I Am the Light of the World
John 8:12-21
43-44

Open your Bible now to the eighth chapter of the Gospel of John. It has been a profound blessing in my own life to be preparing these messages in the Gospel of John and spend time in this truth, and at the same time, it is a challenge to articulate for you what has been embedded in my own heart. So I always ask for the Lord's help in delivering the truth. We come in coming to chapter 8 to a familiar story. The story of Jesus and the woman taken in adultery. And the very familiar line, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her."

And at this particular point, I face a decision, which I've already made, and I'll explain. This familiar story, which actually embraces the last verse in chapter 7, the one that says everyone went to his home, this familiar story does not appear in the oldest manuscripts of the New Testament. It does not appear in any of them at all. Manuscript study is very important to guaranteeing the truthfulness of the text. There are about 25,000 New Testament manuscripts, ancient manuscripts.

The oldest of those uniformly do not contain this story. And so you will find in your Bible probably a note in the margin that says, "Later manuscripts added this," and that is correct. Because we have so many manuscripts, there's really little doubt that this was added later. If something isn't in the oldest and shows up later, obviously it was added.

There's nothing in this story that is un-Christ like or unlike the behavior of Jesus. There's really nothing in the story that's unlike the behavior of the religious leaders. It's a wonderful story of forgiveness. Very likely, something like this happened and was passed down orally from person to person to person, and eventually, someone decided that the story ought to find its way into the New Testament, even though it wasn't in the original.

And so they put it there. In most old manuscripts, it is placed here. But sometimes in Old Manuscripts, we find it somewhere else in the Gospel of John, and we even find it sometimes in the Gospel of Luke. So apparently, it was a story that floated around that somebody decided should find its way into the New Testament.

The problem with that is the church from its earliest years has known it didn't belong there. In fact, if you're looking for ancient commentaries on this story written by church fathers and leaders, you won't find one until the 12th century. And even when you start to find the commentary in the 12th century, the notation is made that this doesn't appear in the earliest manuscripts. Why is it here? Because somebody put it in. Why is it in your Bible now?

Because once it found its way in, it became traditionally a part of Scripture, and apparently, Bible translators are unwilling to remove it, so they just put a notation. I'm happy to tell you that when this

does happen, and it happens here, and it happened also at the end of Mark, there is a similar addition to the Gospel of Mark in the 16th chapter from verse 9 on. I'm happy to tell you we know they are additions because we have those ancient manuscripts.

Consequently, we know that the Holy Spirit has then enabled us to preserve the true text. I have written some notes about this story in the study Bible footnotes. I've written something about this in the commentary on John in deference to people who would be interested in some kind of an interpretation, but the problem is if it didn't appear in the original text, then it is not inerrant. There's no guarantee that it's accurate. There's no guarantee that it's without error, like every other part of Scripture.

Furthermore, it interrupts the story that's going on here. I guess you could call this internal evidence. It interrupts the story. We are at this point starting in chapter 7 with Jesus at the feast of tabernacles. It lasted a week in the fall of his final year, six months from the cross. We have been going through the events when he arrived in the middle of the week, went to the temple and began to teach. What follows this story in verse 12 is part of the ministry that Jesus had during the feast of tabernacles.

So this interrupts those events and the obvious sequence. It should go from verse 52 to chapter 7 immediately to verse 12 of chapter 8. So that's what we're going to do this morning. Let me begin reading in verse 12. By the way, for a more extensive explanation of that, you can check the McArthur commentary on John or any other commentary for that matter. Let's begin at verse 12.

"Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. He who follows me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life.' So the Pharisee said to Him, 'You're testifying about yourself. Your testimony is not true.' Jesus answered and said to them, 'Even if I testify 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 cam going. You judge according to the flesh. I'm not judging anyone. But even if I do judge, my judgment is true, for I am not alone in it, but I am the Father who sent me. Even in your law, it has been written that the testimony of two men is true. I am he who testifies about myself and the father who sent me testifies about me.'"

