

The Light Of The World

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Preacher: Rev Kenneth I Macleod

[0 : 00] I'm reading at verse 5, John 9, verse 5. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

Previously in verse 12 of chapter 8, Jesus again had said this. Jesus said, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

The Jews had the idea that if ever they came across any person with any form of disability, in any way, shape or form, then that that disability was brought either because of some sin in that person's life, or because of some sin within the parent's life.

And that's why they asked this particular question of Jesus. Who sinned? This man or his parents? Jesus shows us straight away that that's a terrible way of assessing a situation, and assessing any person's predicament, or any person's disability, or anything like that.

And Jesus is showing that their thinking was completely wrong. We live in a very judgmental society. People are always making judgments in the day we live in.

[1 : 17] And we should heed the word of God over and over, because the Lord tells us, Judge not, he said, that ye be not judged. Judgment ultimately belongs to the Lord.

And although there will come a day when Jesus will judge righteously, all at this particular time as we live out our days, Jesus says, don't you judge one another.

And I think our own lives will show us that so often when we've thought, maybe passed wrongly, we've passed judgment on a particular situation, or on a particular people, and as time goes on we say, oh, you know, I feel really bad about that.

I thought this, or I thought that, and time goes on to show that what you thought was, or what I thought was completely wrong. That's why the Lord says, don't be judging, because invariably you're going to get it wrong.

And of course there was a very harsh judgment that the Jews were passing on this poor man who had been born blind. But Jesus shows us that a lot of the things that happen in life, that there is a reason and a purpose.

[2 : 29] In fact, we could say everything. And Jesus is showing us here that a lot of what happens, or again we could say all that happens, that these things are for the purpose of demonstrating the works of God and to the glory of God.

A classic example of that was Lazarus' death. Nobody could understand why Lazarus died. Lazarus of all people. That was the home Jesus loved to go to.

That was his special home in Bethany. When he was tired and he wanted somewhere for refreshing. He wanted somewhere he could relax. That's the place he went to. It tells us that Jesus loved Mary, Martha and Lazarus.

And yet Lazarus gets sick and he dies. And of course there would be obvious questions. Mary had the questions. Martha had questions. Many of the Jews would have had questions.

Why that home? But again Jesus shows us that Lazarus' death was to demonstrate the works of God and also to demonstrate and it's for the glory of God.

[3 : 40] And we've always got to remember that that's a big picture. We only see where we're at and we're very caught up in our own lives. But we've got to remember that God is a big picture.

And God is working everything for his own glory. Everything. And all these things that have happened in your life that sometimes just don't make sense. It actually makes sense to God.

And that is where trust comes in and faith comes in. Because only faith can believe that God knows exactly what he's doing. Where we're able to hand over to the Lord in the face of heartache, in the face of pain, in the face of confusion.

And it's very often, even when people might not have the outcome that happened with this blind man and happened with Lazarus, that as people journey through their life crushed and broken, and yet their lives are demonstrating the grace of God in an amazing way.

You and I know people whose lives are demonstrating God's grace. They've had a tough providence. Life's been hard.

[4 : 55] Life's been painful. And yet, you look at them and you say, I don't know how they're coping. I don't know how they're dealing with that. And yet, God is taking glory out of these things.

Because even although we can't understand, and so often we feel that life is unfair, but one day, one day we will see it all differently.

And that's where we need the faith to trust and to believe that God is in control, that he's in charge of everything. And that's what was true of this particular situation with regard to this man.

Now, in verse 4, Jesus says that he must work the works of him that sent him. You see, Jesus was on a mission and he had a particular timetable. And time was short for Jesus.

Because he had only three years of public ministry. And so he achieved an incredible amount within these three years. So he knew that time was short.

[6 : 02] And it's in fact, for ourselves, time is short. And I think we've always got to... There's a version of scripture which says that we must redeem the time. And we're going to make use of the time because the time we have is limited.

It's short. It's soon going to be over. And I remember as a younger man, and people would say, you know, see, when you get older, you won't believe the speed of time.

And I used to say, well, it's going quite fast where I am right now. But it's true when you push on the years. You're trying to put the brakes on and saying, oh, slow, slow, slow down a wee bit.

Because time is racing. And you feel you're doing so little and achieving so little. And you're saying, Lord, what have I done? And so that's why we want to make the most of the time that God has given us.

