

Fil-Am Community Church

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## **I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD**

John 8:12

Good morning! We're continuing our series on "got Jesus?" We're trying to discover the answer to questions like **"Who is Jesus?"** "What did he do?" **"How can he help me?"** "Is he still relevant?" We're looking at the "I Am" statements of Jesus in Book of John and from there dig out the answers to these age-old questions. This morning I'd like to share with you the second part of this 7-part series.

There is a certain Indian tribe whose men rise early every morning to perform an ancient ceremony that they believe causes the sun to come up. They believe that if they failed to perform this ritual, they would plunge the world into utter darkness. Never have they dared to skip a day--just to find out if what they believed was true--the risk would be too great.

It is true that without sunlight, life on this planet would quickly cease to exist. No plants would grow-- the temperature would rapidly drop--and in just a short time we would all be dead. As vital as sunlight is to our physical existence, there is a light that is even more vital to our spiritual existence.

It is the light that John describes in John 1:9 as "The true light that gives light to every man..." This vital life-giving and sustaining light **is Jesus**. In our text today we find Jesus speaking to the people & the religious establishment of His day.

Let us read John 8:12.

*"When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, '**I am the light of the world.** Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'"*

So, Jesus claims to be the Light of the World. This claim was made not long after the Feast of Tabernacles. A very spectacular part of this feast was the use of the great candelabra. There were four candelabras in all and they were filled with oil by young men who had to climb ladders that were 50 cubits high.

A cubit is considered to be about 18 inches--50 cubits would be around 75 feet. So if these young men had to climb 75 feet to put oil in the candelabras, the candelabras themselves must have been at least 75 feet tall.

The light from these lamps was so brilliant that "there was not a courtyard in Jerusalem that did not reflect the light." The brilliant illumination from these candelabras was a great occasion in the city of Jerusalem. But when the feast

was over, the great candelabra would no longer be lit. And the great darkness formed a marked contrast w/the brilliant light from before. It was in the darkness of this post-festival period that Jesus made His claim. He spoke not only of being a light to Jerusalem--which was all that the light of the feast could mean. He spoke of being a light to the world.

What was Jesus communicating to us in this proclamation that He is the light of the world? The answers come when we recall what light does.

## **I. What Does Light Do?**

### **1. Light scatters darkness.**

Literally, we know that at a flick of a switch, a light bulb can dispel darkness. Now, how many charismatics does it take to change a light bulb? One, since his/her hands are in the air anyway.

How many Calvinists does it take to change a lightbulb? None. God has predestined when the lights will be on.

How many Pentecostals does it take to change a light bulb? 10, one to change it and 9 others to pray against the spirit of darkness.

How many Amish does it take to change a lightbulb? What's a light bulb?

How many liberals does it take to change a light bulb?

At least ten, as they need to hold a debate on whether or not the light bulb exists. Even if they can agree upon the existence of the light bulb, they still may not change it to keep from alienating those who might use other forms of light.

How many Baptists does it take to change a light bulb?

At least 15. One to change the light bulb, and three committees to approve the change.

If you have ever been in a room or a cave or cavern totally devoid of light, you know how frightening darkness can be. Complete darkness is palpable, and you wouldn't even dare move. Darkness paralyzes you. In Scripture, darkness is often a metaphor for sin, death, sin's consequence, and everything that is not of God. Conversely, light is often a metaphor for redemption, spiritual awakening, goodness, peace, and all that is of God. In

John 3:19-21 Jesus says:

*“This is the verdict: **Light has come into the world**, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. **But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light**, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.”*

There seems to be a resurgence these days of an interest in paganism, witchcraft, and the like. Let me tell you that there is nothing new about the New Age. Let me tell you that it is darkness and oppression. And let me remind you that when missionaries brought the Gospel to the British Isles in the 6th century people fled paganism in droves and ran to Jesus because their former religion was darkness and the Lord was light. Light scatters darkness. Jesus is the light of this world and He vanquishes sin, spiritual blindness and oppression, death, hell, the grave, and spiritual bondage.

When baby Jesus was presented to the temple by his parents and Simeon saw him, this was his great cry (Luke 2:29-32) *“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. <sup>30</sup> For my eyes have seen your salvation, <sup>31</sup> which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: <sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.”*

## **2. Light gives warmth.**

Did you know that one small candle, properly reflected, can raise the temperature of an igloo from below freezing to over 20 degrees Fahrenheit? That’s just amazing how heat from a single candle can give comfort to anyone. But even the heat from a light bulb can give warmth, maybe not so much to us, but to little chicks. When I was young, we raised poultry. We had little chicks and every time there were strong rains and the weather was a bit cold, I would go out and lift the cover of their cage to check how they’re

doing, and I would see those little chicks huddled around a single light bulb. And I guess, it's pretty obvious that when the sun is out, we just want to go out and enjoy the warm weather.

Light gives warmth. In the Bible warmth is often equated with the comfort that God provides to the grieving, the rejected, and the oppressed.

In Isaiah 60:19-20, God says,

*“The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory. Your sun will never set again, and your moon will wane no more; the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your days of sorrow will end.”*

So, the light that God gives is far warmer than the warmth of the sun.

Because it is not skin deep. It penetrates your being.

And when it does, **it lifts you up and strengthens your inner being.** I remember the story I read of a grieving widow in church. She just lost her husband, a soldier in the army who fought in Vietnam. A lady in church who was sitting on the opposite side of the pew noticed how the widow looked so despondent that she prayed for her. Then, she noticed how her face seemed to light up. Afterwards, when they talked the widow testified that she felt a sudden rush of warm feeling coursing through her body at the moment that she was being prayed for.