"So they were saying to Him, 'Where is your father?' Jesus answered, 'You know neither me nor my father. If you knew me, you would know my father also.' These words He spoke in the treasury as He taught in the temple, and no one seized Him because His hour had not yet come. Then He said again to them, 'I go away, and you will seek me and will die in your sins. Where I am going, you cannot come.'" We've already seen this conflict escalating, and it will escalate fiercely through this chapter in John and through the final six months of Jesus' life until it reaches the full flame in passion week and takes him to the cross in God's perfect time. But the things that Jesus said were the things that kept escalating the animosity of the religious leaders. And one of those statements is found here in verse 12.

When Jesus said, "I am the light of the world," they knew exactly what He was claiming, exactly. This is one of the I am statements in the Gospel of John, of which there are seven. This is a notable one and a memorable one and one with which we're all familiar. But I don't think we may fully understand the essence of this and the way those Jewish leaders received it. I'm going to help you with that, I hope, but let's break the little narrative down into some subsection so we can kind of track our way.

Let's start with the area. The area, that would be the first point to consider, and for that, I want to take you to verse 20. When I say the area, I mean the exact location where these words were uttered. These words He spoke in the treasury as He taught in the temple. I want to start there because that sets up absolutely everything. These are remarkable words, but Jesus doesn't just speak these words out of nowhere. There is a compelling scenario that He captures, and we saw that already back in chapter 7, verses 37 to 39 when He talked about being the living water, and He said that at a moment when they were going through a ritual remembering the provision of water in the wilderness, which was a daily part of the celebration of the feast of tabernacles, which was designed to commemorate the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. And Jesus, when He said that He was the living water and if anybody drank of that water they would never thirst was contrasting that spiritual water with the water being poured out in the ritual.

He had a way of capturing the moment, turning it to himself, and He does it again here. So it's really critical to know exactly where He is. He's in the temple, and a section of the temple where the treasury existed. Now one of the things that people did when they came to the temple was give money, and there was a massive courtyard in the temple that had 13 receptacles around the entire area. Thirteen of them. It was in the courtyard called The Court of the Women.

There was a courtyard beyond that, and that would be the Court of the Gentiles where anybody could come and traffic. But once you left the Court of the Gentiles and came in, it was for Jews or duly processed proselytes, men and women. But women could go no further. They couldn't go into the next court. They could go into the Court of the Women. So naturally, they put all the places to give an offering where both the men and women could come. It was in that very place that the widow gave her last two coins. The first court, again, is the Court of the Gentiles. The second is the Court of the Women where the women are allowed to go. The next would be the Court of the Priests, and that's restricted.

Restricted even to men who went in to offer sacrifices with the priest. And around the porch of this massive Court of the Women where there would be tens of thousands of people at this particular time in the feast of tabernacles because they came from everywhere, there were 13 allocated places to give money, and according to historians, they were trumpet shaped, which means probably they had a larger opening and funneled down, and the money went into some kind of container.

They were very specific as to their connection. Number one and number two trumpet receptacle was designed for the half shackle temple tax that everyone had to pay. Number three and number four were where women put money to purchase the two pigeons that they needed to offer to purify themselves from childbearing.

Number five was where the money went to purchase the wood for the fire on the alter. Number six also for the incense in the alter. Five and six then for things related to the sacrifices. Number seven was designated as the receptacle to keep up the golden vessels of the temple. To hire the people to clean them and have money to replace them. Then you have eight through 13. Those were for the general fund. Anything and everything else. There's where Jesus is. He's in this Court of the Women. It would be the most packed court in the temple. Just keep that in mind.

At some opportune moment, go back to verse 12. "He spoke to them again, as He had been speaking. 'I am the light of the world,' he said. 'He who follows me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life.'" He didn't say, "I am a light in the world," which some rabbi or some teacher

might say that He was a light in the darkness. He said, “I am the light.” He didn’t say, “I am a light in Jerusalem.” He didn’t say, “I am a light in Judah.” Some teacher might say that. He said, “I am the light of the world.”

