

# A Journey with Christ the Messiah

## I AM the Light of the World

### John 8:12-20

#### INTRODUCTION:

This morning we are continuing with a series that I have entitled *A Journey with Christ the Messiah*. Through this journey, our goal will be to fully understand that Jesus WAS Who He claimed to be, the Messiah, the Son of God, and the Son of man. During this journey we will also fully understand that the Bible HAS to be the inspired Word of God. In the next few weeks, Lord willing, we will be looking at the seven "I AM" statements that Jesus actually said about Himself in John's gospel.

#### All Stand and Read Scripture

John 8:12-20 (NASB)

<sup>12</sup> 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." <sup>13</sup> So the Pharisees said to Him, "You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true." <sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>15</sup> You judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone. <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> Even in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men is true. <sup>18</sup> I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me." <sup>19</sup> 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." <sup>20</sup> 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.

As we prepare to continue this journey, let's bow in a word of prayer.

#### Prayer

In chapter 20 of John's gospel, John told us why it was written.

John 20:31 (NASB)

<sup>31</sup> but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ (The Messiah), the Son of God; and that believing you may have **life** in His name.

John wrote his gospel so we could believe that Jesus was the proclaimed Messiah of the Old Testament and that by believing and following Him we may have eternal life with Him in Heaven. With that focus, Jesus declares many wondrous things about Who He is. These are things we **need** to know because it eternal future depends upon our commitment to His teachings.

Jesus uses simple teachings to help our wayward minds to comprehend the deep truths of His word. We need that understanding. We need that light! We need light in order to live on earth and we need His light to live spiritually. Darkness symbolizes sin and despair. Without the light of Jesus, this entire world would be in darkness with no hope. Jesus came so we would not have to grope in the darkness. So that we would not have to live and die in the darkness. Darkness fills the world, and yet we find that there is a way in which this darkness may be dispelled and that is by coming to Jesus and walking the glorious life of righteousness through Christ Jesus.

When Jesus states "I AM the Light of the World", He is saying something very profound about Himself. He is saying "I AM God! He is saying we need Him. He is saying that we need to come to Him and find life in Him. He is the light of the world.

1 John 1:6-7 (NASB)

**6** If we say that we have fellowship with Him and *yet* walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; **7** but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Men love the shadows. They love the dark secrets. Because they can do things behind closed doors and in dark places where men cannot see their immorality. But there is a God in Heaven that can see all of our iniquities. All things are naked and open under the His eyes. You cannot hide anything from God because God is Light. He is a lit candle in an otherwise dark room.

## **BODY:**

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

John recorded seven times where Jesus said "**I AM**" in his gospel.

- I AM the Bread of Life.
- I AM the Light of the World.
- I AM the Door of the Sheep.
- I AM the Good Shepherd.
- I AM the Resurrection and the Life.
- I AM The Way, The Truth, and The Life.
- I AM the True Vine.

When Jesus proclaims these seven "**I AM**" statements, He is saying some very important things about Himself. He is tying in with what was said by God Himself in Exodus Chapter 3 when He was revealed to Moses in the burning bush and God said "**I AM Who I AM**".

Exodus 3:14 (NASB)

**14** God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

When Jesus uses the phrase "**I AM**" He is stating that He **IS** God in the flesh!

Jesus stated this to the Pharisees.

John 8:51-59 (NASB)

<sup>51</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he will never see death.” <sup>52</sup> The Jews said to Him, “Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham died, and the prophets *also*; and You say, ‘If anyone keeps My word, he will never taste of death.’ <sup>53</sup> Surely You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets died too; whom do You make Yourself out *to be*?” <sup>54</sup> Jesus answered, “If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, ‘He is our God’; <sup>55</sup> and you have not come to know Him, but I know Him; and if I say that I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you, but I do know Him and keep His word. <sup>56</sup> Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad.” <sup>57</sup> So the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?” <sup>58</sup> Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.” <sup>59</sup> Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

There is no doubt that the Jews understood what He was saying because they took up stones to kill Him for making Himself equal with God at the end of the chapter. Such a statement, if not true, was blasphemy and the punishment prescribed by the Mosaic Law was death. But Jesus committed no blasphemy; He was and is God, the second Person of the Godhead, equal to the Father in every way.

