

I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

I AM: SEVEN IDENTITY MARKERS OF JESUS · JOHN 8:12 · APRIL 23, 2023 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

"Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'" (John 8:12)

Jesus the light of new creatio

The connection between light and creation (John 1:4-5; Genesis 1:3)

The true light giving light, wisdom, and God's illumination (John 1:9; Psalm 119:105)

Jesus the light of new freedom

The connection between light and the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:2, 10; Exodus 13:21; Leviticus 23:33-43)

The suffering servant as the bringer of the light of life in death's darkness (John 1:4-5; Isaiah 53:12)

Jesus makes us light like Him

We are changed by Jesus' light (John 9:6-7; 12:35-36)

We become a reflection of Jesus' light to others (Matthew 5:14-16)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Have you ever experienced total darkness? What was it like? How did it feel to enter the light?
2. This weekend we continue our preaching series, "I AM: Seven Identity Markers of Jesus," by looking at Jesus' statement, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). Begin your study in prayer by asking God to speak to you through His Word, and then, whether you're on your own or with a group, read John 8:12-20 aloud.

3. On face value, what do you think Jesus means when He declares Himself to be the light of the world in verse 12?
4. Themes of light and darkness, day and night, pervade John's gospel. Explore those themes by reading some or all of these verses. What do you learn?
John 1:4-5 John 1:9 John 3:14 John 3:19-21
John 9:4-5 John 11:9-10 John 12:35 John 12:46
5. The backdrop to Jesus' teaching on being the light of the world is the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot), which is the setting of John, chapters 7-8. Read more about the Feast of Tabernacles in Leviticus 23:33-43 and Deuteronomy 16:13-15. One aspect of this festival was the lighting of tall lamps in the Temple to remind people of God's deliverance from Egyptian slavery accompanied by a pillar of fire (Exodus 13:21-22). How might this symbolism play into what Jesus is saying about Himself in John 8:12?
6. What does it mean to you that Jesus is the light of the world?
7. Much of the tension in the passage following Jesus' statement in 8:12 relates to Jesus' authority. Jesus points to His relationship with His Father. How would you describe that relationship from what you read in verses 14-20?
8. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, "You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14-16). How might this truth about Jesus' followers flow from Jesus' identity?
9. What do you think it means for you to live as a light for Jesus in the world?
10. What is one thing God is revealing to you through this study? If you're on your own, write that down, pray over it, and share it with someone this week. If you are with a small group, share your answers with one another before closing in prayer.

DIG DEEPER:

- Memorize John 8:12
- Draw, ink, or paint either the phrase of Jesus, "I am the light of the world," or the story that follows about a blind man being healed in John 9. As you do that, let God speak to you about who Jesus is and what Jesus means to you. When you finish, consider sharing your prayer reflections and/or artistry with a friend.
- Watch The Bible Project's two-part "Overview of the Gospel of John": bibleproject.com/explore/video/john/
- Read N. T. Wright, *Simply Jesus: A New Vision of Who He Was, What He Did, and Why He Matters*