

**Joke:** A guy goes to jail. First night after lights out he hears someone yell out, "49!", then the entire cell block bursts out laughing.

A few moments later, someone else yells out, "88!", and everyone laughs again.

The new inmate turns to his cellmate and asks, "What's with the numbers? Why is everyone laughing?"

His inmate replies, "Well, we've all been here so long we've heard every joke. Instead of telling the entire thing and wasting time, we gave each joke a number, so we can just yell out the joke number and everyone gets a laugh."

The new inmate says, "Huh... I guess that makes sense," and after thinking a moment, asks, "Can I try?"

His cellmate says, "Yeah, sure, go ahead. Just yell out a number, everyone will know which joke you're telling."

So the guy yells out into the darkness, "22!", but nobody laughs. Saddened and confused he waits a moment, then yells out, "70!" Again, nothing. He turns back to his cellmate and asks, "Why is nobody laughing?"

His cellmate responds, "Hey man, some people know how to tell a joke, and some don't."

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## In His Words - Week 2: I Am The Light Of The World

We live in a world that is shrouded in darkness. And all too often the darkness causes us to stumble around, and in our stumbling around we sometimes make mistakes and miss-steps in this thing called life. And in order to be able to see things clearly, we need to have light that exposes all of the dangers and temptations around us. In Jesus' own words we find that he is the only true source of light that leads us and guides us.

Last week we started a new series called In His Own Words. In this series we're looking into one of the I AM statements that Jesus makes in the gospel of John. Those I AM statements Jesus uses helps us to better understand His true nature.

Today we will look in John 8 verse 12 where Jesus says. . .

John 8:12 (NIV): When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

It doesn't take long if you've ever tried to navigate a dark room at night, that light is an amazing help to get us to where we want to go.

I couldn't imagine driving my car down the highway at 11 at night without turning on the head. . .lights.

They are there to help you see the road in front of you. And so that others can see you. (Talk about that point)

And the good news is Jesus, isn't just a flicker in a dark room. He is more than the headlights on your car, or a lamp in living room. He is the light of the world! A beacon that illuminates every corner of our lives. His light not only leads us and shows us how we can have eternal life, but His light also guides us, empowers us, and shows us the way to live, how to act, and how to respond to every situation you find yourself in.

C.S. Lewis once said, "I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else."

Jesus' light not only shines on us, but it also should shine through us, it illuminates our path so we know how to live as God has called us to live.

The Light of Jesus is not just a metaphorical concept; it is a practical, life-altering reality that has the power to guide us through this maze we call life.

When we think about light, we often think about its ability to illuminate our surroundings, helping us see our path more clearly.

And Jesus, as the Light of the world, illuminates our spiritual path, guiding us through the complexities of life and every challenge that you and I may face.

Psalm 119:105 (NIV): Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.

The Passion Translation says it like this. . .

Psalm 119:105 (TPT): Truth's shining light guides me in my choices and decisions; the revelation of your word makes my pathway clear.

Jesus' light guides us by revealing the truth. In a world that doesn't seem to have an absolute truth, but instead is often filled with deception, confusion, and falsehood, His light penetrates the darkness, revealing the truth that sets us free. And hear this church truth always sets you free.

The truth of the cross and Resurrection sets us free from sin. Just learning to tell the truth sets us free from guilt.

And here's the thing that's what the Holy Spirit does He doesn't just free you, He changes your want to.

If you have gotten comfortable in your bitterness He can give you peace in your soul so that you can live free from the pain.

It is through His light that we can discern right from wrong, truth from lies, and reality from illusion.

His light shows us the way to live. His life and teachings serve as a model for us to follow. He taught us to love our neighbors, to forgive those who wrong us, to seek justice, show mercy, and to walk humbly with our God.

And when we follow His example, it helps us navigate the complexities of life with wisdom and grace. His light serves as a compass, pointing us in the right direction, helping us make decisions that honor God and benefit others.

This truth is why the author of Hebrews wrote this, “let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.”

We’ve got to keep our eyes on Jesus. He’s the guide, the light, and the lamp to our path. His light illuminates our divine purpose and calling in His Kingdom. And church make no mistake you have a divine purpose and calling in His Kingdom.

Each one of us has been created for a purpose and on purpose. You and I may have been a surprise to mom and dad, but you were no surprise to God, you have a divine assignment. Discovering that purpose can often be challenging I know. . .but scripture tells us. . .

Proverbs 25:2 (NIV): It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a matter is the glory of kings.

Let me pause here just a moment and say this, I’ve said this before but it bears repeating. God doesn’t hide things from us, He hides things for us. And if we will persistently run after Him, search His word, live for the one that called us out of darkness into His marvelous light, you find what He has for you.

And It is through His light that we can discover and fulfill our God-given purpose. His light illuminates our path, revealing the steps we need to take to fulfill our calling and live as disciples of Christ.

