

I AM the Light of the World 4.30.17 #cccsermons

The I AM Claims of Christ Series

The "I AM" statements of Jesus help us to understand who He is.

- The phrase I AM was a **pretty SACRED** phrase in the life of a Jew because it was designated only for Yahweh. So when Jesus said in **John 8:58**, "Before Abraham was, I am", Jesus was not only claiming to be God Himself, but was just beginning a revelation to His followers that He is what everyone **NEEDS**.
- **John 8:12 (NIV)** "I AM the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

When Jesus spoke these words, John tells us he was speaking at the end of the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths or Ingathering (see **Leviticus 23:33-43** and **John 7:2**).

- During this feast, Israel celebrated the harvest and lived in shelters for a week to remember how God had brought their ancestors out of slavery in Egypt and provided for them for 40 years as they wandered the wilderness living in these primitive shelters. Also, during this Feast, four huge candelabras were placed in the Court of Women, the public location in the temple, and **were kept lit** all the days of the festival, pushing light up into the night sky like a searchlight, to remind the people of the pillar of fire which guided their forefathers in the wilderness.
- Notice, now that all the sacrifices had been offered during the week, all the shelters were being taken apart, all the torches representing God's presence had just been extinguished and Jesus declared to those around him, "I AM the light of the world." Just as the light of the torches represented God's presence, Jesus was saying **I AM** God's very presence in the darkness of this world.

When Jesus spoke this, it was right after the Pharisees had **eagerly** brought an adulterous woman to Him, intent on stoning her and putting Jesus on the spot. There was no compassion in their hearts for this woman, but instead they use her as a pawn in their game to try to trap Him. Jesus, of course, won't play along and instead demonstrates true compassion on this wayward woman, and in the process, putting them and their self-righteousness on the spot.

- **John 8:6-9 (NIV)** *But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. ⁷When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."⁸ Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.⁹ At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there.*

Actually, Jesus was just exposing the **DARKNESS** in the Pharisee's hearts.

- This is a warning to us: no matter how good or how Christian we think we are, there is still darkness in our hearts that **CHRIST** must deal with.

Man's natural condition is to walk in DARKNESS. Today, many prefer to live in darkness, yet darkness is no condition in which to live. God's design for you and me is not to walk in darkness, but to **AVOID** darkness all together.

Darkness in the Bible is always an analogy for evil or sin or anything not of God.

- **If darkness, by definition, is the absence of light, then spiritual darkness is the absence of God's PRESENCE.** (see **John 3:19-21**)
- **John 3:19-21 (NIV)** ¹⁹*This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.* ²⁰*Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed.* ²¹*But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.*
- **Our world is where it's at because it lacks the presence of God and God's LIGHT.**

Conversely, light is often a metaphor for redemption, spiritual awakening, goodness, peace, and all that is of God. (see **John 1:1-5**)

- In fact, God's first **CREATION** was light (see **Genesis 1:3**).
- **John 1:1-5 (NIV)** ¹*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* ²*He was with God in the beginning.* ³*Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.* ⁴*In him was life, and that life was the light of men.* ⁵*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*
- In order to see our lives changed, our communities changed, our world changed, it requires the light of Jesus shining in the dark corners of our life and in our communities.

We need light in our lives because...

#1 Light **CONQUERS** darkness.

- And, according to **John 1:5**, the darkness **CANNOT** overcome the light.
- Satan is spoken of in Scripture as the Prince of Darkness, but the Light of the World conquers that darkness!

#2 Light has a way of **EXPOSING** the dirt and filth in our life. (see **Ephesians 5:8-13**)

- We use light to evaluate things.
- Light reveals our spiritual condition, whether we are **CONTENT** in our sin or **CONVICTED** of our sin. The Bible and the Holy Spirit is God's way for us to be able to see this world and all that is in it as it really is.
- Once we have allowed Jesus to go through and expose all the dark areas of our life, we must allow His light to shine in our everyday life.

#3 Light gives **WARMTH**.

- When we have the light of Christ in our lives, we warm up our world.
- Stop using the light of Christ to create **HEAT** on Facebook and social media and use it to create warmth. (see **Galatians 6:10**)

#4 Light gives **DIRECTION**.

- A light points us in the right direction and protects us from potential trouble.
- Because the world is so dark, God left us the **BIBLE** to light our path both now and in our future. (see **Psalms 119:105**)

#5 Light is meant to be **REFLECTED**. (see **Matthew 5:14-16**)

- **Matthew 5:14-16 (NIV)** ¹⁴*"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.* ¹⁵*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.* ¹⁶*In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*
- Our light is a reflected light because we shine only as we allow Him to shine through us.
- If there is no light within, then there will be no light **SHINING** out.
- There are opportunities to shine are all around us, **but first we have to follow!**
- If we are truly following Christ, then the direction, path and timing is not up to **ME**.
- If I am following, I am not the leader! I will have to trust God completely with my life.
- The question then is not, *Is Jesus the light of the world?* but, *Is Jesus the light of your world?*

Jesus, the great I AM, came into the world to expose the darkness and reveal the truth of God. Jesus is not merely a light or another light among many lights, but He is the only true Light for the whole world.

- Jesus calls into the darkness of your life and says come follow Me.
- The more areas of our life we allow Christ into, the more light will shine through us.
- **Bottom line: We need to follow the light and our light needs to follow what we do.**
- **Matthew 5:16 (NIV)** *In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*