Tonight as we continue with our series on “The Great I AM” statements of Jesus we are going to be considering His second “I AM” statement and that is “I AM The Light of The World.”

Please turn with me to our scripture text in John chapter 8. And let’s read verses 12-20.

JOHN 8:12-20 (NKJV)

12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

13 The Pharisees therefore said to Him, “You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true.”

14 Jesus answered and said to them, “Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from and where I am going.

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

16 And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent Me.

17 It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true.

18 I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me.”

19 Then they said to Him, “Where is Your Father?” Jesus answered, “You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.”

20 These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come.
ILLUSTRATION

When I was growing up back in Indiana, there was a lady in my home Church by the name of Mabel Ragsdale. Miss Mabel was an elderly woman and just as sweet as she could be. But the thing I remember most about Mabel Ragsdale was she was completely blind.

Every Christmas a group of us teenagers would go Christmas caroling at Mabel Ragsdale’s house. The scene was more like halloween than Christmas. Because she was blind, there were never any Christmas lights. In fact, there were no lights at all. The house was pitch dark.

As we stood there and sang Christmas carols we couldn’t tell if Miss Mabel was even aware of our presence until we would see her frail frame standing in the doorway barely visible in the dim reflection of our flashlight.

It was hard for any of us to imagine what it would be like to live in total darkness, never experiencing any distinction between morning and night, day after day.

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**Light is essential to life.** If there were no sunlight plants could not grow, which would rob us as well as the animal kingdom of life-sustaining food. If there was no sunlight our planet would be an un-inhabitable frozen ball of ice.

Think of the grave danger of driving at night without headlights on your vehicle or any other vehicle on the road. Imagine the chaos of driving in a big city with no stop lights. Think how boring a 4th of July celebration would be without the beautiful lights of the fireworks or how dull looking a birthday cake would be without lighted candles. Think how frustrating it is when you need a flashlight and the light won't come on because the battery is dead.

LIGHT is one of those wonderful blessings in life that we often take for granted.

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**The Scriptural Setting**

The scriptural setting of this Great “I AM” statement of Jesus that we are looking at this evening is very interesting.

The account of **The Woman Caught In Adultery** is about “spiritual darkness.” The sinful woman was living in the darkness of sin. And the self-righteous Pharisees were living in the darkness of cold, lifeless, legalistic religion.

The account of **The Healing of The Man Born Blind** is about “physical darkness.” It is about a man who had never seen a radiant sunrise or brilliant sunset or the glow of a full moon.

And so it is very fitting that Jesus' great “I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD” statement fall right between an account on “spiritual darkness” and an account on “physical darkness.”

**The Physical Setting**

The “physical” setting for this **Great “I AM” statement** is also very interesting. By “physical setting” I mean where Jesus was when He said, “I AM the LIGHT of the WORLD.”

We learn in **John 8:2** that Jesus was in the **Temple in Jerusalem** when he made this “Great I AM” statement, and that it was “very early in the morning.”

The Temple was monstrous in size, and with its alibaster white stone and the brilliant gold, silver, and bronze decor, the temple would literally “LIGHT UP” in the radiant morning sun.
Verse 20 tells us precisely where Jesus was at the Temple when He made this “Great I AM” statement.

v.20a These words Jesus spoke in the treasury.

The fact Jesus said “I AM the LIGHT of the WORLD” in the Treasury area of the Temple is significant. Most commentators agree that this took place during “The Feast of Tabernacles.”

During the week long celebration of “The Feast of Tabernacles” the Treasury area was the focal point of the nightly celebrations. Huge candelabras were set up and 4 giant torches containing large bowls of oil were lit and the Jewish people would dance and sing while carrying lit torches.

Ancient historians described the scene as “a stunning vision.” It was as though the Temple were a glistening diamond in the midst of Jerusalem. More recent commentators have described it as though huge floodlights radiated from the Temple that could literally be seen for miles and miles. This “LIGHT DISPLAY” was a symbolic reminder to the Jewish people of how GOD had protected them with “The pillar of fire by night when they wandered in the wilderness.”

So don’t miss the significance of this: Its early morning. Just a few hours earlier the previous night the Temple was all aglow from the brilliant “light display” of the Feast of Tabernacles. And now the Temple glistens in the morning sunlight. And Jesus speaks these words to those who are gathered there: “I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. HE WHO FOLLOWS ME SHALL NOT WALK IN DARKNESS, BUT HAVE THE LIGHT OF LIFE.”
Let's look at this “Great I AM” statement more closely and consider its meaning.