Folks, that is God's love and grace at work. It is available to anyone. Jesus says in Matthew 11:28, "*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.*"

### **3. Light provides healing**

When EZ was born, he was diagnosed with a higher than normal bilirubin level. This meant that he had jaundice. The doctor told us that he needed to be treated and so we went home from the hospital without him. The doctor had him go through phototherapy everyday for a few hours. What they did was they exposed him to a high-energy light in order for the bilirubin to break down and its level to come down. We visited him in the hospital everyday, and were so anxious and praying that his condition would improve. On the third day, the bilirubin came down to a level that is manageable and we were so thankful to God that he was out of danger. We continued the treatment of his disease at home by exposing him to the sun everyday.

Light can heal just as Jesus, the Light of the World, can heal. It's interesting that in John 9, Jesus claims again that he is the light of the world. Then, he proceeded to do a miracle healing. He gave sight to a blind man. This is what we read in John 9:5-7, "*While I am in the world, **I am the light of the world.***"<sup>6</sup> *After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes.*<sup>7</sup> "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of

*Siloam” (this word means “Sent”). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.”*

When Jesus was on earth, he had an extensive healing ministry. He healed people wherever he went. Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever. If he healed in the past, he would still be in the present. In this church, we believe that Jesus can heal and that's why in our prayer meetings every Wednesday, we never failed to pray for the sick. In your bulletins are prayer request forms and I encourage you to write down any sickness or body ailment that you want us to pray for you.

#### **4. Light helps us find our way.**

How would we get anywhere without lighted signs, neon arrows, and traffic lights pointing the way? The psalmist declares in Psalm 119:105 that God's Word is a lamp for our feet and light for our path. In John 12:35 Jesus says: *“You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. **Whoever walks in the dark does not know where they are going.**”*

You see, Jesus as the light helps us to find our way. He knows we are in darkness. We are lost. We cannot find our way. We don't know where to turn. But Jesus loves us and he doesn't want us to be in a lost state forever. He sees us and knows what's going on and so he comes to light our way.

That tells us that we don't find God, He finds us. We don't seek for heaven, Jesus seeks us. Without the light of the Gospel, and of the Gospel's author, you will not know where you've been, where you're going, or how you might get there. We are like the character Christian in the opening paragraphs of John Bunyan's allegory *The Pilgrim's Progress*: men and women clothed in rags, with the great burden of sin and guilt upon our backs. It isn't until the Evangelist points out the light of yonder wicket gate that we can see things aright.

**Jesus is the way**—to the Father, always to the Father. He gives direction. He helps you find your way.

Those are the things that Jesus do for us. He scatters our darkness, he gives us comfort, he provides healing and helps us find our way.

Now, Jesus wants you to follow him, to make him your light forever. And when you do two things happen. Again, John 8:12 says, *"I am the light of the world. **Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.**"*

**But first, how do you become a follower?** It is by believing he died for your sins. Many people are lost because of their sins. Many are going to hell because of their sins. The Bible says in Romans 3:23, *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"*. Sin is anything you do that does not

please God. Murder is sin and does not please God but even a sin as small as lying does not please God either. And even just the thought of hating somebody is sin. So, sin is serious and separates us from a holy God. The Bible says about God in Habakkuk 1:3 *“Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrongdoing.”*

But God loves you. That’s why he sent Jesus to become your light, to become your Saviour. Romans 5:8 says, *“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”* And in John 3:16, *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that **whoever** believes in him shall not perish but **have eternal life.**”*

To follow Jesus, you need to admit you’re a sinner. You’ve been going the wrong path and now Jesus finds you and he wants you to follow his light. Ask for his forgiveness and he will save you from your sins and death. You will be with him in heaven forever.

II. So, now, what happens when you become a follower of Christ?

### **A. You shall never be lost. “*will never walk in darkness*”**

Jesus says you will never walk in darkness. You will never ever get lost. In short, you will never lose your salvation. Don’t believe those who say that you can lose it. That when you stumble and fall, or you backslide, that you’ll

lose your salvation. Then, when you regain your senses and ask for forgiveness, you get back your salvation. No, the Bible says that Jesus died for your sins once and for all. Once saved, always saved. It is not up to you, it is up to him. Jesus assures us that no one can take us out of His hand.

In John 10:28-30, Jesus says, *“I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; **no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.**”*

That’s double security. The devil will try to make you fall, tempt you and put everything before you to make you fall. Perhaps, you will but you will never lose your salvation. Jesus and his father has a firm grip on your soul. You see, when you sin, what you lose is fellowship with God but you don’t lose your relationship. It’s just like a son or daughter who disobeys a parent. The parent becomes angry and right there the fellowship is broken. But you don’t stop being a son or daughter. The relationship is still there. So, a follower of Jesus will never lose their salvation.

## **B. You shall become a light yourself.**

Jesus says in Matthew 5:14-16, *“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the*

*house.<sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”*

That’s what it is all about: giving glory to God and living in such a manner that others will give glory to God. There is a difference between Jesus’ light and our light.

If we are saved we are lights in the world, but Jesus is the light of the world. If we are believers we are light, but we are reflective light. He is the source of light. We are just reflecting the light of Jesus.

A missionary in China once asked a native if he had ever heard the Gospel. “No,” he replied, “but I have seen it. I know a man who was the terror of the whole district. He was at times as fierce as a wild animal, and was also an opium smoker. When he accepted the Jesus’ religion, he became quite changed. Now he is meek, and is no longer wicked, and has given up opium smoking. I can see by that, that the Gospel and the service for Jesus are good.”

Folks, that’s being a light in this dark world. Are we letting our light shine before others? Are we reflecting the light of Jesus? Or are we hiding it? We’re not so sure about whether to let others know we’re Christians? St. Francis of Assisi once said, “Share the gospel. If necessary, use words.”

Let us Pray.....