

# You Can't See Where To Walk In The Dark

## Walk Like A Christian Series-2

### *John 8:12-30*

The world needs light, something John has already told us in chapter 1.

There are conditions for seeing and knowing the light—following Jesus. Finally, walking in the light can be permanent. The light of life can change a person so that he or she need never again walk in darkness.

Chapters five, six and seven of John's Gospel have picked up three major Old Testament wilderness reminders of how God dealt with his people:

1. the comparison between manna and the bread of life in chapter 6;
2. the comparison between water in the desert and the water of the Holy Spirit in chapter 7;
3. here in chapter 8 a comparison with the pillar of fire which led the people through the wilderness and Jesus, the light of the world.

### **BACK STORY:**

People have come from all over for the Feast of Tabernacles also known as the Feast of Lights  
In the temple by the court of women

Great Candelabra to remind them of pillar of fire while wandering Ex. 13:31 This (Menorah)  
which cast its light over the room in which he was teaching.

Now amidst the blaze and the joyousness of this illumination, He proclaims, "I am the Light of the world"—plainly in the most absolute sense. For though He gives His disciples the same title, they are only "light in the Lord" (Eph 5:8); and though He calls the Baptist "the burning and shining light" (or "lamp" of his day, Jn 5:35), yet "he was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light: that was the true Light which, coming into the world, lighteth every man" (Jn 1:8, 9). Under this magnificent title Messiah was promised of old (Is 42:6; Mal 4:2, &c.).

Everyone there knew the Menorah would be extinguished after the feast. But Jesus indicated that his light would remain forever.

### **KNOW JESUS ... KNOW THE LIGHT**

**V.12:** In this verse Jesus claimed the distinction. Previously Jesus had said His disciples were "the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). But the disciples were His reflected lights.

"Light" (phōs) is the natural symbol for truth and the revelation of God.

**The one that follows me**—as one does a light going before him, and as the Israelites did the pillar of bright cloud in the wilderness. Like a flashlight on a path in the dark.

 **Lighthouse and the ship... you only receive benefit from the light when you follow it.**

Benefit from the light comes from following its guidance. If you stray from the light, you will be unable to see. Then injury or disaster will surely follow.

**But shall have the light of life**—the light, as of a new world, a newly awakened spiritual and eternal life.

Jesus claims went beyond the usual religious assertions of enlightenment and actually claimed to be the luminary itself. He claimed to be the light “of the world,” a role reserved for Yahweh, the Creator (cf. **Gen 1:3**),

Where did the light come from in the beginning of Genesis? God’s Glory... day 4 sun!

who was regarded as **superior to all deities** including the sun god of the Gentiles. To anyone familiar with the exodus story and the celebration of Tabernacles, Jesus was identifying himself clearly with the God.

## **KNOW JESUS ... KNOW THE STANDARD...**

**V.14:** Pharisees had placed their ultimate trust in their use of Scripture or the law.

Legal prescription in Deut 17:6 (the necessity of two witnesses).

**Even if...** it contravenes their technical rules of evidence.

A court case is ideally settled according to the facts. The Pharisees were unaware of the facts; therefore their conclusion was false. For a witness to be credible he must possess and render facts concerning that which he testifies. Jesus was a credible witness, for He possessed the facts and testified to the reality.

Where are you from? Where are you going? How do you know?

No individual can be sure of his own origin apart from external testimony, nor can he be sure of his future circumstances. Jesus, however,... knew 'that he had come from God and was returning to God' (13:3)"

**I know where I came from and where I am going.** - its as clear as day... bright as the sun.

By contrast, **Jesus did not come to judge people but to save them** (3:17). When He does judge in the future, He will simply execute the Father’s will according to truth and the Law (cf. 5:27, 45). **He Himself will pass judgment on no one. The FATHER will...** how is this different

from you? You don't pass judgement.... but you must point out sin.... but the sentence or judgement will come from above.

**V.15: By outward appearance (externals) ...** Judge according to the standards of the flesh (2 Cor. 5:16). The Baptist had said:

**John 1:26** John answered them, **"I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not recognize,**

*John 3:19 Now this is the basis for judging: that the light has come into the world and people loved the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds were evil.*

Myopic minds... Because the god of this age had blinded their thoughts so that they could not see the illumination of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God (2 Cor. 4:4).

