

I am the light of the world

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 January 2000

Preacher: Rev John Macsween

[0 : 00] We shall turn now to words you will find in the Gospel according to John.

The Gospel according to John chapter 8 at verse 12. John chapter 8 and the 12th verse.

Verse 12. Then speak 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.

The last Sabbath we try to consider for a little the relationship between the leader and his followers.

[1 : 12] Christ leads his disciples to follow. They come after him.

Not before him, but after him. And we mentioned three qualities that were to be found both in the leader and in his followers.

Namely, a right, a willingness, and ability to do that which was appropriate to their respective positions.

In Christ there is ability and willingness to lead his people.

But, furthermore, he has a right to do so. He has been called to this work by the Father.

[2 : 33] And it is in the call of God we say we have always to look for right or authority to do anything which the Lord requires of us.

Therefore, it follows that the right to follow him. Arises from the same source. Those who follow Jesus have a right to do so.

That is, they are not doing something for which they have no permission. But they have more than permission. They have the specific call of Christ himself.

It is not anything in them that gives them a right to draw near to him. And that is a point that needs to be emphasized.

What right has anyone to draw near unto God? What right has anyone to claim any relationship at all with him apart from the relationship that cannot be destroyed?

[3 : 57] Namely, the creator-creator relationship. How dare I, to put it like that, draw near unto him?

Well, there is only one justification for drawing near. And that is not what we feel. Not what we desire.

Not what we would like to be or to do. None of these, not all of them put together. The right can never give anyone a right to draw near unto God.

That right is founded exclusively on God's own call. It is because God calls.

It is because Christ says, come after me. That anyone, or any man as it is here, has any right to come after him.

[5 : 06] Or to draw near unto him. Now let us be clear on that point. Now let us be clear on that point. It is not something in us that constitutes our authority to call upon God.

Or to draw near unto him. It is not even the spirit of grace and supplication.

It is not that we would like to present our petitions. None of these we repeat. Nor all of them combined. Answering to the question of right at all.

Oh, then what a relief that is. What a tremendous relief. That our authority to draw near to God does not rest on what we are, or what we feel, or what we would like, or what we would desire.

That it is entirely separate from our sins and our feelings.

[6 : 32] Our authority is not in us. It is in God and in God alone.

But the next thing that we mentioned is not to be confounded with the first. They are to be kept distinct in our thinking.

If we are to think clearly and scripturally about man's relation to God.

The next thing we mentioned was our willingness to do. That, of course, must be in the feet. It is a willingness won in them.

By the Holy Ghost. And from that willingness, the ability to follow him is inseparable. Made willing, in a day of his power.

[7 : 37] In the day of his power, they are enabled and persuaded to take advantage of the right which is given them in the call of the gospel. And thereby, to follow Jesus.

Now, this day we shall consider for a little... the promise of Jesus. If any man will follow me, any man will follow me, he shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

This privilege, this blessing, connected with the soul's relationship to Christ.

He said before us, negatively and positively, he shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

And the first thing observable here is the comprehensiveness of the statement. There is no room for exceptions. If any man will follow me, it is not this may be true of it, but this must be true.

[9 : 00] If any man will follow me, he shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

That's a categorical statement. That is, it's unconditional from every angle. if any man will follow me, he shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Now there are one or two things implied here, which we may mention in passage. First, everyone who does not follow him is in darkness.

If he is the light of the world, and if there is no other light, and if the enjoyment of this light is to be had by following him, it follows necessarily that those who do not follow him or come after him are in darkness.

Now what darkness is this? It is, it is the darkness of death. the darkness of the curse of God.

[10 : 27] For death and the curse of God are inseparable. And this is darkness indeed.

This is the darkness that is the precursor of outer darkness. Where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

There is darkness. But this is not only a state. There is something awful about it.

Something terrifying. Certainly something terrible. In the chapter of the rest this morning there was a passage to this effect.

Who has saved you from the power of darkness. darkness. This darkness is active so to speak.

[11 : 49] It has power. Power to retain in its grip all who act in its grip.

darkness. It is not easy to get away from darkness. Certainly it is not easy to get away from this darkness.

Easy did we say it is not possible. It is a darkness that has power. only God can deliver from it.

Hence the apostle says who has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of his dear son.

They were made partakers of the light of life. Delivered from the power of darkness. Now this power is too full.