This is exclusive. This is all encompassing. More importantly, this is a direct claim to be the Messiah, and they knew it. They were very, very familiar with the Messianic promises that came through the Prophet Isaiah, and in Isaiah 42, 49, 50, and 53, you have Messianic chapters of Isaiah in which the Messiah is called the slave of Yahweh or the servant of Jehovah. And in chapter 42, you have this prophecy about Messiah. You will be familiar with it where the Father speaks of Messiah, His servant, His slave. “Behold my slave, whom I uphold my chosen one, in whom my soul delights. I have put my Spirit upon him.” There is a prophecy of the Messiah’s coming and His empowering by the Holy Spirit.

It goes on to speak of things concerning Him. All of this, verse 5, “Thus says God the Lord who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and its offspring who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it. I am the Lord,” and He’s speaking now to His Messiah. “I have called you in righteousness. I will also hold you by the hand and watch over you, and I will appoint you as a covenant to the people as a –” what? Light to the world.

“As a light to the nations. To open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the dungeon, and those who dwell in darkness from the prison. I am the Lord. That is my name.” He says that the servant of Jehovah, the Messiah, will be the light of the world. Again, in Isaiah 49, here again this servant of Jehovah is presented. Verse 5, “And now says the Lord who formed me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob or Israel back to Him so that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honored in the site of the Lord and my God as my strength,” he says, “Is it too small a thing that you should be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel? And not just Israel. I will also make you a light of the nations so that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth,” thus says the Lord, “The redeemer of Israel and its holy one.” This is from God. Messiah will be the light of the world. When Jesus says, “I am the light of the world,” he is making the claim to be the prophesied Messiah. To be, in the words of Malachi, the son of righteousness who is now rising with healing in his beams.

John even begins his gospel with reference to this. “In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was that true light, which coming into the world enlightens every man.” So right at the very outset of his gospel, he identifies the coming Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the light. The light and the life.

The light, of course, is a magnificent metaphor. Light is the active power that dispels darkness. And Jesus Christ is the light of truth that dispels the darkness of falsehood. Jesus Christ is the light of wisdom that dispels the darkness of ignorance. Jesus Christ is the light of holiness that dispels the darkness of impurity. Jesus Christ is the light of joy that dispels the darkness of sorrow.

Jesus Christ is the light of life that dispels the darkness of death. When He says, “I am the light of the world,” He even uses the tetragrammaton, the I am. The claim to be God, and the claim to be Messiah. To say, “I am the light of the world,” is to identify yourself as God. Psalm 27:1. The psalm has said, “The Lord is might light and my salvation.” First John 1:5 says, “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.” They understood what he was saying. He was claiming to be God. He was

claiming to be the Messiah, the light.

But the question comes up why here, why now? Why does he say that? Now we learned back in our last message, chapter 7, verse 37, when He said, “If anyone is thirsty, let Him come to me and drink,” and then spoke about the rivers of living water that would flow from the innermost being of those who came to Him.

We know why He said that there because He was capturing that moment of the pouring out of the water, and He turned it to himself. Well He does the same thing here, and so in order to grasp this amazing moment, it’s really important to understand another ritual at the feast of tabernacles, another very important ritual. He could have said, “I am the light,” just out of nowhere, and of course, it would have made sense in the world of darkness. We all understand that. All of us are characterizing Ephesians 5:11 as doing the unfruitful works of darkness. “We walk in darkness. The way of the wicked is darkness,” the Scripture says. “The foolish heart is darkened. We are darkened in our understanding and excluded from the life of God.” Scripture talks about that frequently. It’s a common description.

We have been delivered out of the domain of darkness, so there was certainly theological understanding of the notion of darkness. Even Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament said, “The fool walks in darkness.” Isaiah said, “Men substitute darkness for light.” So I suppose Jesus could have just popped up and said, “I am the light of the world,” and it would have had some impact because people use the metaphor of darkness for the disastrous reality of the human condition even then.