**"I judge no man"** reminds us of the narrative just preceding. Jesus told the woman taken in adultery, **"Neither do I condemn thee."** And a short time earlier He had taught this principle: **"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (7:24).**

Jesus was not a civil judge nor did He come on a mission of condemnation. He came to seek and to save those who are condemned already (3:16-18). What does this say about YOU!

## **KNOW JESUS ... KNOW THE FATHER**

**V.16:** Jesus' judging was totally unlike theirs. Theirs was biased and limited. His was not His own because of His unique union with the Father.

**Kata sarka a life lived according to the flesh contrasted to life that is lived according to the Spirit (kata pneuma)**

Authentic (alēthinē, "right") judgment because it would be rendered jointly by Jesus and the one who "sent" him.

Jesus claimed to be acting as God's agent or shaliach (representative).

Greek word krinein itself, which can mean both "judge" and "condemn." The purpose of the coming of Jesus was not to condemn but to save.

Coming face to face with the decision... God placing them in the position to make the comparison.

The antithesis of judgment according to the flesh is judgment in harmony with the mind of the Father. You must be so mission-consciousness so you don't have isolated judgment but in accord with God's Word. Not externals... but God's values.

Jesus' role actually was and is part of the Father's judgment or evaluation. YOURS TOO!

**V.17:** The LAW... rules of evidence... Jesus seized the opportunity to show the Pharisees that their ("your") law conflicted with their fleshly method of judgment

**V.19:** They asked "where" not "who." ... were they indicating a slur on His origin? When you don't have facts... slander the character! Jesus' answer concerned "who" not "where."

In the natural a father and his son are usually very much alike. When one sees either, one's mind reflects on the other. The qualities of Jesus' personality (attributes) should have suggested to the Jews the God they professed to know. Moreover, the works He did indicated His origin.

**V. 20: *Near the offering box*...** treasury, tuba funnels, court of women... message for men and women.

**No one seized him** ... Jesus was working on God's time schedule to accomplish the Father's will. How often do we put on pressure to perform for God? We try to argue people into the the kingdom... shame them to behavior a certain way. Expect them to be at a place where God has not yet moved them? **God's Timing...**

## **KNOW JESUS ... KNOW THE WAY**

Maps.... don't work unless you know where you are and where you want to go...

**V.21:** Serving the prince of the world (12:31). Judge them as children of the devil (8:44). Their destiny was in the opposite direction from Jesus.

**BIG QUESTION:** Were any of them prepared to change their opinion of him?

That was the fundamental question they needed to answer.

It is in fact the fundamental the unbeliever must answer today!

**Limited Time Offer....** must be done before you die! Entry Rules: must be done here (earth) must be done in person!

They misunderstood and misconstrued everything he told them. When he spoke of heaven, they thought of Nazareth. When he mentioned the Father, they impugned the legitimacy of his birth. When he spoke of home, they concluded he was planning suicide!

**Look back at v.19 ... Where is your father?** Notice the absence of the capital letter in their question. Did you notice that before? They don't get it!

**In v.21-24...**

**COUNT:** **Three times** Jesus warned them, you will die in your sins (vv. 21, 24). Note: The use of the singular 'sin' here probably is a condemnation on their unwillingness to believe.

**COMPARE:** The singular stresses "the sin" (hamartia) of **unbelief** from which the total accumulation of sins springs. The Jews persisted in their unbelief and rejection of Him; thus they "shall die" in their sin. The plural (sins) at 8:24 means that Jesus rendered his verdict on their **evil actions** ”

To die in your sins means to die with the burden of one's own sin and its penalty enforced by a righteous God (Rom. 6:23).

**Romans 6:23 For the payoff of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Physical death separates the spirit from the body; spiritual death separates the spirit from God.

**V. 22–24.**

**Ironic... perhaps He is going to kill himself...** both a misunderstanding and an ironic prophecy. They wondered if He would commit suicide and thus be unreachable.

Sarcasm... mockery to His supposed eternal destiny (hell), not to His earthly ministry among the Samaritans... or worse....Gentiles. The Jews believed that the one who committed suicide was sent to the darkest place in Hades. The Jews twist Jesus' words concerning leaving earth and going to heaven to the extreme contrast.

It is interesting that Americans believe in hell two to one over Europeans. But the percentage of people who believe in hell is much greater in this country than the percentage of people who think there is some possibility they will end up there.

Jesus says that unless you believe that “I Am” ... The light of the world, from the Father, the deliverer, the sacrificial lamb of God, the way the truth and the light, the Messiah, the sent one, The Christ!

I'm not that bad... God will somehow sneak me in ....