[13 : 07] It is it has a direct relationship to God himself. Because as we have indicated it is the darkness of God's curse.

God is light. But that light has ceased to shine upon man in a state of sin.

The cloud of the curse came in between the creator and the creator shutting out all spiritual life leaving man in total darkness in the grip of darkness.

But this power that is connected with or inseparable from this darkness is active also on the part of the atmosphere he keeps the subject in darkness.

He cannot keep them anywhere else of course. He is darkness himself. He is in the kingdom of darkness. His power he exercises in the darkness never in light.

[14 : 34] indeed he can transform himself into an angel of light but he is still an angel of darkness and he transforms himself into an angel of light in order to carry on and to intensify and increase his works of darkness.

Now this is what is assumed in this statement of Jesus even that they who do not follow him are in darkness the darkness of death of the curse but what is assumed in the deliverance from darkness he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have light light the light that never shines on the kingdom of darkness darkness but we have to remember first of all that there are degrees of light the first streak of dawn is very different from the midday brightness of the day but the first streak of dawn comes from the same source and is of the same nature as the midday light there's no difference in the source nor in the nature of light but there may be much difference in the measure or in the degree of it light now it is noteworthy that in

God's dealings with men light is the first thing that makes a difference in what they are from what they wear in nature the approach of the winter is inherited first by the shortness of the day it is as warm now as it was in the middle of June yes and warmer but the day is not so long why the winter is on its way there isn't so much light in other words and the same of course with the coming of summer when the day starts to land there is no other appreciable difference in the weather here we have a saying that as the day lengthens the cold strengthens the only indication of the coming of summer is that there is more light not more heat so it is offered in

God's gracious dealings with people in his giving them light light it may be in measure compared with the first state of the dawn but the point is that there is light where there was none before there may not be any warmth of affection there may not be any appreciable difference according to one's own estimate of things but there is this light and what is its first effect it convinces one of the darkness in which one is if I interpret it right that is the meaning of the common saying the darkest hour is before the dawn why is it darker in fact or no it is darker by contrast when the light comes it shows how dark it was the same in spiritual things the first effect of life we say is to give men to realize that there is much darkness in that they are in darkness as they are in and of themselves hence he who was never conscious of darkness was never conscious of life because life has no meaning but in relation to darkness we must know darkness if we are to know life and conversely we must know life if we are to know darkness maybe I mentioned to you before an incident an imaginary incident that one of the historians has in one of his books he says there was a kingdom where everyone was blind and this man who was frightened one night thought that he could win where everyone was blind as the saying is in the kingdom of the blind the one night man is king so he went to this place and he asked him do you know that you are blind the answer was what is blind we don't understand what you say has anybody told you you were blind no because we don't know what that means so he found it impossible for them to convey to them the idea of blindness why they never knew anything else and they could only know blindness by having the fact the same with the darkness in which man is tell him he's in darkness and of course many under the preaching of the gospel would agree but if each one was to speak honestly and from the heart if he were to tell people that they are in darkness the answer would be what is darkness we don't know what you mean now

nobody could know what that meant but those who have had some idea of life some idea of it it might be intellectual yes but in a spiritual sense no one has felt this darkness until the light of God shined upon he might have felt he was ignorant and many other things but darkness in its cruises is known only to those who follow me if any man will follow me he shall not walk in darkness he shall not walk in the darkness of God's curse he saved from that in Christ Jesus he shall not walk in the darkness of uttered ignorance of

[23 : 37] God's salvation he shall not walk in that darkness he isn't in it anymore he cannot walk in it as a matter of fact but that's too conscious darkness oh that's another question in such darkness he may walk long so we have to make a distinction between things that's different who is among you that walk in darkness and has no light who let him trust in the Lord and stay upon his God who is among you that walk in darkness that's the darkness of the soul who has seen life and to think from the soul that is in darkness and knows not what darkness means if any man will follow me or will come after me he shall not walk in darkness but shall have the life of life he shall not walk in darkness anymore he saved from the power of darkness and from a conscious point of view we might say that the power of darkness consists to a great degree in this its power consists in this partly a bit to make the soul ignorant of the darkness or how often the redeemer in his gracious teachings how often he warns us against this there is that sin of which we all would do well to give heed if the light that is in the darkness darkness how great is that darkness is the light that begins to be darkness what does that mean oh well we take it and it means something like this you think you have life but it is not the light of life it is not the life that is in

