

Session 3 – I AM the Light of the World

John 8:12–30

Jesus' words invite us to consider a deeper question:

What does it mean to walk in the light instead of the darkness?



How to Use This Study

This series is designed to be experienced in two stages.

- **Personal Study During the Week**

Each participant reads the Scripture and works through the Study Guide before the group meeting.

- **Group Discussion Together**

When the group gathers, the Facilitator and Student Guides help guide conversation, reflection, and prayer based on the material everyone has already explored.

- This format allows the group to move beyond surface discussion and engage the Bible more deeply together.



Where We Are in John's Gospel

John's Gospel is written with a clear purpose:

To reveal who Jesus truly is.

**Unlike the other gospels, John organizes much of his story around:
Miraculous signs and conversations that reveal spiritual truth, and powerful declarations
about Jesus' identity.**

These declarations are known as the “I AM” statements.

Each one reveals something essential about who Jesus is and why He came.

In this session we encounter one of the most powerful of them all:

“I am the Light of the World.”
(John 8:12)



Light and Darkness in Scripture

The Bible frequently uses the imagery of light and darkness to describe spiritual reality.

Darkness Represents	Light Represents
Confusion	Truth
Deception	Clarity
Sin	Life
Separation from God	God's Presence

From the very beginning of Scripture, light symbolizes the work of God.

Genesis begins with the words:

“Let there be light.”

Light reveals what darkness hides.



The Setting: The Feast of Tabernacles

Jesus makes this declaration during the **Feast of Tabernacles**.

This was one of Israel's most joyful and symbolic annual celebrations.

The festival remembered how God sustained Israel during their journey through the wilderness celebrating:

- God's provision
- God's protection
- God's presence among His people

One part of the celebration involved a powerful visual symbol.



The Temple Lamps

During the Feast of Tabernacles, massive lampstands were lit in the Temple courts. These lights illuminated the city of Jerusalem throughout the night.

They reminded the people of something important.

During the wilderness journey, God guided Israel through a **pillar of fire by night**.

That fire symbolized:

- God's presence
- God's leadership
- God's protection

For generations, Israel remembered that light.



Jesus' Declaration

It is in this setting that Jesus makes a remarkable statement:

¹² *Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, **"I am the Light of the World."** If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.*

John 8:12

This was far more than poetic language.

Jesus was claiming to be the **true source of the light that Israel had celebrated for centuries.**

What the pillar of fire represented in the wilderness,
Jesus now claims to fulfill in Himself.



What Does Light Do?

Light performs several important functions.

Light reveals **what is hidden.**

Light **exposes what darkness conceals.**

Light **shows the path forward.**

Light **makes life possible.**

- Without light, people stumble.
- Without light, people lose direction.
- Jesus is claiming to bring **spiritual illumination to the entire world.**



Walking in Darkness

Jesus describes humanity as walking in darkness.

Darkness is not simply ignorance. It is a condition of the human heart.

People can be highly educated and still be spiritually blind.

Spiritual darkness appears as:

Moral confusion

Misplaced priorities

Distorted understanding of God

Inability to recognize and/or accept truth

Without light, people cannot see clearly.



The Promise of Jesus

Jesus makes a promise connected to His declaration.

¹² Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, ***"I am the Light of the World. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life."***

John 8:12

Notice the emphasis on following.

Jesus is not simply offering information.

He is inviting people into a relationship of trust and guidance.

Following Him leads people out of darkness.



The Light of Life

Jesus continues with a remarkable promise.

Those who follow Him will have **“the light that leads to life.”**

This phrase connects two themes central to John’s Gospel:

Light reveals truth.

Life flows from that truth.

When people encounter Jesus, they discover:

Clarity

Purpose

Spiritual Renewal

Restored Relationship With God



The Promise of Jesus

The Pharisees immediately challenge Jesus.

¹³ The Pharisees replied, “You are making those claims about yourself! Such testimony is not valid.”

John 8:13

According to Jewish law, a claim required multiple witnesses.

They question whether Jesus has the authority to make such a declaration.

**But the real issue is not evidence.
The issue is spiritual blindness.**



The Problem of Spiritual Blindness

Throughout the Gospel of John, people witness Jesus' miracles yet still reject Him. Why?

Because spiritual blindness is not simply about lack of information.

It is about resistance to truth.

Light exposes what darkness hides.

For some people, that exposure is uncomfortable.

Light always forces a response.



Why People Resist the Light

Jesus explains that some people reject the light because they prefer darkness.

Darkness allows people to hide.

Darkness allows people to avoid change.

**But when light shines, reality becomes visible.
Truth becomes unavoidable.**

The presence of Jesus confronts every person with a decision.



Jesus' Authority

¹⁴ Jesus told them, *“These claims are valid even though I make them about myself. For I know where I came from and where I am going, but you don’t know this about me.”*

John 8:14

He says His testimony is valid because:

He knows where He came from
He knows where He is going

**His identity is rooted in His relationship with God.
The religious leaders judge according to human standards.**

But Jesus speaks with divine authority.



Knowing God

Jesus then addresses the deeper problem.

¹⁷ Your own law says that if two people agree about something, their witness is accepted as fact ¹⁸ I am one witness, and my Father who sent me is the other.” ¹⁹ “Where is your father?” they asked. Jesus answered, “Since you don’t know who I am, you don’t know who my Father is. If you knew me, you would also know my Father.”

John 8:17-19

He tells the leaders that if they truly knew God, they would recognize Him.

They believed they knew God because they knew the Scriptures.

**But knowing about God is not the same as knowing God personally.
Their inability to recognize Jesus revealed a deeper spiritual problem.**



The Invitation of the Light

Jesus' declaration is not merely a theological statement.

It is an invitation.

Light invites people to step out of darkness.
It calls people to leave confusion behind.

It offers a new way of seeing and living.

But accepting that invitation requires humility.

People must choose whether they will follow the light.



Following the Light

Following Jesus means allowing His truth to guide our lives.

It means trusting His direction even when the path is unclear.

It means allowing His light to reveal areas of our lives that need transformation.

The light of Jesus does not simply inform us.

It changes us!



The Central Claim

**Jesus is not simply offering spiritual insight.
He is claiming to be the source of light itself.**

**Truth is not merely an idea.
*Truth is found in a person.***

**To encounter Jesus is to encounter the light of God.
The Light of the World has come.**



Reflection Questions

1. Why do you think Jesus chose the image of light to describe His mission in the world?

What does light accomplish that darkness cannot?

2. Where do you see spiritual darkness in the world today?

How does confusion about truth affect the way people live?

3. Why do you think people sometimes resist the light even when it becomes clear?

What fears or obstacles might keep someone from embracing truth?

4. What might it look like in your everyday life to follow Jesus as the Light of the World?

Where might His light need to illuminate your own path right now?



Key Takeaway

Humanity often searches for clarity, direction, and truth.

But Jesus does not simply offer guidance.

He makes a far greater claim:

He is the Light of the World.

Just as light reveals the path in darkness,
Jesus reveals the truth about God, about ourselves, and about the way to life.

Those who follow Him no longer walk in confusion or spiritual darkness.

They walk in **the light of life**.

The Light of the World has come.

The question is not whether the light is shining.

The question is whether we will choose to walk in it.

