

John 8:12-30 Light of the World

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[0 : 00] is taken from the Gospel of John, from John 8, verses 12 to 30. So the Gospel of John, verses 8, verses 12 to 30.

The Gospel of John, chapter 8, verses 12 to 30. Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

So the Pharisees said to him, You are bearing witness about yourself. Your testimony is not true. Jesus answered, Even if I do witness about myself, my testimony is true.

For I know where I come from and where I am going. But you do not know where I come from or where I am going. You judge according to the flesh.

I judge no one. Yet even if I do judge, my judgment is true. For it is not I alone who judge, but I and the Father who sent me.

[1 : 19] In your law it is written that the testimony of two people is true. I am the one who bears witness upon myself. And the Father who sent me bears witness about me.

They said to him, They said to him therefore, Where is your Father? Jesus answered, You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also.

These words he spoke in the treasury as he taught in the temple. But no one arrested him because his hour had not yet come.

So he said to them again, I am going away and you will seek me and you will die in your sin. Where I am going you cannot come.

So the Jews said, Will he kill himself? Since he says where I am going you cannot come. He said to them, You are from below, I am from above.

[2 : 28] You are of this world, I am not of the world. I told you that you would die in your sins. For unless you believe that I am he, you will die in your sins.

So they said to him, Who are you? Jesus said to them, Just what I have been telling you from the beginning.

I have much to say about you and much to judge. But he who sent me is true. And I declare to the world that I have heard from him.

They did not understand that he had been speaking to them about the Father. So Jesus said to them, When you have lifted up the Son of Man, Then you will know that I am he, And that I do nothing on my own authority, But speak just as the Father taught me.

And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, For I always do the things that are pleasing to him. And as he was saying these things, Many believed in him.

[3 : 39] Thanks be to God for the reading of his holy word, And his name with the glory and praise. Our reading this morning, Jesus is clear in stating, I am the light of the world.

Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, But will have the light of life. The passage contrasts light and darkness, And the clear different outcomes, For these two things.

For the light that lives in life, And the life that lives in the light, And the life in darkness. The allegory of light is also heightened, For the Jews who would have been hearing, Jesus teach in Jerusalem.

As he is teaching at a time, That is just at the end, Of the feast of the tabernacles. Where light was a central theme.

Jesus regularly used, Familiar terms, In everyday life, To deliver his message. So it is little wonder, That he would use the images, From the feasts, From the recent feasts, The feast of the tabernacles.

[5 : 07] Because part of that feast, Was about light. And in the, Temple, Sorry, In the court of the women, There would be, Huge candelabras, That would be lit.

That would not just, Sort of, Light up a small area, But would light up the whole court, And the surrounding, Areas. So when Jesus starts to speak to the crowd, He is straight to the point, And uses an image, Which would very much, Have been in their minds.

So what does Jesus say, As he starts to teach? First of all, He states his divinity, And gives two promises, To those who believe in him, And for those who follow him.

The two promises, Are, Those who, Sorry, Those who follow him, Will not walk in darkness, That, They will have a light, Of life.

He sets out, His right, To make the promise, By stating, I am the light, Of the world. His, I am statement, Is, An emphatic statement, Of his divinity, And links with God's description, Of his self, In Exodus, Three, Chapter 14, Sorry, Chapter 3, Verse 14, God said to Moses, I am, Who I am, And he said, Say this to the people of Israel, I am has sent me to you.

[6 : 48] Jesus, As earlier in John 6, 35, When he declares, He is the bread of life, He also, He links himself, With his heavenly father, And that, Whoever follows him, Will walk, Will not walk in darkness, His life will be, Illuminated.

When Jesus applies the title, I am to himself, He claims to God, He claims to be God, As clearly seen in verse 58, Of this chapter, In John 8, 58, Jesus said to them, Truly, Truly, I say to you, Before Abraham was, I am.

Jesus doesn't promote, The idea, Of being a helper, Of God, Or of being some, Great teacher, But, He is clear, In his divinity, In his, Being the infinite being, He is clear, That he is God, He existed, Before Abraham, He existed with God, Before God, Called out to Abraham, He has always, Existed with God, The Pharisees, Though, Skip the contrast, Of light, And darkness, Highlighted, Highlighted, By Jesus, And rather, They, Are not slow, To jump, On the nature, Of his statement, Declaring, That, Jesus was witnessing, About himself, The legalistic,

Outlook, On life, Their need, For the following, Of rules, And regulations, Fastens, Causes them, To fasten, On illegal, Technicality, Jesus is bearing, Witness, To himself, Say the Pharisees, Therefore, The claim, It is not valid, That anything, Is to say, Can be disregarded, That is, Not to say, That it is not true, Rather, That it has no worth, Because he is testifying, And talking about himself, This is the human answer, When we hear things, We would rather not, The Pharisees, Are up to their old tricks, Claiming that he violates the law, And that if he violates the law, He cannot be, Who he claims to be, In John 5, Jesus heals invalid, Who lay at the pool, For 38 years, On the Sabbath, Now the Pharisees,

Could circumcise a child, On the Sabbath, To ensure that the law was kept, The Old Testament law, Stated that, The circumcision, Had to happen, Within a set period, And if that set period, Fell within the Sabbath, Then it was okay, For them, To carry out, The circumcision, But they set that aside, And condemned Jesus, For healing, A sick man, On the Sabbath, But they forget, That it was through Christ, That the law came, And so Jesus responds, By contrasting himself, With the Pharisees, Jesus knows, Jesus knows, Jesus knows, Where he came from, And where he is going, We're not here, Talking about, His physical birthplace, At Bethlehem, Or him heading to, Jerusalem, And eventually, To Calvary, But that Jesus,

[10 : 42] As the son of God, Had been with God, From eternity, And was present with him, At the creation of the world, In John 1, Verses 1 to 3, We read, In the beginning was the word, And the word was with God, And the word was God, He was in the beginning with God, And all things were made through him, And without him, Was not anything made, That was made, So Jesus was not only with God, But was involved in all of creation, And knew of God's plans, For the salvation of humanity, He knew that his earthly journey, Would end at Calvary, Where he would die, For the sins of man, And he knew of his resurrection, And he knew of his return, To his father in heaven, He knew of his return to glory, The Pharisees, Know nothing,

Of this, They work purely, In earthly levels, They function, As sinful, Humans, Far from God, Who are controlled by the flesh, By earthly desires, In verse 15, The Pharisees judge, By their experiences, And by, Earthly, Human, Knowledge, Their judgment is flawed, As it works on a human level, It is according to our flesh, And our desires, Now we know, That in our fallen nature, Our flesh is weak, And incomplete, So their judgment, Is also weak, And incomplete, It is imperfect, So we may have expected, Jesus to say, That he does not judge, In the same manner,

As the Pharisees, But rather, Jesus states, That he judges, No one, A very assertive statement, And one, Which looks, To contradict, What, Jesus later says, In verse 26, And in chapter 9, And that may cause, Some difficulties for us, As it's clear here, That Jesus does judge, But as Morris points out, We should notice two things, One, That, Jesus' purpose, Was not to come to judge, Of course, In John 3, 16, We read, For God so loved the world, That he gave his only son, That whoever believes in him, Should not perish, But have eternal life, For God did not send his son, Into the world, To condemn the world, But in order that the world, Might be saved through him, So,

Jesus came as the saviour of the world, Not as the judge, That was not his intention, As coming, As Jesus, God incarnate, On earth, And two, The kind of judging, That he engages in, Is not at all, The same as the Pharisees, It's not what, The Pharisees envisaged, By the terms that they used, Jesus judges, Along with the father, On a different level, He operates, On a different plane, The Pharisees, The Pharisees, Judgment, Is according to the flesh, But, To Jesus, That is no judgment at all, It is a judgment, Of limited knowledge, It is limited, By man's ability, To understand, We can only judge,

By what we see, In front of us, Jesus, And our heavenly father, God, Judges, Not just what we do, But judges, The heart of man, He knows our desires, He knows our intentions, And our actions, They know everything, They judge our motives, As well, As looking at our actions, And together, Our father, And Christ, Know our hearts, So in verse 17 and 18, We see that Jesus shows, That he fulfills the needs, In the law, For two to testify, To make his statement valid, Remember, Jesus made the law, He didn't just learn it, He speaks, Not on his own, But in line with the father, He sent him, To save the world, And the father, Will testify for him, The father,

[15 : 48] Will attest, To what Christ teaches, So in verse 19, The Pharisees continue, With their worldly vision, Asking, Where is his father, As if looking, For his father, Joseph, To appear, To testify to him, In this response, Jesus highlights, The fact, That the Pharisees, Do not know his origins, Or know his heavenly father, In verse 21, Jesus continues, To contrast himself, With the Pharisees, Announcing, That where he is going, They cannot come, Jesus, Jesus announcing, That they will die, In their sin, The first implication, Mentioned, Of not being in, In a light of life, Of a life, Of unbelief, Jesus states, That, Where he goes, He cannot come,

