

# The Light Message

(A Study of the Gospel of John; Message #29)

John 8:12-20

## A. Jesus is likely still teaching in the Temple at the Feast of Tabernacles

1. The festival celebrates God's gracious provisions and his presence
2. Jesus isn't claiming to be "*a light in the world*" but "*the Light of the World*"

## B. To the Jewish listener, the word "light" is synonymous with God

### 1. In claiming to be the light, Jesus proclaimed himself God

*"The Lord is my light and my salvation..."* (Psalm 27:1)

*"Send forth you light and your truth, let them guide me..."* (Psalm 43:3)

*"...by his light I walked through darkness."* (Job 29:3)

*"...for the Lord will be your everlasting light..."* (Isaiah 60:19)

*"Though I sit in darkness, the Lord will be my light."* (Micah 7:8)

### 2. In claiming to be the light, Jesus is claiming to be the promised Messiah

*"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death, a light has dawned."* (Isaiah 9:2)

*"I will keep you and make you to be a covenant for the people, a light for the Gentiles"*  
(Isaiah 42:6)

*"I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."* (Isaiah 49:6)

### 3. This "light" is associated with the incarnation of Jesus Christ

*"The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world"* (John 1:9)

*"Simeon took the child in his arms and praised God, saying, 'Now dismiss your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.'" (Luke 2:28f)*

### 4. Jesus could not have made a more startling claim

## THE CLAIM (8:12)

### A. Jesus is literally claiming to be the teacher of everything divine, everything human, and every way they interface

1. Jesus claim to be "*the light of the world*" is a Christocentric statement
2. Jesus claim to be "*the light of the world*" is a Christoexclusive statement
3. Jesus claim to be "*the light of the world*" is a Christoinclusive statement

### B. Jesus takes his universal claim and applies it to personal practice: his followers would never be unsure of what he wants them to do...

1. Jesus is "*The Light of the World*" - a missionary claim

2. Jesus is "*The Light of Real Life*" - an existential claim

## C. The truth is, the world, is a mess; Scripture defines it as "darkness"

1. This wisdom Jesus teaches in his mountain sermon in Matthew is morally countercultural
2. In Mark's Gospel we learn following Jesus is humanly countercultural
3. In Luke's Gospel, Jesus reminds us following him is socially and economically countercultural
4. In John, Jesus is claiming this new life he offers is spiritually and existentially countercultural

*"The light shines in the darkness, the darkness has not understood it."* (John 1:5)

## THE CHALLENGE (8:13-18)

### A. The pushback comes immediately: "*Testimony about yourself isn't credible*"

#### 1. Jesus admits it is self-testimony and makes two additional claims:

a. First: "*I know where I came from and where I am going*"

b. Second: "*There is a second witness in the room - the Father who sent me*"

#### 2. Jesus says those two facts are sufficient to credit my self-testimony

### B. Pushback 2 - "*How does knowing your origin and destination credit their testimony?*"

### C. Pushback 3 - "*If the Father is here, where is he?*"

1. John says, "*Whenever Jesus speaks, the Father's Spirit is saying, Amen!*"

2. Jesus self-claims are never just self-claims; the Father always says, "*Amen!*"

### D. John would say when future disciples apply Jesus' words to the church and the world, the Father's Spirit says "Amen" and accredits those words

## THE COUNTERCLAIM (8:19-20)

### A. The question, "*Ahem, where is your Father?*" is an appropriate one

### B. Jesus adds, "*In order to recognize the Father, you need to recognize me*"

1. That is, when we are with Jesus we are with the Great God himself

2. Reformation churches call this the *testimonium internum Spiritus Sancti* (i.e., "*the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit*")

### C. The cave said, "*Come down and see.*" The sun came down and said, "*Show me the darkness.*" But there was no darkness. There was only light.