**Any different for people today?** Morris makes an excellent point regarding the kind of faith called for in this passage: “Basically faith is trust. But in our reaction against the view that faith means no more than a firm acceptance of certain intellectual propositions we must not go so far as to say that it is entirely a matter of personal relations. It is impossible to have the kind of faith that John envisages without having a certain high view of Christ. Unless we believe that He is more than man we can never trust Him with that faith that is saving faith” (Morris, p. 447).

**V.23:** Believe in life on other planets? I believe in life other than on this earth...

Jesus is saying **patiently/gently**... I'm from up there... you don't get it... You continue to live down here...

They would “die” because they continued living in the realm of sin, remaining under its power. Physical death would be their prelude to eternal separation from God.

Jesus is telling them ... Because you don't get this... you will die in your sins... forever be separated from God spending eternity in torment!

That means ... just just an intellectual understanding... not just lip service ... but what is in your heart! Do you believe the truth in your head.. and in your heart ... that is really believing!

## **KNOW JESUS ... YOU'LL KNOW THE TRUTH**

Ever had one of those conversations... impromptu debate... (at the barber shop)

**V. 25:** Exasperated by answering the same question over and over ...

He has more he could say... The beginning" is in the accusative case... John 1:1; Gen. 1:1 "What I have been telling you." ....

Jesus pointed to his forthcoming death-resurrection (“lifted up”) as the context for recognizing both his “**I am-ness**” (**egō eimi**) and his **God-directed mission**.

Pointing out their sin probably angered them! If they would reject the Sin-Bearer (1:29), they would continue in this realm (world) of sin. If they reject Jesus as the revelation of God that he has claimed from the beginning, they would miss their only hope for salvation.

**V.26:** There was so much Jesus could have said to show their error ... their sin... Jesus would only speak of what the Father told him to speak about. Do we do this? Can you do this... be so in tune with the Father that you let your stuff go and focus only on what he wants you to say. If you are His messenger... control your tongue!

**V.27:** They perceived not “**Preoccupied**” as they were with thoughts of an earthly deliverer” and **prejudiced** against recognizing Jesus as the one sent from God.

They did not understand His meaning, they persistently ignored and ridiculed Him. The time came when they failed to follow His truth at all. Jesus brought them the words of eternal life, but because of their obstinate will His message was the seal of their doom. Just like today!

**V.28:** Makes it clear... more clear than v.25

Lifted up ... His Glorification... Only at the Crucifixion...

Only then would KNOW Him for who He really is. "Know" (gnōsesthe) here refers to knowledge gained by experience

Jesus did not mean that everyone would be saved. He meant that the Cross would reveal that He is God's Word (the Logos), and that what He taught was just what the Father ... taught Him.

*Isaiah 52:13* “**Look, my servant will succeed! He will be elevated, lifted high, and greatly exalted—**

Some of the very Jews from this verse later became disciples after realizing they had crucified the Lord their Messiah.

**V.29:** The positive "with me" is followed by the negative "not left me alone" to stress the presence. **You are NEVER alone!**

**V.30:** "Many believed on him." They had begun a journey of faith. The way might be hard at times; the light might become dim. It may be difficult and strenuous. It may be filled tears, but they had begun the heavenly trek.

## **2 Truths to take with you from this passage....**

1. One inescapable truth jumps at us from these verses: the heresy that everyone will be saved someday denies the clear teaching of the Bible. **There will be no escape for those who refuse the gospel**—not in the first century and not today.
2. Just as *many put their faith in him*. His believers can be confident that the light of Jesus wants to shine on the problems of life. We should take with us from this text more than just theology of Jesus as the light of the world or even as the Son of God. As God’s children through faith in the Savior, we can say with Jesus, **The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone.**

 **After the Last Lamp is Dawn :** A man whose youth and early manhood had been spent in evil ways, and who was converted to God, was one night giving his testimony. He had met an old drinking pal during the week who chaffed him for turning pious. “I’ll tell you what,” I said to him, “you know what I am (he was a lamplighter); when I go round turning out the lights, I look back, and all the road over which I’ve been walking is all darkness, and that’s what my past is like. “I look on in front, and there’s a long row of twinkling lights to guide me, and that’s what the future is since I found Jesus.” “Yes,” says my friend, “but by-and-by you get to the last lamp and turn it out, and where are you then?” “Then,” says I, “why, when the last lamp goes out it’s dawn, and there ain’t no need for lamps when the morning comes.”

—*Sunday School Times*

Prayer: