

Lighthouse Bible Church

July 14th, 2013

John 8: 12 *Scripture reading 2nd Corinthians 4: 1 - 6*

‘Following the Light of Life’

Stand – Read – Pray

As we return to this book of John we want to remind ourselves that John has been presenting Jesus for who He is, God in human form. We have seen Him over and over again through what He has done and what He has said that He is truly the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God and therefore equal with God.

We have also heard through His teaching that He is the only way to the Father and to everlasting, eternal life. He told Nicodemus in John 3 that He must be lifted up and whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. John the Baptist said in Chapter 3 that ‘He who believes in the Son has everlasting life.

Jesus said in John 4, to the woman at the well, that ‘whoever drinks of the water that He shall give them...it will spring up into everlasting life. He even told her that He was the promised Messiah, the Christ. He told the people in John 5 that ‘he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life’.

He has told them that He is the fulfillment of all the Messianic prophecies of scripture. He told them that He is the ‘bread of life’ that endures to everlasting life. He told them that He is the ‘living water’ of everlasting life and invites all to come to Him and drink freely. And now He is going to tell them that He is not only the bread of life and the water of life but He is the light of life, the light of the world.

Remember back in **John 1: 4 - 5** where it said **in Him was life and the life was the light of men and the light shines in darkness and the darkness did not overcome it.** John the Baptist said later that he came to ‘bear witness of that light’ to bear witness of Jesus, and then in **John 3: 19 - 21** it said **this is the condemnation that the light has come into the world and men loved, what, darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.** It goes on to say **for everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light that his deeds may be clearly seen that they have been done in God.**

We live in a dark world don't we? A spiritually dark world! There is a darkness that every single person is born into because they are born with a sin nature as **Romans 3: 10 – 18** & **Romans 5: 12** says. . There is a darkness that all unbelievers are held captive by because of their love of sin **Romans 1: 21** says. **Proverbs 2: 13** says there are those **who leave the path of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness.** Why? Because ‘men love darkness rather than light, right.’

And if anyone dies in the darkness of their unforgiven sin then they will spend an eternity in the place of everlasting darkness. **Matthew 22: 13** & **Matthew 25: 30** say that the unbeliever **will be cast into outer darkness where there will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.**

You see, when Jesus came into the world, the world was in darkness and He came as a light to the world. In **Matthew 4: 16**, quoting Isaiah, he says **the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light and upon those who sat in the region of the shadow of death, light has dawned.**

Paul, in his call to ministry by Jesus it says in **Acts 26: 17 – 18** was sent to open **their eyes in order to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Jesus.**

In **Colossians 1: 13** it says that Christ **delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.** **1st Peter 2: 9** says that we were called out of darkness into His marvelous light.

I love what **Ephesians 5: 8** says **you were once darkness but now you are light in the Lord.** And that is only possible because **Jesus is the Light of the world and he who follows Him will not walk in the darkness but have the light of life.**

That is everyone who is a born again believer, who has put their faith and trust in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Remember a couple weeks ago that Jesus offered salvation to anyone who would come to Him, and some did and many did not and it caused a division among them.

And because of all that Jesus had done and said and because of His growing popularity and following, the Pharisees wanted Him dead. They sent the temple police to arrest Him and they come back empty handed, so they decide to take matters into their own hands and try to trap Jesus while He is teaching in the temple.

Remember they brought a woman caught in the act of adultery and challenged Jesus with what He would do. If He went with the law of Moses, she should be stoned and then He would not be seen as a loving, merciful, forgiving person and He would have violated Roman law. If He does not consent to her being stoned for committing adultery, then they would say you are not following the law of Moses, how could you be the Messiah.

So they thought they had Him right where they wanted Him, either way He answers He is done for. And we saw how He dealt with them by simply saying 'He who is without sin, let him cast the first stone'.

And they were all convicted in their conscience and walked away condemned, ashamed, defeated and more frustrated and angry at Jesus than ever, but they could do nothing against the wisdom of God. And that is where we want to pick it up this morning in John 8 starting in Verse 12

Verse 12: Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.

In order to understand this verse and this passage we need to look at **Verse 20** for a minute. It says there **these words Jesus spoke IN THE TREASURY as He taught in the temple ...**

The location of Jesus’ teaching is important to the text. He is teaching in the treasury portion of the temple when He says ‘I am the light of the world’ and we’ll see why that is so significant in a minute.

