

WHO IS JESUS?

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD!

“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, 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

Home missionary, Pastor Audred Spruiensma

WHO IS JESUS? THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Maybe you are like me. One of the most beautiful things to see is the sun rise in the morning. The darkness of night is chased away, and there is the beautiful brightness of the sun. Can you imagine the joy of the blind man in John 9 when Jesus caused him to see for the first time in his life?

“I am the light of the world.” The context of this second “I AM” statement of Jesus was the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7) and the forgiveness of the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11).

In the Feast of Tabernacles, there was the burning of candles. This was a reminder of how God led his people in the wilderness by a pillar of fire. In John 8 the woman caught in adultery had been living in spiritual darkness and immorality. But Jesus forgave her and called her to “go and sin no more.” The Jewish leaders, rather than rejoicing in this saving work, walked away in hatred because of their spiritual blindness. Jesus is the saving light.

THE IDEA OF JESUS AS THE LIGHT

The contrast in John 8:12 is light and darkness. Light is in Scripture a picture of true knowledge, holiness, and joy and happiness. Darkness is a figure of ignorance, sin, guilt, error, evil, uncleanness, and misery. Jesus came into the darkness of the world to bring light. What does this mean?

Jesus is divine. When Jesus says, “I am the light of the world” he is again announcing that he is divine, the Son of God. In Isaiah the Savior that was to come is announced as a light to the Gentiles. In Malachi 4:2 the coming Savior is called the Sun of righteousness that shall arise with healing in his wings. Can you imagine this brilliant bright light blazing with the glory of God?

Jesus is the revelation of the holy God. One of the perfections of God is that he is light (I John 1:5), “and in him is no darkness at all.” This means God

is pure, clean, and without sin. He is perfect. This is true therefore also of Jesus. He came into the world as a pure and holy light, shining in the midst of the world’s immorality and sin.

Jesus is the Savior. The sinless One came to deliver us from the darkness. To do so, he must himself be without sin. He came into our sin and guilt, descending into the darkness of hell to pay for our sins. He did that on the cross. By this he earned for us life.

Jesus comes to impart true knowledge. Light in Scripture stands for truth and knowledge. What kind of knowledge does Jesus give? He is unlike many teachers today who give merely their opinion. Jesus gives true knowledge of God, of our sin, the only way of salvation, and the life of obedience that follows.

Jesus is the source of spiritual life to sinners. The first thing that God created was light. This was necessary for the plants and animals that God would later create. They needed the light and heat of God’s created light. We, who were in the darkness of sin and death, need Jesus. He came to give life to lightless and lifeless sinners. He is the light of life because he is the divine Savior with power to give the light of eternal life to dead sinners like you and me.

WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF THIS LIGHT?

Always, there is a two-fold effect. For the Israelites in the wilderness, the pillar of light led them and saved them. But the Egyptians who pursued the Israelites were left in the dark. The woman in John 8 was forgiven and was called to live in holiness. Those who accused her were filled with shame and hatred for Jesus. The blind man could see and was filled with joy. The Jewish leaders were blind and would not acknowledge the miracle done by Jesus. What will you do with Jesus, the light of the world?

Jesus, the light, first of all enlightens, gives knowledge to his people. They see how they are

blind sinners. Jesus came and delivers his people from the power of the darkness of their sin and depravity. Jesus delivers them from the ignorance and gives to them the true knowledge of God. He opens the eyes of our hearts and minds. He makes us to see our sin and repent of it. He gives to us faith and causes us to believe on him.

Secondly, Jesus gives us life. We were spiritually dead, separated from God. But the light shined on us and drove away the darkness of our death. The light shined on us and created in us new life, life with God, eternal life.

Thirdly, when the light shines on us who believe, Jesus causes us to be holy. Jesus said to the woman who was forgiven, "Go, sin no more." Light stands for holiness. God calls us who are saved to show forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light (1 Pet. 2:9). "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. (Ephesians 5:8,10)." What about you and me? Are we doing that? We must if we are following Jesus.

But there is another effect which light has on people. Thieves do evil deeds at night. They want darkness to cover their deeds. They flee if a person comes with a flashlight. During the wicked reign of King Ahab, we read that the sky became like brass and the earth like iron. With no rain for three and a half years, the earth was hardened. So the light can expose, and harden.

When Jesus the light shone with the glory of God, the enemies of Jesus were exposed in their sin and lies. They did not want to be discovered in their sin. They were hardened in their sins. Rather than repenting, they hated Jesus, and sought to kill him (John 9:31).

This still happens today. When Jesus, the light of the world, is set forth in the preaching of the gospel, there is a sad effect. Many hate to have their sin

exposed. They become angry when Jesus is proclaimed as the only Savior. They do not want to hear the call to repentance, faith, and obedience. They are hardened in their sin and darkness and condemned.

WHAT IS OUR CALLING

Jesus says, "I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." What does this mean for you and me?

It means first of all that we must not refuse to follow the light. We must not ignore the light. We must not continue to walk in the darkness of sin. When the gospel is preached or taught, we must not ignore that light. We must not close our minds. We must not apply the call to 'repent and believe' for only others. When the light shines and exposes our sins, we need to repent. When the light shines, we must embrace that Sun of righteousness! When that light guides in the way of holiness, we must flee from immorality and impurity. If you or I do not believe in Jesus, the light of the world, we will end up in the place of eternal darkness, called hell.

Positively, you and I are called to believe in Jesus. We are to receive the truth. We are to embrace Jesus by faith. He is the only Savior from the darkness of ignorance and sin. We are to trust in Jesus for all of our salvation. Follow Jesus, the light of the world.

There is a promise: we will have "the light of life." Jesus not only proclaims but actually imparts blessings. To the ignorant, wisdom is given. To the blind, there is sight. For the impure, there is holiness. To those in sadness, there is joy. Those who were dead are made alive, alive forever more. Jesus is the light of the world.

Are you following the light of the world? He that follows Jesus shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.