Because it's soon going to be over. We've only got a wee while. And then it's over. We don't know when it's going to be over. But we've only got a wee while. And that's why we're told to redeem the time and make the best use of what we have.

[7 : 12] And we've got to remember that whatever we do by faith, whatever works that we do for the Lord, that these works will follow us.

And I think I've often said, and I think we all know there will be a lot of shocks come the day of judgment. Because everything that's done of faith, that bears its fruit.

And, you know, even when you come to church, you came to church tonight. And if you came by faith, and you're saying, you know, I love the Lord. I love coming to worship the Lord.

Your coming here was a coming by faith. It was a witness to this community. By coming to church, you're telling people, there is a God and I'm going to worship him.

And I love to worship him. And often these kind of things we maybe don't take to heart. But the Lord takes note of every single thing that we do by faith.

[8 : 15] And so it's important that we use the time given to us. And then Jesus says in verse 5, As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

And again he had said in the previous chapter, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

Now in the Bible, light and darkness are spoken of in different ways. Sometimes they're spoken of in a spiritual or a moral sense. Other times in an intellectual sense.

For instance, in a moral or spiritual sense, Light is spoken of for purity and righteousness and godliness.

And darkness would be highlighting all that is evil and unrighteous and godless. And in an intellectual sense, light will speak of truth.

[9 : 16] And darkness will speak of error. And it's very clear that from the Bible, That darkness is our default position.

That's how we are when we came into this world. We were conceived in sin. We were born in sin. Sin is what envelops our life. We are by nature in darkness.

Unless of course the Lord's light has come in. As happened in the likes of John the Baptist and so on. But by nature, we are in darkness. And this is one of the wonderful things, of course, that the Lord Jesus Christ has done.

He has come to bring light. To bring light into your life. And to bring light into the world. And there is nobody else in all the world that can do that.

Jesus is altogether unique. And one of the things that we are very conscious of. Before we were converted.

[10 : 20] We were in the dark. And one of the ways that you can look back and realize you are in the dark. Is that very often church didn't make sense.

You would hear things and you would say, I know that. But you didn't really. You knew about Jesus, but not really. You knew about God, but not really.

And you know, I find it quite extraordinary how people will pontificate and say this, that about God. Who don't have the remotest clue about Him. Any person who is telling you who God is apart from the Word of God.

The only way we can really know God is through His Word. And if people are trying to tell you who God is apart from His Word, they don't know. God has revealed Himself to us through His Word. Yes, the heavens reveal the glory of God. And the creation reveals His eternity and His power and His Godhead. But the self-revelation that God has given to Himself is through His Word.

[11 : 30] So any person who is talking to you about who God is and this and that. And is doing so apart from the Word of God or contrary to the Word of God. Hasn't a clue what they are talking about.

They are talking about, they are making up, it is a figment of their own imagination. And there are loads of people around who are doing just that very thing. We are in the dark without the light of Jesus.

And it is only Jesus that can make sense of anything for us in this world. And it is only by Jesus that we can make our way to God. And that is what Jesus has done.

He has come to bring light into the dark. The dark that is in our hearts. That is what Paul tells us in Corinthians. For God who said, let light shine out of darkness.

And let it shine into your hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. You know, when light comes into your life, understanding comes with it.

[12 : 39] That is what light does, doesn't it? Light helps you to see and to understand. It is amazing when somebody explains something.

I remember I was hopeless at maths in school. But we had one very good maths teacher. And unless I had that maths teacher, I was sunk. And you could be struggling for a whole year in maths getting nowhere.

Then this particular teacher, when you got that teacher, you'd say, ah, it is actually quite straightforward. And sometimes people have special gifts where they can open things up in order that you will see.

Well, that's what the Holy Spirit does for us. He comes and he brings the truth and enables us to see. You know, by and large, we're groping about in darkness out with Christ.

If you come home late at night and the house is locked and you've got the key, but there's no light anywhere at all. And you're going to put the key in the door. You know, sometimes it's incredible and you're fumbling about.

[13 : 43] You say, this is ridiculous. This is my key. This is my house door. And I should, how on earth. And then you might actually have to go and, if you have your phone, there might be a wee torch.

