

- I. Jesus is the ONLY light of the world – all else is darkness
 - A. John 8:12-20 . . . Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life." [13] So the Pharisees said to Him, "You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true." [14] Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. [15] You judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone. [16] But even if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone in it, but I and the Father who sent Me. [17] Even in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men is true. [18] I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me." [19] So they were saying to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also." [20] These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come.
 - B. Prayer
- II. Following Jesus is the only way to live in the light
 - A. John 8:12 . . . Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."
 1. For me, this is the most profound statement in this section of verses, and the reason I say this is because this statement clearly tells us that Jesus, himself, is the Light of the world, and if we will follow Him – that is, if we will do what He says we are to do, and think as He says we are to think, and behave as He says we are to behave – we will break free of the darkness – with all its falsehoods, distortions of the truth, ungodly allurements, and anti-God, anti-faith ideology. And in breaking free of the darkness we will begin to live in the light of life rather than the darkness of life.
 2. Now you may be wondering why this is so profound? Consider this: though many speak the words, "Jesus is the light of the world," they speak them as if they are a Christian cliché or an empty platitude. However, these words present a reality that is both the

foundation and the path to living the life God created us to live and Jesus died and rose again in order to save us to live.

- a. For example, when you believe these words and respond by wholeheartedly applying Jesus' teachings and His example in the most practical ways possible to every area of your life, the result is a transformed mind, a remade personality, radically different desires, freedom from ungodly and irrational fears, modified speech, reformed behavior, and spiritual maturity.
 - b. And though this will not happen all at once, this is where you will be going if you will believe that Jesus is the light of the world and respond accordingly. And if you go in this direction, you will progressively gain a life that is lived in the light, because you will no longer be living according to the foolish, sinful, and selfish ways of the world. You will no longer live according to the irrational, senseless, self-destructive, and relationship damaging passions, longings, and fears that come from your human nature. And you will no longer hold the devil's pleasures and treasures as if they are worth pursuing and obtaining.
- B. I suspect you already know this, but let me remind you that it is the darkness – whether in whole or in part – that blinds us to the truth so that we think the devil's lies are the truth, the world's ways are the path of life, and our fleshly, sinful desires are natural and therefore reasonable.
1. It is the darkness that dulls our conscience and alters our reasoning ability so that we lose the ability to discern good from evil, right from wrong, love from selfishness, humility from pride, rational from irrational thinking, wisdom from foolishness, and holiness from unholiness.
 2. It is the darkness that directs our heart, mind, and will toward every kind of evil.
 3. It is the darkness that prompts us to behave in ways that damage or even destroy relationships – first between God and us, and then between us and others.
 4. It is the darkness that drives distrust of God. It is the darkness that fills the void left by distrust of God with a form of self-protection that places the well-being and security of self over love and over true, meaningful honesty and intimacy in relationships.
 5. It is the darkness that drives self-rule, irresponsibility, laziness, disrespect, arrogance, and hostility – and this list could go on, but I think you are getting the picture as to why walking in darkness

makes it impossible to live a quality, satisfying, fulfilling, inwardly peaceful, mentally and emotionally healthy life.

- C. In contrast to the darkness, it is the light that frees us from everything that wars against love and justice, that inflicts unnecessary suffering and loss, that feeds ungodly anger, resentment, bitterness, irrational fears, selfishness, sexual immorality, every kind of addiction, hatred, gluttony, greed, deception, theft, covetousness, envy, jealousy, strife, impatience, unkindness, meanness, abusive speech, gossip, malice, homosexuality, idolatry, and everything else that seeks to destroy what God created and His purposes for creating it. So once again, it is the light that frees us from the oppression and destructive effects within us of all this evil.
1. As Jesus said, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that [you] may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10).
 2. Do you see the contrast between the purpose and efforts of darkness and the purpose and efforts of light? The darkness is always and only your enemy, while the light of Christ is always and only your friend.
 3. The one leads to destruction and death, the other to joy and life.
 - a. Do you want joy and contentment in your life regardless of the circumstances? Walk in the light.
 - b. Do you want contentment and inward peace regardless of the circumstances? Carefully and as fully as possible follow the teachings and example of Jesus.
 - c. Do you want to do your part in building and maintaining healthy, meaningful, enjoyable, honest, and mutually satisfying relationships? Live according to the light.
 - d. Do you want a mindset and attitude that counts it all joy when trials and difficult times come your way, that loves your enemies, that prays for those who mistreat you? Follow Jesus’ example and live according to His teachings.
 - e. Do you want to mourn over your sin, humbly seek forgiveness for even minor infractions, and be known as someone who takes responsibility for your behavior? Walk in the light.
- D. But sadly, we can know the truth that sets us free, and we can come to Jesus – in faith believing, and yet selectively hold to those truths and those parts of Jesus that we want while clinging to those parts of darkness that we deem better, more satisfying, more fun, safer – or in essence, better than some parts of the light.

1. Jesus addresses this kind of mixed up thinking, this kind of double mindedness when He says to Nicodemus, “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. For everyone who does evil hates the Light (*whether in whole or in part*), and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed” (John 3:19-20).
 - a. We may not embrace the darkness in whole, but if we embrace it in part, it is in that part that we hate the light.
 - b. And it is in that part that we do what is evil, self-destructive, dishonoring to God, and damaging to whatever good is in our world.
2. Therefore, in Matthew 6:22-23, Jesus says that “the eye is the lamp of the body (*we might add the ear since we not only take in truth through the eye gate, but also the ear gate – such as you are doing today*); so then if your eye is clear (*unhindered by the lies and deceptive promises of darkness*), your whole body will be full of light. [23] But if your eye is bad (*that is, you prefer darkness over light – whether in whole or in part*), your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!
3. What we are inside determines our character, beliefs, values, and the principles by which we live. What we are inside determines our mental and emotional stability. It determines our spiritual health, and it determines our ability to live a peace-ruled, loving controlled, godly life. But if what we are inside is being influenced by darkness – in any amount – we’re in a mess and we will continue to live a messy, sin-stained, foolish, and spiritually immature life.
4. This is why James writes, “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. [8] Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. [9] Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. [10] Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you” (James 4:7-10).

III. Conclusion

- A. Do you see that the Light of the world has come to save us, not just from eternal hell but also from the present darkness – so that we can live a life that is full and rich, beginning today and on into eternity?
- B. Therefore, it is to this end that Jesus says to you and to me, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."