But there’s far more going on here than that. Far more. And let me help you with that. When the feast of tabernacles began, candelabras were set up all through the Court of the Women. Candelabras really all around the Court of the Women. As far as historians say, they literally filled the Court of the Women with the capability of light. Every night, they would go around, and they would light these large candles, and they would burn all night.

This was actually called by the Jews the illumination of the temple. And the reason they did was because remember now, the feast of tabernacle is they’re celebrating what? They’re celebrating the 40 years they wandered in the wilderness. And how did they know where to go in the wilderness? They were led by light. They were led by a pillar of fire at night and a lighted cloud in the daytime. This was the light that led them in the wilderness. To commemorate that, they had this illumination of the temple, and they lit all these candles and let them burn all night.

There’s some interesting descriptions of it by historians, ancient historians who describe it as a stunning vision, like a diamond in the midst of the city of Jerusalem was the temple ground with like floodlights coming up across its perimeter walls. Every night they were lit, the temple became a flashing diamond, a symbol of the pillar of fiery light and cloud that led them in the wilderness. Some have said they actually quoted Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6. “I will be a light to the nations.”

I can visualize Jesus standing there. “Maybe they’re just lighting them.” We don’t have the exact moment. “Maybe they’re just lighting them.” Or maybe He’s there earlier in the day, and they’ve been extinguished. And maybe He looks at those extinguished Candelabras and says, “I’m the light of the world, and I never go out. If you follow me, the light will never go out. You will never walk in the darkness. But you will have the light of life.” It’s a profound moment. “I’m the light that never is

extinguished. And as the pillar of light in the day and the night led Israel to the promised land, I am the light that will lead you to the kingdom. I will lead you to God, to heaven, to everlasting life. It's not a light to be looked at. Not a light to be admired. It's a light to be followed. It moves. It's to be followed."

Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let me deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." He said to His disciples, "Follow me." They followed the cloud, they followed the pillar, and they were led to the promised land. That whole generation died, of course, and only the next were able to go in. Jesus said, "If you follow me, you will go in. You follow me, this will light you all the way to – you receive the full promise of eternal life." So rather dramatically and beautifully and powerfully and effectively does Jesus capture the crowd and the stunning temple ritual turns to Him.

"I know the way out of darkness," He says. "I know the way out of the darkness of ignorance. I know the way out of the darkness of sin. I know the way out of the darkness of sadness and sorrow. I know the way out of the darkness of death. Follow me, and I will lead you to life, eternal life." What does it mean to follow? Just the word itself. Follow me. The way it's used in ancient usage, it's used of a soldier following his commander as the believer follows Christ as his sole commander. It's used of a slave following his master as the believer is to do the same.

It's used of someone following a wise counselor. It's used of someone following the law obediently. It's used of a student following the teacher's line of argument. That's what it means to follow all of those things, to follow Christ as a soldier follows his commander, as a slave follows his master, as a person in ignorance follows a wise counselor. As a disobedient sinner turns to follow the law obediently. As a student follows the teacher's line of reasoning and argument.

To be a follower is to give yourself totally to Christ. To say with the psalm, "The Lord is my light and my salvation." Where as it also says in the Old Testament, "The Lord shall be an everlasting light." "Follow me," Jesus said, "and I'll lead you to the heavenly promised land. I'll be the light, the true light." It might interest you to know that the rabbis even declared that Messiah's name is light. They knew what Isaiah was saying. So Jesus is claiming not only to be the I am, not only to be God who is the true light, but to be the Messiah prophesied. So we go from the area to the assertion. That's what he asserts. It's a powerful, dramatic moment. Captivating the people, and they understand.

Certainly the leaders understood because you see the antagonism that rises immediately. The antagonism appears in verse 13. So the Pharisee said to him, "You're testifying about yourself. Your testimony is not true," which is to say you can't do that. That's not how it works. They accused Jesus of an invalid claim because He's making it for Himself. You're just boasting. Why should we believe you? There are no witnesses to confirm this.

This is another calculated attack, and of course, they're saying essentially this is an illegal claim because you cannot claim anything, and we cannot confirm it to be true unless it is confirmed by at least what, two witnesses. And that's exactly what Jesus refers to later in the discussion. Verse 17. "Even in your law, it has been written that the testimony of two men is true." So they go onto that legal aspect, this calculated attack. It's biblical law. You have to have at least two witnesses. You can't possibly think that just because you say it, it's true. In fact, it's invalidated because there are no confirming witnesses.

This is how unbelief operates, by the way. Unbelief never has enough proof. His words alone should have been convincing enough. They had enough hearing of His words to know that He spoke like no other person ever spoke, and that's exactly what was reported to them by the soldiers they sent to arrest Him in the last chapter. His works, ubiquitous works of healing, power over disease, demons, death, and nature. His effect. But unbelief never has enough proof.

Go back to chapter 7 verse 17. "If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak for myself." If you're willing to know the truth, you'll know the truth. If you're willing, you will know the teaching. They weren't willing. Their unbelief begat ignorance. Now you can be an unbeliever because you're ignorant. That's a better situation. Because if we can just remove the ignorance, perhaps you'll believe.

But the worst possible scenario is to be ignorant because you're an unbeliever so that when you're given the proof, your unbelief locks you into your ignorance. That was then. They weren't unbelievers because of ignorance. They were ignorance because of unbelief. They didn't process anything He said. They didn't connect any of the evidences, which were replete. They just wanted Him trapped and dead. And I would just say, generally speaking, that you want to be very careful if you're rejecting Jesus Christ in unbelief. You're in a safer condition if your unbelief is because you're ignorant than you are if your ignorance is because of your unbelief.

That's terminal. Because if ignorance has been met with truth and you're unwilling to see it, you are locked into the kind of ignorance that is hopeless. John 7:17, "If you're willing, the truth is there." The truth is there. Are you willing? When somebody says, "I don't believe the gospel. I don't believe Jesus is the son of God. I don't believe in Him as the Savior," there's usually two things to say. Number one, "That's such an amazing and such an astute conclusion. You must have studied the Bible intensely for years to come to that conclusion."

Because the world is full of people and has been for centuries who have studied it deeply their whole lives and are convinced He is who He said He was. So for you to overturn that, you must have made some kind of an extensive and erudite effort to understand everything in Scripture. That's not true. That's a very humiliating thing to say to someone who probably hasn't even read the New Testament. The second thing you'd want to say is, "Are you willing? Are you willing? Is your unbelief because of ignorance so that if ignorance is removed, you're willing?" These weren't. There Pharisees, these leaders, they weren't.

So you go from the antagonism to the answer in verse 14. Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I testify about myself, my testimony is true." You know, Deuteronomy 19:15, another passage in Deuteronomy, talk about two or three witnesses. That's for people who are liars. That works for us because we're all liars. We all live in a world of lies and deception. We've got to confirm things with several people hoping to get the truth.

But that doesn't apply to God. Jesus said, "Even if I testify about myself, my testimony is true. I'm not subject to those laws that are meant for a world of liars. I know where I came from, and I know where I'm going," and He's saying there, "I'm eternal. I'm transcendent." "The law was made for man, not for God. The Sabbath was made for man, not for God. I speak the truth because of who I am." So His answer is, "First of all, my claim is valid because of who I am and where I'm from and where I am going."

We know where he's from. The Word became flesh and dwelled among us, but it was the eternal Word who was with God. And I know where I'm going, John 17. "Father, restore me to the glory I had with you before the world began. I came from the Father. I'm going back to the Father, but you don't know where I come from or where I'm going." In fact, they didn't even know what town He was from. They thought He was from Nazareth. They never bothered to check. Why would they?

Their unbelief confined them to a willful ignorance. They never looked at the records to see that He was born in Bethlehem where Messiah is to be born, and He was of the line of David, both father and mother. And you remember that discussion from our last message. So first of all, He says, "You don't know anything about me, even temporally. You don't even know what town I'm from." Back in chapter 7, verse 28, He cried out on the temple teaching saying, "You both know me and know where I'm from." He's saying that sarcastically.

We know where you're from. You're from Galilee. You're from Nazareth. The Messiah doesn't come from there. He says, "You think you know me and where I'm from? I've not come of myself, but He who sent me is true whom you do not know. I know Him because I am from Him and He sent me." And they were trying to seize Him, kill Him. He's saying it again. When He says, "I know where I came from," they know He means God. And I know where I'm going. Back to God. I'm transcendent. I'm eternal. I am God.

Their denial of His testimony is willful ignorance. Ignorance is cheap. Ignorance is common, and ignorance in the face of evidence is terminally deadly. Jesus says, "You judge according to the flesh." Verse 15. You judge according to the flesh. Your judgment is superficial. By the way, they judged everyone. That's what Jesus referred to in Matthew 7. A sermon on the mount when He said, "Judge not, lest ye be judged." Stop the judgment. The final judgment is at your rendering. That's what the leaders were doing on everybody, but they judge according to the flesh.

You don't know me. You don't know me at all, and yet you sit in judgment on me and judgment on my testimony. All you know is external. All you know is physical, and you don't even know the town I came from. You haven't even checked the temple records. You don't even know what you could know. And you're the judge of my like you're the judge of everybody else.

Verse 15, He then says, "I'm not judging anyone," in that way he means. "I don't judge in the flesh." Apostle Paul, you know, in 2 Corinthians 5:16 said, "I judge no man in the flesh." What did he mean by that? He meant I don't judge people superficially. If you're a Christian, you judge people spiritually. You don't judge people superficially. You judge them spiritually.

Pharisees judge superficially, behavior. Jesus said, "I don't judge that way." But, verse 16, "Even if I do judge, my judgment is true." And by the way, He will judge. Back to chapter 5, verse 22, "And following all judgment is given to Him, and one day, He will raise all the dead to a judgment of life and a judgment of condemnation, and the Father has given all judgment into His hand, and He will judge.

But according to verse 30 of that fifth chapter, "He will judge in perfect harmony with the Father. Next time He comes, He will come as the judge." Back in chapter 3, He said He didn't come to judge, but to save the first time. "I'm not here to judge, but if I do judge, my judgment is true, for I am not alone

in it, but I and the father who sent me. I judge in accord with the Father." John 5:30. He says exactly the same thing.

And then He goes to the second point. Not only because of who I am from heaven going back to heaven, sent by God going back to God in perfect coordination and harmony with God. Then there's a second reason, and at this point, He exceeds to their expectation. Okay, even in your own law, it has been written that the testimony of two men is true. I'll give you that. I am He who testifies about myself, and the Father who sent me testifies about me. There's two. You want two? You have two. Myself and the Father. Myself and the Father. This again is an infuriating claim, very much like the claim he made back in chapter 5. My Father is working until now and I am working, and they wanted to kill Him because He was making himself equal with God.

Here He says, "I judge and my father Judges. I testify and the Father testifies. Two reasons that my claim is valid. Number one, who I am, and number two, the testimony that my Father corroborates." And of course, their response is predictable. Verse 19, they were saying to Him, "Where is your father?" Scorn, ridicule, sarcasm, mockery. I don't know whether they were throwing some slur at Him as an illegitimate child, which of course appears in ancient times. I don't know whether they were mocking the fact that no one knew His father because His father was long dead by the time He was in ministry. I don't know really what they were saying, but it was intended as scornful mockery. "Where is your father?"

Jesus answered, "You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also. You don't know me. You don't know my Father. You wouldn't know God if he came up to you. You don't know Him. You don't know me." Back in chapter 5, he said similar words. In verse 23, "If you don't honor me, you don't honor the Father." Later, he will say to the disciples, "If you've seen me, you've seen the Father." But this is the final insult. They prided themselves on knowing God. They knew God better than anyone. He says, "You don't know Him at all."

Matthew 11:27 says, "The son reveals the father." You don't know God. You don't know Him at all. This is a devastating statement. This is a characterization of the leadership of Judaism in the time of Christ. They didn't know God at all. Still true of those who reject the Savior. So that was the answer, devastating answer. Verse 20 then, we already looked at these words He spoke in the treasury as He taught in the temple.

They are now so infuriated that again, again, they want to seize Him to kill Him. But they can't. They tried three times in chapter 7 unsuccessfully. They can't because His hour had not yet come. He's on a divine schedule. They can't do a thing. Final statement is the avenging. The avenging, verse 21. Then He said to them again, "I go away. You'll seek me. You'll die in your sin. Where I'm going, you cannot come." That's final. Earlier, He said, "I'm not going to be around long. I'm just going to be here a little while," as if there's still some time. Here we are only hours later, at the most, days. "Your ignorance is confirmed. It's willful, and it's the product of your unbelief in the face of the revelation." We know how extreme their rejection was because they attributed what He did to Satan.

So He said, "I'll go away." Not six months from then, but as far as they were concerned, He was gone. "You will seek me." You know, that's the horror of lostness. And I told you that last time. Hell is where you now know finally who you need and you seek but never find. That's why there's weeping and gnashing of teeth. Where I go, you cannot come. You will die in your sin.

I want to close with just a look at chapter 12 because I think it ties this together, and I won't take long because time is up. Chapter 12, and we'll obviously get to it, but for now, verse 35. Verse 35 is a good concluding portion. So Jesus said to them this just before His last supper with the disciples in John 13 at the end. "For a little while longer, the light is among you. Walk while you have the light so the darkness will not overtake you. He who walks in the darkness doesn't know where he goes. While you have the light, believe in the light so that you may become sons of light."

That's the cry, isn't it? It's the same thing He says in chapter 8. But what's so stunning is immediately in verse 36, it says, "These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid himself from them. They didn't have much time. "Believe now, or I'm gone.' And He hid himself." Verse 37 explains why. "Though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him." Was that a shock to God? No, it was a fulfillment of prophecy. It fulfilled the word of Isaiah who said, "Lord who has believed our report, to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

For this reason, they couldn't believe. They wouldn't believe, and now what? They couldn't believe. For Isaiah said He is – this is from Isaiah 6, the first one from Isaiah 53. "He has blinded their eyes, hardened their hearts so they would not see with their eyes and perceive with their heart and be converted, and I heal them." These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory and he spoke of Him.

Isaiah's prophecy in chapter 6 is a prophecy of Jesus being rejected, and then God rejecting the rejecters. But thankfully, verse 42, many even of the rulers believed in Him, say, "That's good." Not so good, but because of the Pharisees, they were not confessing him for fear they would be put out of the synagogue, for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God. What a sad reality. He is the light of the world, the only light. Walk in the light or experience darkness forever. Lord, thank you again for the truth, the compelling and powerful word of Scripture comes through to us as always.

And we bow beneath its glory, its urgency. Help us to understand how serious these truths are. Believe while you can, come to the light while the light is available before it is hidden, and the one who would not believe cannot ever believe. Willful blindness becomes judicial blindness. Lord, may the light shine on hearts today. May Christ be the light of life. May many follow Him. Not walk in darkness, but follow Him all the way to that glorious light of heaven.

Father, now we ask that you would use these things that we have learned today to enlighten us and to open the hearts of some who perhaps have been and still are in the darkness and to make us all aware of how important it is to be lights in the world, for this terrible darkness that binds men's hearts. Use us, Lord, to be the light. We thank you for that great privilege. Do it by your power, we pray. In Christ's name.

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