The light of Christ provides us comfort and hope in times of darkness. Life is filled with challenges and trials that can often cause us to lose hope. But. . .Jesus' light shines brightest in the darkest of times. His light expels the darkness, and because of that we are able to find comfort, hope, and reassurance in whatever situation you find yourself in. His light reminds us that no matter how dark our circumstances may seem, there is always hope, there is always a way out, He is lighting the path before you so that can find your way.

The Light of Jesus is a tangible reality that we can experience in our daily lives. It is a light that guides us, a light that illuminates our path, a light that reveals the truth, a light that shows us the way to live, a light that leads us to our divine purpose, and a light that provides us with comfort and hope in times of darkness.

As the second half of Psalm 30 verse 5 tells us. . .

Psalm 30:5 - “. . .weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.”

The Light of Christ is powerful, it's transforming. This light is not merely a physical illumination, but a spiritual one that transforms lives and hearts.

Colossians 1:13–14 (NLT): For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, 14 who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins.

Just as a lighthouse guides ships safely to shore, Jesus' light guides us through the tumultuous seas of life. It illuminates our path, helping us navigate through the trials, tribulations, and all the uncertainties.

It provides clarity where there is confusion, direction where there is aimlessness, and hope where there is despair. It is a beacon that constantly points us towards God's will and purpose for our lives.

Jesus' light has the ability to change us from the inside out. When we allow Jesus' light to shine on our lives, it exposes our sins, our weaknesses, and our shortcomings. But it doesn't leave us in a state of condemnation. Instead, it leads us to repentance, forgiveness, and we as new creation go through a transformation.

It turns our hearts of stone into hearts of flesh, and our lives of self-centeredness into lives of Christ-centeredness.

Romans 8:1 (NIV): Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, (talk about condemnation vs conviction).

Maybe some of you have heard that God is mad at you because you can't seem to get your act together. . .that's simply not true.

Watch this. . .

Romans 2:4 (NIV): Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

When you taste and see that He is good, it begins to transform you into what you were created for. You long to please Him, revere Him, glorify Him, worship Him.

Jesus said that whoever follows Him will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life. This light brings life in its fullest sense - a life of joy, peace, purpose, and eternal significance. It is a light that conquers death and promises eternal life.

Theologian John Stott, once said, "The Christ of the Bible is not a Christ of our own making. He is not a Christ who will always conform to our expectations. But He is a Christ who, in the end, will satisfy our deepest needs and fulfill our deepest desires."

That quote encapsulates the power of Jesus' light. It may not always align with our worldly expectations, as a matter of fact he seldom does. His ways are not our ways. After all Father Knows Best. But His light will always satisfy our deepest spiritual needs and desires. It is a light that guides, transforms, and gives life. It is a light that is powerful beyond measure. It is a light that leads us home, back to Him, and into eternal life.

He has promised those who follow him eternal life. It's not that we deserve it, or can earn it. It's called grace. And that promise is not just about life after death it's also about our life here on earth. When Jesus says, "Whoever follows me? . . . will have the light of



life," He is offering us a life illuminated by His presence, a life filled with His love, grace, and truth. Today, tomorrow, next week, every day while we are here.

It's a life that begins when we accept Jesus as our Savior but it doesn't stop there. It's a life marked by a deep, personal relationship with God, a life where we experience His love, grace, mercy, and peace in a way that is beyond human comprehension.

He gives us joy unspeakable, a peace that passes understanding, and a life that is abundant.

We are not just passive recipients of God's love, but we are called to actively participate in His divine plan. We are called to be the light in the world, reflecting Jesus' love and grace to those around us. We are called to live a life of purpose, a life that is in line with God's will and His divine plan.

This promise of eternal life is not just about the destination, but about the journey. It's about living a life now that is guided by Jesus' light, a life that is marked by His love, a life that is filled with His grace. It's about living a life that is not just about us, but about Him. It's about living a life that is not just about what we can get, but about what we can give. It's about living a life that is not just about our will, but rather all about His will.

In His own words, Jesus said. . .

Matthew 16:25 (NIV): For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.

That means that His dreams become our dreams, His thoughts our thoughts! His ways our ways.

Does that mean you can't go and take a vacation because God never takes a break. Of course not just take Jesus with you. Shine His light wherever you go so others can see Him in you.

It's worth noting that in Jesus' own words He states, "I AM the light of the world." Last week we heard Him say, "I AM the bread of life."

He's not only the provision and sustenance of life, He's the path through it. He's the trail, the road, the Way.

And so for those of us in the room today, and those watching online who've been wandering and stumbling in the darkness. . .convinced that there's more. . .convinced that there's a better way. Let me tell you there is and Jesus is the way. He is the light.

But let me also remind you of some other words from Jesus. . .he said,

Matthew 5:14–16 (NIV): 14 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

We are to reflect the light of Christ to others. We are windows through which the light shines. So remember where ever you go this week shine.