And seem, And they seem, First to be, Understanding to some degree, By his hearers, But still, They bear their earthly views, They see, That he is probably, Speaking of his death, But limited, To him taking, His own life, But in verse 23, Jesus is clear, In his standing, Compared to his hearers, He is above them, He is from the father, They are below, Him, Here Jesus is not, Referring to hell, But from this world, He is from heaven, There from, Earth, From this fallen world, That has repeatedly, Failed, To acknowledge, Its creator, It is important here, To realise that, The contrast, That Jesus is making, Is not about,

A spiritual realm, And a material world, It is not some, Greek, Philosophical debate, It is a contrast, Between, The realm of God, Himself, And the realm, Of his fallen, And rebellious creation, And that's why, We cannot recognise, Who he is, Nor, Understand, His teaching, They are in different realms, Just as at times, We speak, Past one another, Because although, We speak of the same things, We come from different, Viewpoints, God is from heaven, The Pharisees, And the hearers, And the hearers, Are from a sinful, Fallen earth, In verse 24, Jesus repeats, That they will die, In their sin, As he repeats, That unless we believe, That he is the Messiah, The saviour of the world, Sent by the father, We will die, In our sins, The only possible escape,

Lies in belief alone, Not in man's actions, Jesus states, Unless you believe, That I am, He, You will die, In your sins, Unfortunately, Still the Jews, Seen unable to comprehend, Jesus' teaching, And they ask him, Who are you?

And Jesus states, How he has been trying, To tell them, He is the one, Who has been, From the beginning, And now comes, On the father's mission, The Jews still, Do not see the symbolism, And Jesus' closeness, To God, So in verse 28, And 29, Jesus states, So Jesus said to them, When you have lifted up, The son of man, Then you will know, That I am he, And that I do nothing, On my own authority, But speak, Just as the father taught me, And he who sent me, Is with me, He has not left me alone, For I always do the things, That are pleasing to him, Here, It is not, I realize, It is not that all, Will realize, His true essence, At the point, Of his crucifixion, But, By this act, They will then, Or in the future,

[20 : 14] Know, That he is the saviour of man, And that when he returns, He will return, As their judge, At present, He is coming, As the saviour of the world, And for all, Who believe in him, He will offer, Eternal life, But when he returns, He will come, Return as a judge, And he will judge us, On our actions, And on our belief, Of whether, We accepted him, As our saviour, Being lifted up, Here, Has a double meaning, One, The physical act, Of being lifted up, On the cross, To his death, The view that we can probably see, That the Jews may have understood, And two, That he will be exalted, For his greatest glory, Is in accepting, The shame, And the humiliation, Of the cross, In order that he may bring, Salvation to sinners, Salvation, To you,

And I, And in so doing, He fulfills the will, Of his father, Because this is the will, Of his heavenly father, This has been God's plan, Since Adam, First disobeyed God, In the garden of Eden, Jesus, Jesus does nothing, On his own, His purpose, Is to fulfil, The father's will, Jesus has, Became, God incarnate, Having, Came down from heaven, But the father, Who sent him, Is always with him, As he carries out, The will of the father, He did not leave God, In heaven, When he came to earth, The two of them, Jesus, And the father, Are always together, They're always, Linked, Jesus describes himself, As a light of the world, But what does that mean, For us, What does it mean, Today,

To be the light of the world, Well if we, Start by, Looking at the, Natural world, If we, Observe God's creation, We know the importance, Of physical light, For physical life, And it's reflected, In God's creation around us, Nothing can live, In darkness, Even plants, Require light, For photosynthesis, Why did I ever, Put that word in, This is when, Plants produce, Energy, They require three things, They require water, They require sunlight, And they require, Carbon dioxide, To produce oxygen, And the simple sugars, That they need to live, But most importantly, They need light, And when we think, Of plants, In darkness, We think of death, As days shorten, And light is reduced, Plant life, Starts to die back,

When plant seeds, We talk about, The seed dying, For new life, To come forth, Darkness, Darkness, Darkness, Darkness, Sees nature dying back, As the light, Disappears, We require light, To remain healthy, After all, Sunlight, Is our main source, Of vitamin D, Without vitamin D, Our bones become weak, And we become unhealthy, Jesus uses, This allegory, To develop, The need for him, To be at the centre, Of our lives, Just as we need, Physical life, Light, To be physically strong, We need, Christ at the centre, Of our spiritual life, To grow strong, Spiritually, Another way, Of looking at it, Would be to, Think of two forests, One is the deciduous forest, Where the trees grow, And branches extend,

