

John 8:12-30

12 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."

12 The five candelabra in the temple court were being put out on the eighth morning of the Feast of Tabernacles. They were so tall and huge they were said to light the courtyards of Jerusalem. The men would dance around them with torches. The middle one was called the Great Light from Isaiah 9:2. We can only guess about the others. Jesus is that light that came to light up those in darkness in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali. That prophecy from Isaiah predicted the main areas of Jesus ministry 700 years in advance and even named the main road, Via Maris, the Way of the Sea.

I would imagine it was when that great light was extinguished by a priest that Jesus cried out, "I am that light, not only of Galilee, but of the world!" This is another of those "no one ever spoke like this man" sayings. His light is the light of life. All life is physically dependent in some way upon light. Spiritually our darkness must be illuminated by Jesus so that we can come out of our darkness into seeing the need for repentance and forgiveness. He does this for all but not all will choose the Light (John 1:9).

13 So the Pharisees said to him, "You are bearing witness about yourself; your testimony is not true."

13 Anyone can make any claim about themselves. Jewish courts didn't accept personal testimony. Two witnesses had to confirm a claim (Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15). The Pharisees knew what He was claiming and were saying, "You can't make that claim about yourself!"

14 Jesus answered, "Even if I do bear witness about myself, my testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I am going."

14 In 5:31 Jesus gave them the two witnesses, John the Baptist and the Father, and for good measure He threw in the works He was doing which were prophesied to be done by the Messiah. This time He dispenses with that since they did not receive it before and just speaks plainly that He cannot lie, which is a claim of divinity (Numbers 23:19), as Moses said God is not like man in that God cannot lie. Jesus knows His origins (John 1:1). He knows His destiny to return to the Father. They didn't know or they would have bowed down and worshiped Him.

God is not in an impersonal unfeeling force. He is the Creator of all things and by Him all things are held together (Colossians 1:15-17). Everything that is was created by Him and for Him, including you and me. While He transcends all things, He is near each one of us and wants you to know Him and His love for you.

15 You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. 16 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.

15,16 Now Jesus turns to a Scriptural reminder of which they are all familiar (1 Samuel 16:7). Jesus looks past the outward to the heart for the Father tells Him the truth about men. That is divine discernment.

17 In your Law it is written that the testimony of two people is true. 18 I am the one who bears witness about myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness about me."

17,18 Jesus declares He can testify for He is more than mere man. The Father bore witness at the baptism, through the Word, and the miracles Jesus was performing.

19 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."

19 We know the Father by knowing Jesus. Here is another of the "No one spoke like this man" expression. Who would dare say to know them is to know God? He so perfectly expresses the Father that to know Him is to know God.

20 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.

20 Treasury: A place in the Temple court of the women where horn shaped funnels led to thirteen bronze chests. Coins would clang down the pipe and drop into the box. Nine were for coins offered instead of sacrifices, and four were for freewill-offerings for the necessities like wood, incense, burnt offerings, etc.

21 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." 22 So the Jews said, "Will he kill himself, since he says, 'Where I am going, you cannot come'?"

21,22 This is another of John's examples of a spiritual statement being interpreted in physical sense. Without the Spirit we cannot understand what Jesus is teaching in the Word. 1 Corinthians 2:14

23 He said to them, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins."

23,24 Pretty straight forward and blunt. I'm from heaven. You are worldly. Believe in me or remain of the world and be judged! Truth hurts sometimes, but it will be even more devastating if we don't hear and receive it. Jesus loves us enough to tell us the truth. Proverbs 27:6

25 So they said to him, "Who are you?" Jesus said to them, "Just what I have been telling you from the beginning. 26 I have much to say about you and much to judge, but he who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him."

25,26 They were trying to get Him to plainly declare that He is the Messiah so they could get Rome to take Him out of the way. Jesus claimed to only speak of what the

Father told Him. In other words, every word He spoke came straight from God (John 12:49). When we measure our spirituality, we like to use other people, but the standard is Jesus. None of us can say our every word comes straight from God.

27 They did not understand that he had been speaking to them about the Father. 28 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.

27,28 Jesus was referring to the phrase "lifted up" in Isaiah 52:13. It was His crucifixion. Why would they know then that His words were from God? Because the veil in the temple would be torn from top to bottom. There was darkness for three hours. And three days later He would walk out of the grave. Then they knew, even if they would not accept it, they knew.

29 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."

29 Here one more saying that could only come from the lips of Jesus. No one else in their right mind would claim everything they do is pleasing to a holy God.

30 As he was saying these things, many believed in him.

30 His loving confrontation and declaration of truth won many of the listeners over.

Questions:

What is the Jewish context of "the Great Light"?

What did Jesus promise if we follow Him?

How did the Pharisees try to reject the claim?

How did Jesus defend the claim?

Why would Him being lifted up convince the skeptics?

Review the "only Jesus could say it" claims.

Do you believe Him?