Just to remind you about the temple setting and the different courts within the temple. Keep in mind that the places within the temple had either pillars or walls but no ceilings, for the most part, especially in some of the larger areas.

When you come into the temple you first enter into the court of the Gentiles and that was as far as a Gentile proselyte could go. Then you walk up some stairs through another entrance that brings you into what is called the court of the women and that is as far as women could go unless they were offering a sacrifice and then they could go into the court of the priests.

The court of the women is also known as the ‘Temple Treasury’ that verse 20 is talking about. The reason is, is because within the treasury, the court of women, there were mounted along the walls 13 treasure chests into which people dropped their offerings.

They were shaped like large trumpets with a small opening at the top and widening at the bottom where the coins would fall into when dropped in. Each trumpet had a designated offering that was to be put into it.

Trumpets one and two were offerings used for the upkeep of the temple. Every Jew had to pay a half shekel for the upkeep.

Trumpets three and four were offerings used for the purchase of pigeons which a woman had to offer, if she couldn't afford a lamb, for her purification after the birth of a child according to **Leviticus 12: 8**.

Trumpet five was the offerings collected for the cost of the wood which was needed to keep the altar fire going.

Trumpet six was the offerings collected for the purchase of incense used during the temple services

Trumpet seven was the offerings collected for the upkeep of the golden vessels used during the temple services.

Trumpets eight through thirteen were used for general offerings, like thank offerings or trespass offerings, of varying amounts to be used in no particular way.

This is the place where Jesus is speaking starting in Verse 12, in the temple treasury. Remember that just a couple of days earlier Jesus was teaching in the temple during the Feast of Tabernacles and as the priest finished pouring the water from the golden pitcher on the altar and the people quoted the salvation passage from Isaiah, Jesus says in that moment of silence in **John 7: 37 if anyone thirst let him come after Me.**

Remember the water ceremony of the Feast of Tabernacles was to remind them of their wilderness wanderings and God's gracious provision of escape by the parting of the water of the Red sea and His gracious provision of water from the rock for their thirst.

Well, He is about to do a similar thing here using another part of the temple ceremony which helps us to understand why He says what He does in Verse 12.

Verse 12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying ‘I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.

Jesus saying ‘I am the light of the world’ would have been an incredible statement in light of where He was and what had just happened earlier. At the beginning of the Feast of Tabernacles and every evening thereafter, they had a ceremony in the Court of the Women called the ‘Illumination of the Temple’.

This was to commemorate the wilderness wanderings and the light provided by God by day and by night. Remember in **Exodus 13: 21** where it says **and the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them Light, so as to go by day and night.**

What they would do is during this 7 day period of time they would erect seating like bleachers around the wall of the Court of the Women and in the evening just as the sun was starting to set, the people would come and be seated to watch and hear and often participate in the dancing and reciting of Psalms and the singing of songs.

But before any of that started, they had the ritual of the illumination of the temple. They had in the court of women anywhere between one and 4 huge candelabra type light holders. One historian described them as 50 cubits high. One cubit is approximate 18 inches to 50 cubits at 18 inches per cubit would be about 75 feet high. Just a massive light source.

Well, these candelabra's would have candle lights placed all over them and be lit just as the sun was starting to set. The historians write that all of Jerusalem was illuminated by the light coming from the Court of the Women.

So these lights are going to remind the people about the provision of light by God during the wilderness wanderings and the priests and people were celebrating with dancing and singing well into the night.

Now can you imagine Jesus, the next day after the celebration is over, walking into the Court of the Women and standing by one of those huge candelabras and maybe gesturing to it and saying 'I am the light of the world'.

Do you remember last night when this candelabra was shining brightly and filling Jerusalem with the light and you were all celebrating and commemorating that light to remember that light that God provided the nation of Israel in the wilderness. Well, guess what, I am the light, not just to Israel, but to the world.

You know what else Jesus was saying in that statement 'I am the light of the world'. Listen to what **1st John 1: 5** says **God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.** In **Psalm 27: 1** the psalmist said **the Lord is my LIGHT and my salvation.** **Psalm 104: 1 – 2** says **God is covered with light as with a garment.** Jesus is telling them that He is God.

I like what **Isaiah 60: 19** says **the sun shall no longer be your light by day nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you but the Lord will be to you an everlasting LIGHT...** and of course we see the fulfillment of that in **Revelation 21: 23 & 22: 5**

They knew the scriptures about God being light and when Jesus said that, they knew what He was saying.