And you'd have to use that. There we go. Soon as a little bit of light goes on, then we begin to see where we're going. We begin to understand a wee bit about what we're doing.

And that's how it is in life. Because, you know this, everybody is walking down a road. And the Bible tells us there are two roads. There's a broad road and a narrow road.

And you know what? But if the light doesn't come, we won't see the narrow road. We're all on the broad road. That's how we're walking naturally. Walking down this great, big, broad road.

But there's this little narrow road. And it's through the gate, because Jesus is the door, he's the gate, that enters into this narrow road. And unless the light will shine in, then we can't see.

[14 : 47] We will continue just walking on. Walking on happily and merrily and not caring. Not realizing that actually this road leads to perdition. The narrow road.

That's the road that leads to light and life. Everlasting life. And so we need Jesus to shine the light in and upon us.

To show us the way to go. And tonight, if you have to say to yourself, you know, I really, I'm not, I don't think I'm a Christian.

You might be saying that. Or you're saying, you know, I think I'm still on that big, broad road. You ask the Lord, Lord, shine that light on. Shine the light. You are the light of the world.

You came into this world to bring light. I can't produce the light myself. Nobody else can. But you are the light. Shine that light in upon my path. Show me the way to go.

[15 : 44] And if you really mean that, then the Lord will do exactly that for you. And he'll say, this is the way. Walk ye in it. And, you know, it's funny.

Often you'll hear Christians as they get older say, You know something? I'm actually getting worse. Have you heard Christians say that? Maybe you're a young Christian. Or maybe you're not a Christian at all.

But sometimes you might hear old Christians say, You know this? As the years have gone on, I'm just getting worse and worse. And you might say to yourself, Ah, that's false piety.

What are they talking about? That's rubbish. No, it's not. What's happening? Very simply. That the light, Jesus, the light of the world, Is revealing more and more of himself.

And more and more of yourself. By his light. Because the light works both ways. The light is revealing more of yourself. And as time goes on, You see more and more of the depravity of your heart.

[16 : 47] And sometimes you step back and you say, You know this? I never knew that was in my heart. You become conscious of sins that you weren't even aware were there at all.

And you realize that maybe sins that are at the surface Are as a result of much deeper rooted problems within your life. How have you discovered that?

By the light. It's not your own discovery. Because your heart by nature is dark. It is by the Lord's light shining into your heart. And you're seeing more and more.

But the beauty of it is that side by side with that, That light also produces greater knowledge. So that your knowledge of Jesus is also growing.

Your knowledge of who the Lord is. All these things are developing and growing. And it's a wonderful way just how the Lord helps us to discover.

[17 : 45] I remember, I mentioned this before, I remember years ago, It's a one particular, I fished quite often, But I remember one particular night, Three of us, I'm sure it was about 40 years ago, Three of us were out fishing.

It was overnight. But we were coming back very, very early. And we kind of started to make our way back At the very, very first flickers of dawn.

And we were trudging over the moor. And it wasn't easy because You weren't seeing properly where you were going. But also, The whole landscape all around was just a world of shadows. Just shadows. You couldn't really see much. But you know, bit by bit, Just gradually, Everything was beginning to take shape.

And you were beginning to see, There's a river flowing there. And there's, And you, Look at all that big stone. There's a wee, There's a hill, A wee hillock there and all that. Beforehand, It was just shadows.

[18 : 47] But very gradually, It began to open up, And open up, And open up. Until, Soon, Everything was crystal clear. And you know, Sometimes that's the way the Lord works in people's lives.

Like this blind man, He couldn't tell how he had come to see. He told what, About Jesus. But he said, Listen, All I can tell you is this, I was blind, And now I see.

That's where I was. This is how I am. What exactly happened, I can't tell you, But this is what happened. And that might be true for many of you here. You remember a day, Where you couldn't see.

And then you began to see, Kind of like the shadows and things, You're beginning to see little shapes and shadows. Spiritually I'm speaking. And gradually, Things are beginning to take shape. And you're beginning to understand. And the gospel is beginning to make sense. And you're beginning to see, Something of where Jesus is. And you're beginning to understand, Something of God's love.

[19 : 53] And you can't get over, How God is gracious to you. And all these kind of things, Begin to open up in your mind, Little by little. Well this is for the, This is Jesus, As a light of the world.