Touching one another, But light, Penetrates the canopy, The other is a dense, Commercial, Conifer forest, And we have plenty of them, Up in Ayrshire, Just as you have, Down here, In Dumfries and Galloway, The trees are planted, Close together, The branches are meshed together, And no light, Passes through, In the first, We can walk, We can see the light, Shining through the foliage, We can see the bluebells, The wildflowers, And the replacement trees, Starting to grow, We can see life, Coming, The second, We can hardly penetrate, The forest, The forest floor, Is covered in dead pine needles, With no sign of light, Or life, And so, Is our life, Without Christ, He is our light, He is the giver, Of life, By birth, We have physical life, We walk, We talk,

[25 : 19] We breathe for a time, And then we die, And life is ended, Christ offers a light, Which brings life, To those who believe in him, Who accept him as their saviour, Jesus is clear, In verse 24, Unless you believe, I am, He, You will die, In your sins, It is not God, Or Jesus Christ, That condemns us, God sent Jesus, To save the world, Not to condemn it, We are condemned, By our actions, And our choices, We are condemned, To death, And eternal separation, From God, Because we refuse, To let the light, Into our lives, Jesus uses the symbolism, Of the feast of the tabernacles, To highlight, His role, As the light of the world, The image of light, So close to the feast,

Of the tabernacles, Looking back to the freedom, From Exodus, From Egypt, And our time in the wilderness, Again, Links Jesus, And God, Through light, God provided, A pillar of fire, By night, And a cloud, By day, Which was over, The tabernacle, In the wilderness, And it lit the way, For the Israelites, It directed their path, It directed when to rest, And when to move camp, In Numbers 9, 15 to 23, We learn how the pillar of fire, And the cloud, Directed the people of Israel, As we make our way, Through this world, This modern wilderness, We are reminded, Not to follow the example, Of the Israelites, Who turned from God's path, Who ignored his direction, We are to look, To Christ, For life, As the plants, Look to the sun, For life,

We are looked, To where our eternal life, Comes from, As we look, To Christ, For the light, That will provide us, With eternal life, So we must also, Be willing, To follow, In his direction, For our life, And this morning, We spoke, In the children's address, About imitating Christ, And in Matthew 5, 14 to 16, Jesus compares us, To the light, And that we can, Keep ourselves, That we cannot keep ourselves, Hidden from the world, But should be seen, And involved in the world, To bring glory to God, In heaven, Jesus says, In verses 14 to 16, You are the light, Of the world, A city on a hill, Cannot be hidden, Nor do people, Light a lamp, And put it under a basket, Put it on a stand, And it gives light, To all in the house,

In the same way, Let your light, Shine before others, So that they may see, Your good works, And give glory, To your father, Who is in heaven, Here, We are compared, To the light, Of the world, We are not suddenly divine, We are not suddenly, In Christ's place, But we are, A reflection of Christ, And the role, He is playing, In our lives, If we again, Look back, To God's creation, We see, The moon, Which shines light, On the earth, But the moon, Is but a lump of rock, With no light, Of its own, It reflects, The light of the sun, So as believers, We reflect, The light of Christ, So that all, Can see, It in us, The light, Is evident, To others, By our good deeds,

Which we do in faith, And through the power, Of the Holy Spirit, Our witness, To the world, The light, That we shine, Is but a shadow, To that of Christ, Who brings salvation, To all, Who accept him, As their saviour, That salvation, Comes through faith, Alone, Faith, In Christ, Not by any actions, Of man, Not by any words, That we may say, Physical life, Requires the light, Of the sun, To continue, Spiritual, And eternal life, With God the father, Requires spiritual light, Available, Only through Jesus Christ, Only through Jesus Christ, He is the light, Of the world, He is, Our way, Our truth, And our life, Let us pray, Father,

[30 : 29] Father, We thank you, That, You gave us, Your son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ, To be a light, To our way, To direct us, Back to you, And we thank you, And we thank you, For the grace, Which you have poured out, On each of us, That our hearts, Have been softened, By your Holy Spirit, That we can accept, Christ as our saviour, And for those, Who are still, Searching for you, We ask that, Their heart be softened, That your grace, Be poured out on them, And that they, May accept Christ, As their saviour, The redeemer, For their sins, These things, We ask through Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Amen, Amen,