Jesus you think you have life you have life oh how many think that today in church they think they have life the light of the human intellect the light which is darkness and if that light itself be darkness how great is the darkness if any man will follow me or will come after me he shall not walk in darkness he will know and know truly what he ought to believe concerning God and the duty that God requires of him but not only will he not walk after but he shall have good life of life and the life of life of course is

Christ himself there is there no difference between following Christ or coming after him and being in him oh no these are the same they are different exercises or rather they point to different aspects of the Christian life but at bottom they are the same to follow Christ and to be in Christ now to be in Christ is the sinner's justification but that is not all the story he that follows Christ is not only in Christ but Christ is in that's why we try to deal with that part of it in our first in our first effort to speak from these words

Christ is in and Christ in the believer is the believer's sanctification the sinner in Christ means the sinner's justification but Christ in the sinner is the sinner's sanctification in that chapter we read this morning the apostle refers to that great mystery among the Gentiles which is he says I hail you the hope of glory he shall have the light of life but while this light may differ in degree it is always we say of the same nature and from the same source hence we find those who have light and those who consistently pray for more light more light more light and this is not for a theoretical state more light because associated with this light there is warmth it's not a cold light that feces the heart it is a warm light that talks that melts that brings it up after itself here then there is a motive for following the light yes the light is pleasant it is a light that attracts a light that warms the smoke that's a motive for following but it is this light that enables one to do so as well so by one and the same light there is the motive to follow to follow on to increase in life life of the life the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus

Christ and it is this life that gives the power but what life is it the light of life the light of life now where there is life there is movement there must be movement where there is life we may not be able to detect the movement but life of necessity is active in some way in some way or other that is true physically of course and it is certainly true spiritual where there is life there is motion it may be very but it must be there and the light of life always moves the light that comes in connection with this light always moves to the source of the light it is it is a moment

[32 : 40] God works that it sits very near the light of life but this is the life not only that gives life or in connection with which life is given it is the life in which that life is nourished the man who grows in grace according to the script is the man who grows in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ hence the script is this grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ he that followeth me shall have the light of life now what do we see in this life many things but the most important thing of all is we see by faith the Lord himself the sun in the heavens is seen by its own light it is by the light of the sun you can see the sun and certainly that is true here it is by the light that is Jesus that we can see him by faith and see him as inexpressibly desirable warming your heart drawing us down to himself in other words making us willing and able by his grace to follow him to follow him in this world deciding to draw nearer to him to know more about him to know more of the blessed effects that come from knowledge of him more of the riches of the covenant that are stored up in his pressure for it pleased the fire that in him should all fullness dwell he that comes after me shall have the light of life notice like us he saved us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of his dear son that is the kingdom of life this light has power it is more powerful than the darkness it is a life that is destined to conquer darkness yea it is a life once it shines it can never forth again the soul that has received light in and from Christ will have life through a holy earth he is made meet for the

inheritance of the saints where in light in light what does that mean does that the life of heaven no not in the first place who has saved us from the power of darkness and translated us it is he who made us meet or suited or fitted for the inheritance of the saints in life what is this fitness or this meekness as it is which meek is the old english word that fit as you know he made us fit equipped us for the inheritance of the saints in life how does he do that by giving life that is the meekness of the sins in life they have life light has shone upon them and that very fact gave them fitness for the inheritance of the sins in life this is a condition without which there can be no meekness no man who is in darkness is fit for the inheritance of the sins in life he he lacks the essential qualification of fitness what is that that this light should shine on us the light that is the concerning which he says if any man will come after me he shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life what makes the distinction and oh well it's plainly set forth in the world if any man will come after him man that's that's the effect to call of

God it is by that effect to a call of the spirit that we come after Jesus it is not something that is at the disposal of man's own of man's own strength of mind and heart and will know it is in this effect to a call if any man will come up he shall not walk darkness but shall have the night of life if he will

come if he will not he continues in darkness and there is no other way it is either darkness or
darkness as we have it in the script of the old testament
I have said before you this day life and death it has to be one of these darkness or light if anyone
will come out for how appropriate then is the pair of church draw me door and we will run on more
five and go through the house the heat election soil go and sink this is not the iron tree go and go
into