

CHRIST IS THE LIGHT

"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."
John 8:12.

Christ Jesus here employs a striking and impressive metaphor. Light is so essential to our work, so closely associated with our knowledge, and so necessary to our happiness, that in a very real sense it is the indispensable preliminary to everything else. Figuratively, darkness has become associated with ignorance, sorrow and sin. Light is associated with knowledge, truth and happiness. Throughout the scriptures light is employed to symbolize the highest blessings, not only in the natural but also in the spiritual world. "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all." Christ Jesus describes Himself as "the light of the world."

From the human standpoint this is an amazing statement. These words were spoken by Him Who came from a village in a despised country, among a conquered people. In all probability these words were spoken in the temple in Jerusalem in the early morning when the Saviour was surrounded by a crowd of people. The shadows of the night had fled away, but even as the Saviour looked at the new-born day and its beauties, He was thinking of the darkness of sin, and of His own glorious mission, which was that of dispelling the darkness. The symbol is a beautiful one, for a ray of light is the cleanest and purest thing we know.

I want you to contemplate the enormity of Christ's claim. We well know that everything in this world depends upon light. Darkness and death go hand in hand. Often people refer to death as a leap in the dark. But when Jesus Christ said, "I am the light of the world," He was making everything and everybody dependent upon Himself. Whether or not people comprehend this and acknowledge it, this is true.

Our text implies that the world is in darkness. It also tells us that Christ is its light. He is the source of all light. He is not a reflector, but He is the spring and source of light, and His purpose is to flood our lives.

The world of humanity is in the darkness of ignorance, and the Lord Jesus Christ brings to it heavenly and spiritual knowledge. Christ is the true light, instructing men who are very ignorant of God, of His designs of mercy, of the prospects of the future, and of everything that is most important for man as a spiritual being to be thoroughly acquainted with.

The world of humanity is in the darkness of sin, and the Lord Jesus brings to it the light of forgiveness and holiness.

The world of humanity lay in the darkness of death, and the Lord Jesus brought to it the light of life.

The world of humanity is in darkness and danger, and the Lord Jesus brings to it the light of safety.

Light is the symbol of all that is desirable. Here we find cheerfulness. The darkness has gone, the day-star has appeared, and the sun has arisen with healing in his beams. Light is the symbol also of holiness, clear as the sun, and the believer is to be clothed with holiness as with a garment. Light is the symbol of health, while darkness is the symbol of disease. Light is also a symbol of wisdom and of power.

"I am the light": and what multitude of things He illumined! He threw light upon the character of God, upon the nature of man, upon the beauty of holiness, and upon the abominableness of sin. He revealed the poverty of the far country, and with a clear, winning light He showed the way back home. Christ is the light and we need Him.

We need the light in the unknown day of life. We are in need of three great primary things: to see the right way, to desire to walk in that way, and to have the power to walk in that way. The Light of Life will satisfy all these needs and equip us throughout our pilgrimage.

"I am the light," not only to make lucid but to make fervid, not only to make fervid but to make operative. The light illumines; the light kindles; the light empowers. The Lord brings to us light that we may know, warmth that we may feel, and power that we may do. He satisfies the mind, He inflames the desire, and He communicates energy to the will. In light and warmth and power the Lord will be to us all that we need in the day of life.

No matter how deep the darkness of sin, Christ can drive it away. The fogs of doubt He can disperse, and through the mists of sorrow, He can cause His light to shine. His light is always available. It is light sufficient; it is light unextinguishable. He proclaims Himself to be "The Light of the World." He is not for a few only, but for all mankind. Like the sun He shines for the benefit of all, though all may not value or use His light.

As the light of the world Christ came to fulfill a great mission. He came to reveal God to men. Through sin, God had been hidden from mankind. So God commanded light to shine out of the darkness, and He placed the light and knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. Christ also came to reveal man as he is, namely, a sinner before God. Christ also came to reveal the way to God and to heaven. He revealed the way by which sinners might get rid of their sins and be saved from the power thereof. When He is admitted to the human heart, the darkness is dispersed forever.

We are enlightened by opening our eyes to the light. In the morning we raise our blinds, and let in the blessed sunbeams, whereby our homes are brightened and our hearts are gladdened. And in the same way we are to become illuminated by the rays of the Sun of Righteousness. We must open our eyes and behold His glory; we must open our intellects to receive His instructions; we must open our hearts to let Him into our affections; we must open our lives to let Him rule over our actions.

"I heard the voice of Jesus say: --
'I am this dark world's light.
Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise,
And all thy days be bright.'
I looked to Jesus and I found
In Him my star, my sun;
And in that Light of Life I'll walk
Till travelling days are done."