

Who Is Jesus Part 9

The Light of The World

John 3:19-21

Memory Verses: John 8:12

MANUSCRIPT

Introduction (Me, We, & the Struggle)

In **Matthew 16:15** Jesus asks; who do you say that I am? It's a great question. Who is Jesus?

For over a month now we've been answering this question from the very words of Christ. He says I am the Good Shepherd. I am the door and the way. I am the truth. I am the resurrection and the life. I Am living water and the bread of life. And last week we saw that he is the true vine. Who is Jesus... he is everything you need!

Today we want to again examine another one of Jesus' I Am statements. Look with me over a **John 8:12** where he says this; "I am the light of the world."

In case you didn't know... light is good. Let me explain. I have two visuals this morning that I think are going to ring true for every parent in here this morning. *Shows **lamp & Legos**. Do you know what these two items have in common? Light & Legos? You know don't you. You know that there is no more excruciating pain in this world than walking through your dark house trying to make your way through your dark bedroom without stepping on a child or waking them up by turning on the lights and going through your dark living room to make it to the kitchen... without turning on the lights cause you don't want to wake anyone up or you don't want that blinding sensation of having been in the darkness for hours and then having a light as bright as the sun burn your retinas to a crips... so you keep the lights off. And then... stepping on a lego. It's awful. If you don't believe me you are more than welcome to take off your shoes and socks, close your eyes and come walk on a lego. We have a triage center set up in the kitchen for those of you willing to dare. No, but for real... that is pain my friend.

But, if you would've just turned on the lights you would've seen the lego that was strategically placed in your path seeking whom it may devour... and you could have avoided it. Lights are very good because they protect you from legos. Light is a good thing.

But, lights are bright and revealing. Let's stay with this scenario... but it's not just your kids in the house... you have friends from out of town staying downstairs. You are willing to risk the legos and keep the lights off... not because it might wake up the kids... but because you look hideous and you wouldn't dare anyone see you like this... so you must stay in the dark. The dark hides our ugly... the light reveals it. So maybe

lights aren't all that great all the time. Right?

Yeah, but here's the thing. We've already talked about Jesus as the way. Can we find the way in the dark? Nope... we need light. And we've already talked about Jesus as the truth. And we want to know absolute truth right? Then lies must be exposed in the light. It don't matter how ugly you are... you need light to put on some makeup.

Do you see what I'm getting at? Sometimes we might not want the light shown on us... but the only way we can be transformed by the way, the truth, and the life... is in the light!

The only way to avoid the legos of life; the painful, hurtful traps, of the enemy is to turn on the light. The only way to have the ugliness of our sin exposed and to be transformed is the light. And there is only one light that can do it... Jesus; the light of the world!

This morning I want us to look at two passages that show us how to live in the light of Jesus Christ this morning. So would you read with me in **John 3:19-21** and then **1 John 1:5-10**. What these two passages show us is... **Only The Light Of Christ Can Expose The Darkness Within Man & Show Us A Better Plan.**

Teaching (Expand on the Problem, God)

So, let's dive in to these two passages a little more. First, let's look at **John 3:19-21** again. What we see here is that... **The Light Is Good Not Only Because It Exposes Our Sin, But Because It Also Carries It Away.** Look what it says here... "People loved their sin and their lies more than they loved Jesus." Think about it... when Jesus was saying this to Nicodemus, a pharisee, he was talking about the pharisees. He was basically saying that on the outside it appeared that the pharisees and religious leaders led the jews to reject Christ because of their religious traditions. Which is partially true... but there was more going on on the inside. Jesus exposes the truth that their hearts were dark. That, the true reason they rejected Christ was because they really didn't want the evil sin of their hearts exposed... and that's what Jesus would do.

And it's the same in our time. The world rejects Christ on the outside because they say it's not real. They point to evolution, atheism, cultural issues and they say... you can't really believe in this stuff can you? But on the inside they know there is more to the story. In reality they know that they are rejecting Christ... because he is the only one who can expose their sinful hearts. The light of Christ exposes our sins! It shows us who we really are on the inside. And there are many of us who don't want anyone to see that because it either makes us look bad or it opens us up to the possibility of conviction.

O, that we would welcome conviction. That we wouldn't be afraid of our spirit telling us that there is something we need to fix. Instead, like a check engine light on our vehicle... we would notice it and take it to

mechanic Jesus and let him shine his flashlight into our engine and diagnose the problem before it destroys us.

Is that you? Are you trying to hide your sin from Christ? Are you rejecting him and his truth so you can go on living in darkness? Are you avoiding the conviction of his Spirit? Please don't... because... **nothing is darker than a life lived avoiding the light of Christ**. Eventually it will destroy you.

But get this... this is what happens when we allow Christ to shine his light into our souls. When we allow Christ to shine his light on us he does the work that we cannot do. Look again at **vs21**. What does that mean? It means this... we cannot expose our own sin. Yes, we can usually diagnose the big ones, adultery, pornography, hate. But, we all have sins that we don't even know of... blind spots like greed, jealousy, anger, bitterness, and lust. And the only way to recognize them is for Christ to show them to us. We need him to expose our sin.

It also means that we cannot expel our own sin either. We can try as hard as we want to stop sinning... but our flesh is stronger than we think. If we rely on our own will power we will be overcome. You know this right? You've tried walking through the dark on your own... but you will step on that lego. You will bump your shin on the coffee table. You can't do it without a light and so we must rely on the power of Christ to help us be righteous and pure.

And it means that we cannot escape our sin. The penalty of our sin is death and we cannot do a thing to escape that on our own. But here's the good news... Jesus has done the work of taking on that penalty for us. We can escape the penalty of our works... our sins because they have been carried out (done away with) in God through the death and resurrection of Christ.

