

## Sunday Morning Message

July 31, 2022

*The Light of the World*

*The Gospel According to John*

Text – John 8:12 - 59

Congregational Reading – John 8:31 - 36

### Introduction

#### “I Am” Statements

Back in the Old Testament, Moses was called by God to lead the people of Israel out of Egyptian bondage. He knew the people would question where Moses got his authority. Who was it that called Moses to do this? He asks the Lord:

*"And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? **And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM:** and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, **I AM hath sent me unto you.**" (Exodus 3:13-14)*

The people of God knew what the term, “I am” meant. It was a name referring only to God. Throughout John’s Gospel especially there are many references where Jesus refers to Himself as the I am.

*"And Jesus said unto them, **I am the bread of life:** he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. ... The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, **I am the bread which came down from heaven.** ... **I am that bread of life.** ... **I am the living bread which came down from heaven:** if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." (John 6:35, 41, 48, 51)*

*"Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **I am the door of the sheep.** ... **I am the door:** by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. ... **I am the good shepherd:** the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. ... **I am the good shepherd,** and know my sheep, and am known of mine." (John 10:7, 9, 11, 14)*

*"Jesus said unto her, **I am the resurrection, and the life:** he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:" (John 11:25)*

*"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6)*

*"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. ... I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:1, 5)*

Three words from Jesus' mouth and the band of men and officers (possibly 600 of them) all fell to the ground.

*"They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground." (John 18:5-6)*

Here in our text today, Jesus declares that He is the Light of the world. He also states very plainly that Abraham, who lived over 2,100 years prior to the time of Jesus, knew Jesus as the I Am.

*"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. ... Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Before Abraham was, I am.**" (John 8:12, 58)*

*"As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." (John 9:5)*

John 8, from verse twelve until the end of the chapter is known as "The Light of the World" discourse. God is light.

## Transition

In this passage, Jesus makes several statements about Himself, all pointing to the fact that He is God in the flesh. These statements cause the Pharisees to come unglued. They have already rejected Him. They had already stated that Jesus did His miracles in the power of Beelzebub, rather than in the power of God (Matthew 12:24)

### I. I Am the Light of the World (vs. 12 – 20)

Notice that the Father backed up Jesus' claim (vs. 17 – 18). He was the second witness (Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15).

At Jesus' baptism.

*"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."  
(Matthew 3:17)*

At the Mount of Transfiguration

*"And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him." (Luke  
9:35)*

Notice again in v. 20, "his hour." A reference to the time of His death (see also John 2:4;  
7:30; 12:23 – 27; 13:1; 17:1).

Note – the treasury refers to the thirteen trumpet-shaped offertory boxes placed in the  
Court of the Women in the Temple.

Jesus states here in John 8:12, and in John 9:5, that He is the Light of the world.

Throughout the Bible, light is used as a reference to righteousness, purity, and holiness.  
Darkness is used to refer to evil and sin.

*"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness  
rather than light, because their deeds were evil." (John 3:19)*

*"Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he  
stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he  
stumbleth, because there is no light in him." (John 11:9-10)*

*"While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things  
spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them." (John 12:36)*

*"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is  
light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and  
walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the  
light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth  
us from all sin." (1 John 1:5-7)*

*"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of  
light:" (Ephesians 5:8)*

*"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of  
darkness." (1 Thessalonians 5:5)*

*"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Corinthians 6:14)*

*"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:14-16)*

In v. 12 of our text, Jesus declares very plainly that if you follow Him, you will not walk in darkness, but have the light of life. The light of life will guide you, direct you, and protect you.

The Bible is a light that God uses to guide us:

*"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psalm 119:105)*

## **II. I Am Not of This World (I Am from Above – vs. 21 – 30)**

Jesus had this same discussion back in chapter seven at the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:34 – 36). He talked about where He was from and where He was going. He came from Heaven and would soon be returning there.

You and I are also not “of this world.” in Jesus’ high priestly prayer for us in John seventeen, He develops this (Turn to John 17:9 – 26).

*"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:" (Philippians 3:20)*

The Scripture says regarding Abraham:

*"For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. ... For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." (Hebrews 11:10, 14-16)*

This world is not my home – I am just passing through.

## **III. I Am the God of Abraham (vs. 31 – 59)**

Notice the great statements in vs. 31 – 36 – if you truly belong to God, you will continue in His word. This does not mean that there won't be moments of doubt and times of disappointment, but if you truly believe, God will keep bringing you back to where you need to be. You will know the truth, and that truth will make you free. Free from the bondage of the law; free from the shackles of sin's power, and from the horror of sin's penalty. The truth – God's Word makes you free.

When you trust Christ as Saviour, you are immediately declared "not guilty" for your sins. You are justified by Christ in the sight of God; you are freed from the penalty of your sins. However, as you grow in the Lord, He sanctifies you, which means He sets you apart. You are being transformed into the image of Christ. He is working in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. He is gradually removing some things from your life and adding some things. You will grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. He is freeing you from the bondage of sin's power as you grow in the truth.

Do you know the truth?

## **God of Abraham**

There are several places in the Bible where you can see God introducing Himself to various people as the God of Abraham (to Isaac in Genesis 26:24; to Jacob in 28:13; to Moses in Exodus 3:6). Here, Jesus is telling these religious leaders that He was there, He knew Abraham, and He was the I Am before Abraham even was.

*"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. ... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." (John 1:1-5, 14)*

*"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:4-5)*

*"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him,*

*and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;" (Colossians 1:15-19)*

## Conclusion

### Who He Is

There are a couple of things that we can take away from this passage. The first is regarding who Jesus is. I remember as a young Christian being blown away by Jesus' statement to the Pharisees in verse 58 – "before Abraham was, I am." What a powerful statement. It presents Jesus Christ as the eternal God who was around, not only a lot longer than these religious leaders, but also during the time of Abraham 2100 years before, and even before the world was created. Jesus is God. He is not just God's Son; He is God the Son. He came down from above – from Heaven – to die for the sins of the world.

He also tells us that we who are saved are also from above, and we need to act like it.

### What He Does

The second thing that I see in this passage is about what Jesus does. He shines light into a very dark world. He is the light of the world. He now shines that light through you and me. As we live for the Lord in this dark world, we shine the light of God.

My pastor in Texas used to say – "It's about time that we started poking some holes in the darkness."

We shine the light when we **live** separated lives while we are living in this world.

We shine the light when we **love** our brothers and sisters in Christ and love the lost people around us.

We shine the light when we **lead** people to Christ, when we communicate the message of salvation. People need to hear that Christ died for them and wants to save them from their sins.