

I Am: Jesus is the Light of the World – Lesson Summary

One of the things my kids love to do is turn out all the lights in the basement and try and hide. Usually one of my younger two will turn on the lights so they “can see” which blinds us all for a moment. As the light bursts into the darkness you can’t help but respond as things rapidly come into focus. However, when the lights stay off, we eventually adjust to the darkness and become much more capable of finding our way around. We become accustomed to the darkness and begin to get more comfortable. I believe it’s a similar reality with our sin. When Jesus declares that He is the light of the world He’s really announcing that He is the light that has come to expose the darkness in our hearts.

Light is a common theme in Scripture. If we consider God’s interactions with His people throughout history there are many times in which His presence is signified by fire, or light. **Exodus 13:21-22** describes God’s guidance to the Israelites as they journey through the wilderness. They are led by a cloud of smoke by day and a pillar of fire at night. I love how the light is described. It’s a fire that “did not depart from before the people”. God’s light did not depart from His people as He guided them through the darkness. **Exodus 19:18-20** provides a description of God descending upon Mt. Sinai in a cloud of smoke and fire. In that moment God is declaring that He is present with His people. We see a similar reality in **Exodus 40:34-38** when God descends upon the tabernacle. In each case, God’s light was a guiding and protecting reality that did not continually remained with His people.

When we consider these instances throughout Scripture, we see a much greater significance in Jesus’ declaration that He is the light of the world. Jesus declares this reality in **John 8:12-13**. In doing so, He is connecting Himself to not only the glory of the Father, but to the Father Himself. Jesus declares that His light will provide freedom. He declares that His light will invade the darkest parts of our heart. When we consider the darkness of sin all around us it can be pretty overwhelming. However, when we come to the understanding that our hearts are just as wicked, it can be utterly crushing. But Christ! But Christ, who is the light of the world, offers us an opportunity to experience His light. Not only can we experience His light, we can receive it.

In **Acts 2:1-4** the Holy Spirit comes upon God people in flames of fire. Those flames descend upon His people and they are filled with the light of Christ. They now become individuals who have the very presence of God living within them. God’s dwelling place is no longer with His people, but instead, in His people. God’s presence which once existed on a mountain top or in the tabernacle, now exists in us! The light no longer guides from above but from within. When Jesus declares that He is the light of the world, and offers us an opportunity to walk in that light, we become bearers of His light. While we can dim or cover the light with our sin, the light will never leave us. If we consider the example of darkness in my basement, I need to ask myself, am I allowing the light of Christ to expose my sin in a way in which I can’t help but respond? Or, is it possible that I’ve dimmed the light for so long that I’ve become comfortable walking in the darkness? Jesus declares that He is the light of the world. In doing so, Jesus declares that He is the I Am who has come to guide His people, to restore His people, to set His people free, and to reside in His people.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Can you think of a time in which the guiding light of Christ provided direction in your life?
- 2) Where are you walking in darkness (perhaps allowing your life to adjust to it) and are in need of Christ’s light to set you free?
- 3) Have you ever had the opportunity to share Christ’s light with others?