So, once again the Pharisees just couldn't let this one go. We see in verse 13.

John 8:13 (NASB)

<sup>13</sup> So the Pharisees said to Him, “You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true.”

Do you understand what they were saying? They were saying, "You are a LIAR!" The reason you are a liar is because the only witness you have is your own witness. They were quoting from...

Deuteronomy 19:15-19 (NASB)

<sup>15</sup> “A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed. <sup>16</sup> If a malicious witness rises up against a man to accuse him of wrongdoing, <sup>17</sup> then both the men who have the dispute shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who will be *in office* in those days. <sup>18</sup> The judges shall investigate thoroughly, and if the witness is a false witness *and* he has accused his brother falsely, <sup>19</sup> then you shall do to him just as he had intended to do to his brother. Thus you shall purge the evil from among you.

The Jews quoted this scripture to Jesus and did as they normally did, which was to take the truth and corrupt it with their own traditions. So they took the scriptures that said that " **on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed**".

And do you know what they came up with? Their conclusion was this, "You cannot witness for yourself". This may seem logical, but it is not. It is two different truths. But this is what they had come up with and they thought that their tradition was based upon truth. Therefore they claimed that Jesus' claim was not true because He had violated the law that states you must have two witnesses.

Christ said, "Let me answer that for you".

John 8:14 (NASB)

<sup>14</sup> 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, . <sup>15</sup> You judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone.

Jesus said, "My testimony IS true". Why is it wrong for somebody to give testimony about himself? Who would know more about their life than themselves?

### ILLUSTRATION:

If there was a court case today and you say, "Now, you can't testify for yourself. You can't tell us what happened because we can't trust you". Why would that be right? That would not be right! Who knows better than the person who has gone through the incident in their lives.?

Let's read again how Jesus responded starting in verse 14. "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, <sup>15</sup> You judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone.

Jesus is returning their logic back to the Pharisees, "Who knows better about Me than Me"? I know where I came from. I know where I am going". That is to say "I know My mission". "I know why I am here!" So why can't I speak to my own testimony today?

Then Jesus continued with their other charge that Jesus did not have two witnesses. Jesus said, "Let me comment on that!"

**John 8:17-18 (NASB)**

<sup>17</sup> Even in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men is true. <sup>18</sup> I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me."

Jesus says, "I DO have a second witness. It is My Father Who sent Me. He testifies of Me".

God did testify of His son. Remember, at Christ's **baptism** and at His **transfiguration**, God spoke from Heaven and said "This is my beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased". He also is reminding them that the miracles that He has been performing was because God allowed them.

We have this statement from another encounter with the Jews.

**John 10:25 (NASB)**

<sup>25</sup> Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me.

At the mention of his Father being His witness the Pharisees, once again, could not contain themselves. Wasn't Joseph His father? They knew the controversy surrounding Joseph. Wasn't He from Nazareth? Wasn't the Messiah supposed to be born in Bethlehem?

Jesus once again used the occasion to answer their question by providing more truth to them.

**John 8:19 (NASB)**

<sup>19</sup> 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."

Jesus beats them at their own game. He makes it clear that He is "I AM". He IS Who He claims to be. **I AM God! I AM the Light of the World!**

## II. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO US?

1 John 1:5 (NASB)

<sup>5</sup> This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and **in Him there is no darkness at all.**

If you walk in the God's Light both light and darkness dwells within you. There is both an old nature of worldliness and a new nature of righteousness within us. There is goodness and there is wickedness. But in **Christ** there is no darkness at all! HE **IS** LIGHT! Jesus says "I AM the Light of the World".

### **I AM Light!**

Why would men rather grope in darkness and despair than to come to the light? It is simple really.

John 3:16-21 (NASB)

<sup>16</sup> "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. <sup>18</sup> He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

So WHY would men love darkness instead of the Light?

<sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. <sup>21</sup> But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."

Since the works of sinful men are wicked they want to hide in the darkness where men cannot see. Since Jesus transmits a bright and shining light that reveals their wickedness to them and they hate Him for that. Because they love their darkness. It is one of the reasons that Christ was so despised, because HE IS LIGHT! In Him is no darkness at all.

## III. HOW DO WE WALK IN THE LIGHT?

When Jesus made the claim that He is the Light of the World, He also made a challenge. Jesus said it would not do us any good that I am the light of the world if you do not do something.

Let's look again at our first verse in this morning's scripture reading.

John 8:12 (NASB)

<sup>12</sup> 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."

Jesus says, if you want to benefit from this then you will have to **follow me**. Do you know what it means to "FOLLOW" Christ?

John 12:21 (NASB)

<sup>21</sup> But **he who practices the truth** comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."

The scriptures reveal that to be a "follower" of Christ you MUST be someone "**who practices the truth**". Just believing that Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God in itself is not enough.

James tells us...

James 2:19-20 (NASB)

<sup>19</sup> You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. <sup>20</sup> But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?

If we are a "follower" of Christ, then we believe in Him, we love Him above everything else, and we **follow** His teachings.

Matthew 16:24 (NASB)

<sup>24</sup> Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

If we are to know light, we must follow Christ. We must follow Him Who is the true light. Christ is not simply a light to look at, He is a light to follow. It is not enough for any of us to say "I believe Jesus must be God!" It is pretty clear here. We need to show we really believe He **IS** God by following Him. By following Him in every aspect in our lives. The light is not just for our eyes, it is for our feet.

Psalms 119:105 (NASB)

<sup>105</sup> Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

Those who follow Jesus Christ know exactly what to expect in the future. We have assurance of our salvation and we are not afraid of death. Because we have the light, we are not afraid of the dark. What we see around us is often quite dark. What we experience in the world around us, what takes place round about us in our lives, is sometimes very dark. We do not let the darkness scare us. We are to let Christ's light shine through us and trust His promises.

Just as Christ is the Light, we are to reflect Christ's light to the world around us. The moon does not generate light but reflects the light from the **SUN** to serve as light to the darkness, so too are we to reflect the light of God's **SON** to the world around us.

Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount that you are the light of the world. The more that we mirror His image, the brighter that light is. Not that we produce it on our own, but that we reflect Him. This gives glory to God. When we become more like Him, through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit within us, we reflect more and more of His light!

## **CONCLUSION:**

I hope that God places within our hearts a burden for our world. People are walking in darkness. They are stumbling around. They are throwing all of their energy in all the wrong places.

We have the light.

Sometimes we ask, "How can we convince them that we have the light?"

## **ILLUSTRATION:**

If we were here at night with all of the lights off and all of the windows covered and it was really dark here, and while you were sitting here in darkness, I would say to you, "Don't worry. I have a flashlight".

How would I prove to you that I have a flashlight? I might say that there are two engineers here who are seen this flashlight. I am going to have them stumble their way up here and describe the size of this thing and its brightness, and what kind of light bulb it has. They are going to verify and be witnesses to the fact that I do indeed have a fantastic flashlight that can dispel the darkness in this room.

Would I have to do that? You would say, "No! Just turn the thing on!"

You do not have to prove a thing to the world. You just turn on the Gospel. Just tell them what it says. And if God is in it, they will get it! He can convict the lost, free them from sin, and let them start walking in His light.

We are not that good at proving things. Trust me. You are not that good at convincing people that you have the light. Just let Christ's light reflect off of you. Open the Bible, communicate it with people, and tell them that you have the light in your hands.

If you do not know Christ as your Lord and Savior, I invite you to come forward this morning and place your faith in Christ and be immersed in the waters of baptism and begin walking in the light and have an assurance of salvation.

**He is Lord!**