I. Jesus is THE Light of The World (v.12a)

v. 12a Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.”

1. Remember, this is how John described Jesus in the opening chapter of his gospel.

   JOHN 1:4-9  In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

2. Eight times in those few verses John identifies CHRIST as “the Light.” And now here in John 8:12 Jesus claims His identity: “I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.”

3. Notice, Jesus does NOT say, “I AM a light of the world.” Or “I AM one of many lights of the world.” Nor does He say, “I AM the light of JERUSALEM” or “I AM the light of ISRAEL.”

   He says, “I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD!” Everyone present at the Temple that day, including the Pharisees understood the significance of what Jesus was saying.
4. You see, for Jesus to say “I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD” was the equivalent of saying “I AM GOD.” Every Jew understood that “LIGHT” was used throughout the Old Testament scriptures to symbolize GOD.

5. Man has always searched for “enlightenment.” Man has always had the desire to know the meaning and purpose of life. And throughout history man has turned to many “false lights” for “enlightenment.”

*BUDDHA is NOT “the light of the world.”
*CONFUCIUS is NOT “the light of the world.”
*MUHAMMED is NOT “the light of the world.”
*ALLAH is NOT “the light of the world.”

JESUS IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. He alone is the voice of truth in a world of lies.

6. A man can have the highest I.Q. in the world. A man can earn a dozen college degrees and spend his whole life studying “the great thinkers” of history, but until a man comes to JESUS CHRIST: THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD he remains in the darkness of ignorance.

7. It is only when one comes to THE TRUE LIGHT OF THE WORLD that he escapes the darkness of Satan's blinding lies and opens his eyes to the truth about sin and salvation.
But not only is **Jesus the Light of The World**........

II. **Jesus Is The LIGHT of LIFE (v.12)**

> v.12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I AM the LIGHT of the WORLD. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have THE LIGHT OF LIFE.”

**ILLUSTRATION**

When I was in India several years ago I preached one night in a very remote village not far from the Bay of Bengal. Because there was no place to turn our vehicle around in this remote village, our driver had to back the vehicle down a long, bumpy mile long dirt path. This path was so narrow that the jungle like brush on either side of the path was rubbing against the sides of the vehicle. When we came to a stop and the driver turned off the engine we were surrounded by total darkness. I couldn’t see any sign of a village any where, except for one tiny light off in the distance. The Indian preacher I was with said, “Just follow the light.” As we walked that long path in total darkness all I could think about was the warnings I had been given about cobras and scorpions. Well as you can imagine, I was doing a whole lot of praying as we made our way toward the village. Eventually we came to a clearing, and all the sudden I saw 50-60 villagers gathered around one single light bulb hanging from a cable tied between two trees. How the Indian power company ever got a power line back to that village is still a mystery to me. I **cannot tell you how comforting it was to see that precious, glowing light.**
1. JESUS is inviting us to “follow the LIGHT.” Of course the LIGHT is CHRIST HIMSELF!

2. JESUS is saying, ”Follow Me, for I know the way out of the darkness.”

   “Follow Me, for I am the LIGHT OF LIFE who can lead you out of the darkness of spiritual DEATH.

   “Follow Me, for I am the LIGHT OF TRUTH who can lead you out of the darkness of Satan’s deceptive LIES.

   “Follow Me, for I am the LIGHT OF FREEDOM who can set you free from the darkness of the dungeon of SIN.

   “Follow Me, for I am the LIGHT OF JOY who can comfort you in the darkness of GRIEF and SORROW.

   “Follow Me, for I am the LIGHT OF PEACE who can comfort you in the darkness of life’s STORMS.

   “Follow Me, for I am the LIGHT OF ETERNITY who can lead you through the darkness of this world to ETERNAL life.

3. FOLLOW THE LIGHT........FOLLOW THE LIGHT OF LIFE!
When Robert Louis Stevenson was a young boy he was intrigued by the work of the old lamplighter who went around his hometown of Edingburgh, Scotland each night with a ladder and a torch setting the stree lights ablaze for the night.

One evening as young Robert watched the old lamplighter do his work, Robert turned to his parents and said, “There is the man who punches holes in the darkness.”

You know, that is a great way to describe what Jesus did when He came to this earth. He is the man who punched holes in the darkness, to allow the light of heaven to shine upon those who were shrouded in the darkness of sin.

And now, those of us who have come to know THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD, have ourselves become “HIS LIGHTS IN THE WORLD.”

When you and I leave this place and go back into the dark world may CHRIST shine forth from our lives so that those who are still living in darkness might be drawn to THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.