This is what he does. And he brings this, Knowledge of himself, Little by little. But this, This is, Here we have this, Conflicting darkness and light.

And, I think sometimes we forget, That there are many, Many people tonight, Who want to be in the darkness. That's why they have chosen, Not to come to church.

Some people haven't come to church, Who want to come to church. There are many people, Who have a, Who are maybe, They're kind of apathetic about church. They have no strong feelings, One way or another.

But there are a lot of other people, Who wouldn't dare darken the door. They have no, Not only that desire, They just do not want, To come near. They're not interested, In the gospel, In any shape or form.

[20 : 56] Well they're, According to the Bible, They're in darkness. That is the real darkness. But everybody outside Christ, Is in darkness. Darkness. And, When you're in the dark, You can't see, You can't work properly.

You can't do, Properly. And that is true spiritually, Because people who are outside, The kingdom, Who are in darkness, Cannot, Serve the Lord.

Which is what we're here for. An extreme picture of that, Of the darkness and light, Is in Egypt, During the plagues. Remember, One of the plagues, Was darkness.

And that darkness, Was acute darkness, Not just the, The darkness, That we will get at night. And it was a darkness, That kind of, Brought everybody to a halt.

But the amazing thing, Was that in the land of Goshen, The part of Egypt, Where God's people were, The light still shone. So here you have a, Right in Egypt, Amongst all the Egyptians, And they couldn't feel, Or find their way about.

[21 : 59] But the Israelites, Can move about fine. Because they're in the light. And that's, That's an extreme picture. But you know, It's a solemn picture, Of how things are going to go.

Because Jesus says, That there are those, Who love the darkness, Rather than the light. Because their deeds are evil. And what's the end result? Well you and I know, There's only two destinies. One is, Into eternal light, With Jesus, Who is a light of the world. The other is, As Jesus terms it, Outer darkness.

Isn't that a solemn thought? Darkness, There's darkness in this world. But hell, Is outer darkness. Darkness. And that is a place, Where, All the, The rebellion, And all the depravity, And all the darkness, That is within the human heart.

It's allowed, Complete, Free reign. That's what happens in hell. Because, In this world, There is what we term, God's common grace.

[23 : 11] And God is, God is keeping our lid, On so many situations, And so many things. And even in people, Who are corrupt, And people who are evil, There are still, Aspects of good, Which is coming from God alone.

But in hell, That's gone. All the restraints, Are removed. And all the darkness, That was there, Explodes as it were out. And it's just living, In the realms, Of, Other rebellion, Against God.

And, Where all the depravity, That is within the human heart, Is given free reign. And that's an awful, An awful, Thing to think of. But that, That is outer darkness.

But that's Jesus's, I have come to defeat that. I have come to give you hope. I've come to bring life, And light into your experience. I am, The light of the world.

And so this is, This is a great message, That Jesus gives. We also know that, One of the things that light does, Is it melts.

[24 : 22] You know sometimes, In the winter, You come out in the morning, And it's absolutely frozen, The car is frozen, Everything is frozen, You're scraping away. But as, The sun comes out, And the light begins to shine, Gradually everything, Begins to melt.

And that's what Jesus does, To our hard hearts. Maybe you're here tonight, And you've got a hard heart. Maybe this means nothing to you. Maybe the gospel, Has never really, There's been maybe times, Now and again, You've been touched by it.

But, You know there's a hardness there, And, You're saying, You're poor. And maybe people around, And your own family, Are saying, Oh what a hard heart. But the Lord alone, Can melt that heart.

There's many a person, In here tonight, And you have to say to yourself, There wasn't a hard heart. I have to say it. Hard heart. But the Lord, Melted that heart. Soften that heart.

So that, You want, The Lord Jesus, As your own. But you'll notice, And, Just with coming, Concluding very shortly.

[25 : 26] It's important, To notice that Jesus says, I, Am the light of the world. I am, The light of the world. In other words, I am not one of many lights, In the world.

I'm the only light, In the world. And that's important, For us to emphasize, As we live in this day, Of inclusiveness. Because people will say, You don't have the right, To say that.

How can you say, That Jesus alone, Is the light of the world? Because Jesus says it. And if any person, Wants to pick an argument, With that, Then, Feel free.