We cannot expose our own sin, expel our own sin, or escape our own sin on our own... in our own power and strength. But Jesus picks it up for us and carries it out. He does the work that we cannot do.

Look back at our memory verse for this week. **John 8:12**. When we follow him he will lead us out of darkness and into the light. **We cannot expose our sin, expel our sin, or escape our sin... but the light of Christ can.**

So what do we do? We pray for conviction. We should pray that Christ would shine his light on our souls and show us our sin so that he can deal with it. **Only The Light Of Christ Can Expose The Darkness Within Man & Show Us A Better Plan**. And what's the better plan? Let him deal with it.

Now let's turn back over to **1 John 1:5-10** and let's see one more thing. It's good to have light expose our sin and take care of it for us... but **The Light Is Good Because It Gives Us Fellowship**. Here we see

many of the same lessons we saw in John 3. We recognize again that people want to live in the darkness rather than the light. That Jesus is the only one who can cleanse us from our sinfulness. And that we must plead for conviction and confess our sins.

But turn your attention to **vs6**. Here we see a new thing that we will miss out on in the dark... fellowship. We cannot have fellowship with Jesus if we are in darkness. It's impossible. You may say... big deal... who cares if we get to have potlucks and picnics with Jesus... I don't even like green bean casserole. First off, I love green bean casserole. Secondly, that's not what fellowship is. Fellowship is the word the Bible uses to describe something that's almost indescribable. It's the feeling of having unity, togetherness, community, relationship, attachment, and belonging. So what is fellowship with Christ exactly?

Two things. First, fellowship with Christ refers to the way we cannot be IN Christ if we have not repented from our life in darkness. You can't be saved until you trust the light and renounce the dark. That makes sense.

But it also refers to those who are saved but who find themselves walking back into the darkness at times. We've all been there right? We have found the light in Christ but the darkness seems to always be beckoning us to come back and check it out from time to time. We all struggle with sin and sometimes the sin begins to take over again. When we go back to the dark, when we are living in sinfulness we lose some of the relationship and community – the attachment we are supposed to have in Christ. You're not attached to the vine the way you should be and your spirituality goes all out of wack. If you are dabbling in the darkness you aren't in fellowship with the light!

And this is why we as believers long for the light. Because we want to be in fellowship with Christ our Lord. We desire the fulfillment of that relationship more than we desire the sin of darkness. Get this... **a believer doesn't avoid the darkness because they are afraid of discipline... but because they long for true fellowship with the lover of their soul; Jesus.**

But look at this in **verse 7**. But if we walk in the light of Christ we not only have fellowship with him but we have fellowship with one another. The only way to feel true community, attachment, relationship, and belonging with other believers in the church is to walk in the light. Yes, we experience the fellowship of Christ through his word, through prayer, through worship, and through circumstances... but one of the greatest ways we experience fellowship with Christ is by fellowshiping with one another. We need the church, we need ONE ANOTHERness. We need the prayers, community, commonality, unity, caring, serving, accountability, and encouragement of the body of Christ.

Some people claim that they can be a Christian without the church. This is somewhat true. You can believe on Christ, and depend on Christ

without the body of Christ. But that's for people who don't have a choice... they are locked in jail or on the mission field. That's not for us... we have a choice. Why would any true Christian want to avoid the only other people on the planet that know who they truly are? This is our tribe! These are our people! And our connection to them is based on our connection to Christ. You want fellowship with one another? **The only way we can have true fellowship within the body of Christ is to be walking in the light of Christ...** Get this... true believers don't want to fellowship with those who are walking in darkness. True believers desire the light. This is the whole point of church discipline. The Bible says that some people need to be put out of the fellowship in order to be restored to the light. True fellowship can only happen when you are walking in the light. Why does church not work sometimes? Because we are a people who struggle with darkness. Why aren't you liking church... there might be some darkness you need Jesus to shine a light on. Why don't you feel like fellowshiping with some people in the church? Either you or they or both of you have some darkness that needs the light.

We've all been in that church where fellowship feels impossible. I'd encourage you to find a church where the people are filled with the light of Christ. I praise God that Stone Creek is that kind of a church.

Only The Light Of Christ Can Expose The Darkness Within Man & Show Us A Better Plan. So once again... what is the better plan? Fellowship with the church.

Application (Resolution, You)

The point is simple – Darkness keeps us in sin and out of fellowship with Christ. In the dark we are unattached to the way, the truth, and the life... we are on spiritual life support. But when we come into the light Christ expels our sin, and brings us back into fellowship with him and his body. **There is no life apart from the light.** Look again at **John 1:4** Jesus is the light of life. You want fellowship, fulfillment, freedom from sin... then walk into the light.

The application is simple this morning... simply ask God to reveal to you the darkness, the sin that is in your life. Once he reveals it to you... confess that sin to him and repent of that sin and you will be back in the light. It's that simple.

And here's another thing... this isn't an every once in a while thing... this is a daily part of being a Christian. Everyday we ask Christ to expose our sin and take it from us. We constantly depend on him to cleanse us, make us righteous, and transform us into his image. So this morning is not different than every morning. Let's all just ask Christ to expose our darkness, and expel it again. **Only The Light Of Christ Can Expose The Darkness Within Man & Show Us A Better Plan**

Conclusion

So here's what I want us to do as way of reflection this morning. We are going to turn off all the lights so that it's as dark as we can get it in here. I know we have windows so it can't get pitch black... but it's darker. And I want you to imagine that this darkness is the lure of sin all around us. The secret sin that's inside of you. And this **lamp**... this represents the light of Christ. I'm just going to ask each and everyone of us that feels comfortable this morning... to get out of your seat, come up to the altar where the light is and ask Jesus to reveal your sin, convict you of your sin, and help you to confess and repent of your sin this morning. Come to the light this morning.