

## Metaphors of Christ - The Light

In John 8:12 and John 9:5 Jesus said "I am the light of the world."

In chapter eight Jesus states that those who follow Him have a well-lit path to eternal life. He himself, by both word and deed, will be guide to a rich physical life and a future reward of eternal life in heaven. His illuminating teaching provides the truth of God's plan to free those who follow Him from the bondage of sin and death. (John 8:32)

In the ninth chapter, He is speaking of His public teaching as long as He was on earth. The signs, wonders, miracles, parables, and explanations showed that He was the way, the truth, and the life. This "illuminated" the "darkness" of mankind's understanding and brought the mystery of God's plan for man to "light."

It is notable that the first creation listed in Genesis is light. (Genesis 1:3) Since the stars, sun, and moon were not created until day four, the question of what light was created on day one has long been debated. A study of 2 Corinthians 4:6 points out that "*the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness has illuminated our hearts with the light of knowledge...*" Specifically, the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ. As Paul says in Romans 1:16-17 "*it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith...*"

The knowledge of God, Identified by John as the Word from the beginning in John 1:1 and further defined to be Jesus in John 1:17 was foretold by the prophets.

In Psalms 119:105 "*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path*" and Psalms 119:130 adds "*It gives understanding...*"

Proverbs 6:23 Refers to the commandment as the lamp, and to the law as the light to be the reproofs of instruction which provide the way of life.

Isaiah 9:2 speaks of those who do not know they are lost in sin and bound by death: "*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.*" Isaiah 9:6-7 tells of Messiah and the great titles He will be have. The beginning of its fulfillment is recorded in Matthew 4:16-17 where the scriptures tell us that "*Jesus began to preach and to say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'*"

Isaiah also says Messiah will be a light to the gentiles in Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6.

Jesus claimed that he was the prophesied light in John 8:12, "*Then Jesus spoke ...I am the light of the world ...the light of life.*"

As Joseph and Mary presented Jesus in the Temple on the 41<sup>st</sup> day after His birth, Simeon, who was told by the Spirit that he would not die until he had seen the messiah, said "*For my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel.*" (Luke 2:30-32)

As Jesus was preparing to return to Heaven He commanded "*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...*" (Matthew 28:19-20)

Paul was given the task of taking the name of Jesus (the gospel), to gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel, (Acts 9:15). Paul expresses the reason for the task to Agrippa II in Acts 26:18 "*to open their*

*eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me."*

Jesus says to the disciples that they have a responsibility to spread the light. (Matthew 5:14-16) *"You are the light of the world. ...Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."*

John, in his later years, again ties being in the light to being in the truth. In 1 John 1:7 He says *"But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."* Then in 3 John 1:3 he says *"For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, just as you walk in the truth."*

Enthroned in His kingdom, Jesus is described as a light like the sun (Revelation 1:16). Since His is a spiritual kingdom, the question of illumination in that Kingdom is answered in Revelation 21:23-24 where we are informed that *"The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it."*

We see then that Jesus is the Light of the world by illuminating the way to eternal life with the knowledge and understanding of the truth which is God's word.