But before you do, The first thing you have to do, Is to take out your Bible, And to study, The life of Jesus, The whole way through. That includes, All the prophecies, About Jesus.

And that includes, Looking in depth, At his life, And his teaching. And then come to this conclusion, Is he, Who he says he is?

[26 : 29] As C.S. Lewis said, There's only three possibilities, With regard to Jesus. He's either mad, Bad, Or who he says he is. That only a person, Who would make, The claims that Jesus did, Only a person, If it wasn't through, It was somebody who was really bad, Or somebody who was mad.

And then when you measure up, Everything about Jesus, He says, Why? He has to be, Who he says he is. And if he is, Who he says he is, And we know he is, Who he says he is, Then there's nothing else, We can do, But to fall down before him, And to worship him, And to acknowledge him, As the only light, In the world.

And he is the light, Of the world, In our day, Just as he was the light, In the world, Way back. He was the light, In the world, Of the previous generation, And the previous generation, And the previous.

And how thankful, That the Lord, Is saying tonight, I am, The light of the world. Not saying, I was the light of the world. Imagine if that's what the verse said, I was, The light of the world.

No, Still tonight, And still tonight, He is giving this opportunity, In order that we may come, To embrace Jesus. One last thing we will say, With regard to light, Light, Light, Light, Light, Light, Light, Light, Light, Helps us, With regard to fear.

[27 : 54] Remember, As a, As a kid, When you'd be in bed, And it was dark, And you'd hear these noises, It's amazing, The imagination, That, That, That, That kids have, I've often spoken about, I've spoken to the, To the, To the young, Used to be cows, Bulls, There was a bull nearby, And of course, That would roar sometimes, I had a, It was a lion, And then I would think, It was climbing up the road pipe, Into the bedroom, And you'd, Your little mind, You had the craziest ideas, Fears, But these fears, Are right throughout this world tonight, There are so many people, Filled with all kind of fears, Fears about the future, Fears about the situations, And all the anxieties of life, Where Jesus says, I'm the light of the world, Because, If you're in darkness, You're bound to have fears, The light, Will help, Dispel these fears,

That's what we sang, In Psalm 27, The Lord's my light, And saving health, Who shall make me afraid, When the Lord, Is your light, And saving health, Then that's it, So you make sure tonight, That this Jesus, Is a light, In your life, Let us pray, Lord we pray, To bless us, With every spiritual blessing, We give thanks Lord, That you are, The light of the world, That you have been, Throughout the generations, And that you are, Tonight as well, And we pray, That if there are any, In here tonight, Who are still in darkness, Please Lord, May your light, Come on into their lives, May you open, Their eyes to see, May you open, Their ears to hear, May you soften, The hardness of their heart, And may they be persuaded, That you are Jesus Christ, The great saviour of sinners, And the great saviour, Who is going to save them, Oh Lord, Bless them, We pray, Bless all of us, We pray, We all need you, And take us to our home, Safely do us good, And cleanse us from our sin, In Jesus name, Amen, We are going to conclude, Singing from Psalm, 146, Psalm 146, And this is from, The Scottish Psalter, The tune is St. Stephen, Psalm, And it is on page, 446, 146, On page, 446, And we sing, Verses 7 to the end, Who righteous judgment, Executes for those, Oppressed that be, Who to the hungry, Giveth food, God sets the prisoners free, The Lord doth give the blind, Their sight, The bowed down doth raise, The Lord doth dearly love, All those that walk, In upright ways, The stranger shield, The widow stay, The orphan's help is he, But yet by him, The wicked's way, Turned upside down, Shall be, So on, These four verses, To the tune, St. Stephen, Psalm, 146, Verse 7, The righteous judgment, Execute, For those, O press of me, O to the hungry, Give us food, What sets the prisoners free, The Lord doth give the blind, Their sight,

The bowed down doth raise, The Lord doth dearly love, The love of those, That walk in upright ways, The stranger shield, The widow stay, The marvelous help is he, But yet by him, The wicked's way, Turned upside down, Shall he, The Lord shall reign forevermore, Thy God, O Zion he, [33 : 00] Praise to all generations, Praise to the Lord, Give ye, Now may the grace, Mercy, And peace of God, The Father, Son, And Holy Spirit, Rest and abide upon each one of you, Now and forevermore, Amen.

Amen. Thank you.