – The scripture tells us to test everything against God's word to ensure that we are not being led astray by false teachings or by misinterpretations of scripture.
- 2 Timothy 4:3-4 – Be sure that you do not choose to believe something un-biblical just because you like what it says, or it suits your needs.

Question 3:

From *Bible footnote on page 2244, Zondervan NIV Life Application Study Bible, John 8:31-35* reads:

8:32 Jesus himself is the truth that sets us free (8:36). **He is the source of truth**, the perfect standard of what is right. **He frees us from the consequences of sin, from self-deception, and from deception by Satan.** He shows us clearly the way to eternal life with God. **Thus Jesus does not give us freedom to do what we want, but freedom to follow God.** As we seek to serve God, Jesus' perfect truth frees us to be all that God meant us to be.

8:34, 35 **Sin has a way of enslaving us, controlling us, dominating us, and dictating our actions. Jesus can free you from this slavery that keeps you from becoming the person God created you to be.** If sin is restraining, mastering, or enslaving you, Jesus can break its power over your life."

Jesus can reveal and illuminate the darkness both within us and in the world...His ability to show us choices which we have not seen. Light brings hope as in "the light at the end of the tunnel" Another name of Jesus also calls this to mind, "the morning star" which promises the morning in the darkest hour of the night.

Question 4:

Sometimes, even as Christians, our sins have become such a part of our life that doing it any other way is very difficult. Even though we know our actions/thoughts/attitudes are wrong, they have become almost like a habit or addiction. "I always respond in anger at the smallest provocation/I always do that when I get bored/etc." We don't know how else to react because some sins are so engrained. The good news that we have another option! When we focus on Jesus' light, we are shown other paths and responses. He gives us the strength to break out of our unhealthy routine. We must accept the help and continually refocus our attention on the Light, regardless of how many times we stumble.

Question 5:

By a woman the Light of the world would come into the world. Jesus would be born of a virgin. Jewish mothers light the candles at the Passover table on Sabbath for the same reason.

There are other examples of Jesus setting women free from the strict law they had lived under for so long. Every time he spoke with a woman, or enabled women to be involved with events, such as His resurrection, He set a new precedent by elevating women to a new position of honor and equality.

Excerpt from *The Charles Spurgeon Sermon Collection*

@ <https://www.thekingdomcollective.com/spurgeon/sermon/3534/>, from *II. JESUS IS THE TRUE LIGHT*.

“...Now it is supposed, not, I think, without good reason, that it was on the morning after this celebration that Jesus stood in the court. The lamps were gone out, but the golden columns that the night before had flamed, still remained in their places—the remnant of a spectacle—the lamps minus the light. Just then the sun was rising in its own peerless splendor. The scene they beheld gave force to the sentence He uttered. The contrast between the lamps which the priests had lit—a fit emblem of superstition—were all going out, perhaps with a noxious smell, while the mighty orb of day was rising when Jesus said, “I am the light of the world; He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness.” Whether the scene and the circumstances were as has been so well imagined, or not, the truth is fitly illustrated by the similitude. When every lamp that ever man has kindled, and fed with the oil of superstition, shall have died out, as they must expire, our Lord Jesus Christ shall, like the morning sun, make glad the sons of men! Away you go, you bright meteors of the night, around which the children of superstition execute their maddened dance of implicit belief! Away you go! Already you begin to go out! I see how you all flicker, even now. The day comes on apace in which the blast of God’s eternal Spirit shall blow you out in everlasting night. But Jesus shines! He is the true Light of God and will shine on forever!”...