Then Jesus says at the end of Verse 12 **he who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.** He is saying ‘he who follows Me, as light, shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life.

Let me ask you a question, how do you follow light? If the light is there then it is there and you don’t follow it, you are just in it or you go to where it is and then you stop. You don’t say ‘follow the light’ it is just there.

But, there is one light that that the nation of Israel did follow and that is the one they were commemorating in the temple, the cloud by day and pillar of fire by night. This was the light of God that they were supposed to follow because He was leading. They needed to be ready for when the light moved, they moved and followed.

So Jesus is saying, follow Me, I am the light that you need to follow. You need to be ready to go wherever and whenever I lead you. And if you follow Me you will never **walk in darkness.**

So how does someone follow Jesus, how are we supposed to follow Him today? Well, when you look at the word follow, ah kol uth e o, it is used at least 88 times in the N.T. it is used of:

A soldier following His commanders orders

A slave following his master and attending to his needs

Someone who follows wise counsel ... thru His word and He is Counselor

Someone who follows the laws of government and their standards ..word

To follow Christ is to follow Him totally and completely, not half-heartedly or when it is convenient or when you want to. It is a total commitment to Him, coming to Him and following Him on His terms, not yours.

If you love father or mother more than Him you are not worth to follow Him. If you love son or daughter more than Him you are not worthy to follow Him. If your love yourself more than Him you are not worthy to follow Him.

If you are willing to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and follow after Him, then you will **not walk in darkness**. Jesus will say later in **John 12: 36 & 46** while you have the light believe in the light that you may become sons of light and I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.

That was the ministry that Jesus gave to Paul in **Acts 26: 18** to open unbelievers eyes in order to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God that they may receive forgiveness of sins...

As born again believers, we are told in **Romans 13: 12** to cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light. And that is only possible, Verse 14 says, through Jesus Christ. In **Ephesians 5: 8** we are told that we were once in darkness but now you are light IN THE LORD. Walk as children of light.

And as children of light, **Matthew 5: 14 & 16** says that we become the light of the world, as Christ shines through us, we are to let our light so shine before men... as a matter of fact **Philippians 2: 15** says that while we are in the world we are to shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life.

The best place to see Christ and follow Him as the light is where He is revealed the most and that is where? In His word, right? **Proverbs 6: 23** for the commandment is a lamp and the law a light... **Psalms 119: 105** Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

And if you are willing to follow Christ, you will not walk in darkness. The darkness of sin, the darkness of this world or the darkness of the evil one.

He says at the end of Verse 12 but he who follows Me shall not walk in darkness **but have the light of life.** You will always have the light to dispel the darkness because the light will be within you.

It is the light of Christ **John 1: 4, 9** says, dwelling within you

It is **the light of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ** dwelling in you as **2nd Corinthians 4: 4** says, that we are to let dwell in us richly.

Romans 8: 2, 10 & Galatians 6: 8 call the Holy Spirit of God and Christ, **the Spirit of Life.**

It is God, who is Light as **1st John 1: 5** says that you have dwelling in you as **John 14: 23** says.

In other words, you have the trinity of God as light and life living within you because you came to Christ and followed Him. And you have the light of His word to guide your path day by day to walk in light and not in darkness of this world.

Approach the Lord's Table.

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John 1: 4 – 5, John 3: 19 – 21
Romans 3: 10 – 18, Romans 5: 12
Romans 1: 21, Proverbs 2: 13
Matthew 22: 13, Matthew 25: 30
Matthew 4: 16, Acts 26: 17 – 18
Colossians 1: 13, Ephesians 5: 8

Verse 12:

John 8: 20, Leviticus 12: 8, John 7: 37
The Wilderness Wanderings:
Exodus 13: 21
Jesus, the Light of God for He is God:
1st John 1: 5, Psalm 27: 1
Psalm 104: 1 – 2, Isaiah 60: 19
Revelation 21: 23, 22: 5
Follow Jesus and you will not walk in darkness:
John 12: 36, 46, Acts 26: 18
Romans 13: 12, Ephesians 5: 8
Matthew 5: 14, 16, Philippians 2: 15
Follow Christ through His Word:
Proverbs 6: 23, Psalm 119: 105
Following Christ means you have the light of life:
John 1: 4, 9, 2nd Corinthians 4: 4
Romans 8: 2, 10, Galatians 6: 8
1st John 1: 5, John 14: 23

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