

This morning we explored together Jesus' "I am the light of the world" statements in John 8:12. In that lesson we came to the understanding that Jesus God, the Messiah gives us spiritual enlightenment through his teachings that lead us to eternal life.

It is very much like his teaching on 'I AM the Bread of Life". Both metaphors; the 'bread' and 'his light' emphasized the fact that what he says we must understand, believe and live by to be saved from our sins.

There is a second 'I AM the light of the world' statement Jesus makes that is found in the gospel of John. Its importance was so significant that John gives us practically a blow by blow of the event in great detail. In the twelfth century when a man named Stephen Langton added chapter divisions in the Latin Vulgate, he wisely gave this story its own chapter. And as a point of interest, verse numbers were added to the chapters by Robert Estienne in 1551 and the Geneva translation of the bible of 1557 was the first printed whole bible to have modern chapter and verse divisions in it, just in case it ever comes up on Final Jeopardy.

The whole 9th chapter is devoted to the story of Jesus healing a man who was born blind. Jesus not only says 'He is the light of the world', he proves it. There are many lessons to be taught within this story but I will limit us to just our topic. Jesus takes a man who has only known darkness his whole life and gives him vision so he can see light. Jesus' words and actions echo Genesis. 1:3, "And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light."

This blind man didn't cry out to the LORD for healing as many blind people had done. Jesus and the disciples saw him, and they asked Jesus a rather presumptuous question, "Rabbi who sinned that this man was born blind, the man or his parents?" To which Jesus informed them, "Neither he or his parents sinned, this happened so that the works of God could be revealed in him." And in: John 9:4-5, he said, "It is necessary for me to do the deeds of the one who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work! While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

Once Jesus ministry started he was on a tight time-line and he had much to do for his Father. The time he had left on earth before his death on the cross was near. (night is coming when no one can work) This miracle that was about to happen was a preordained work of God the Father. It was on the 'to do list' that God gave Jesus. This was going to be a unique healing, previously unknown, it had never happened before. The blind man most likely didn't even have eyes in his sockets, as is the condition of many who are born blind.

6 When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.

7 And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

This is why I think the man didn't have any eyes in the sockets at all. Think of what Jesus is doing here. What was said about Jesus by the apostle John in the first chapter? He said he was the Creator of everything.

How did the Creator make man in the Genesis account? He formed man out of the dust of the ground. By Jesus taking clay and anointing the blind man's eyes with it I believe he was creating new eyes where there previously had been none. It is interesting that Jesus sent the man to the Pool of Siloam because Siloam means 'sent'. The 'sent' here in this verse is different than that of verse 4. This 'sent' is from the Greek word Apostello which means to be sent out on a mission. This too is a pseudonym of the Christ, The Sent of God.

So the Sent of God sends the anointed blind man to the Pool of Sent to wash off the clay so he could see. Unlike Naaman the Syrian General who was told by the prophet Elisha to go wash in the Jordan river seven times to get rid of his leprosy. He got angry at the prophet for ridiculous reasons and refused to go, forfeiting the healing at first; until he complied with the instructions and was healed. This blind man faithfully went there right away, washed, and came back seeing.

After the man was healed news spread quickly what had never been done before, someone who was born blind was healed! And it was done on the Sabbath. Everyone was amazed even doubting if it was the same man who used to beg. The man ends up in front of the religious leaders who were more interested in legal matters of the law, which they grossly misinterpreted, rather than to be filled with awe and joy for the man who was healed and praise God for it. The former blind man so frustrated the religious leaders because of the answers he was giving to their questions, they threw him out of the temple and excommunicated him.

The story ends with Jesus revealing himself as the Messiah to the former blind man, who didn't know who Jesus was up to that point, he just thought he was a prophet. The blind man showed great faith by following his instructions to receive his sight. Jesus showed he is master of both the physical and spiritual.

Because of the healing, the response of the man is exactly what miracles are designed to do, create faith in those who witness them. Jesus gave him a physical healing of sight, he could now see physical natural light, the miracle combined with Jesus testimony created spiritual light within the man. The former blind man's faith caused him to worship the Lord upon learning that he is the Messiah.

His honest and correct response condemned the teachers of the law who were unbelieving and contended with the Lord over legal matters they misinterpreted. Let's read the conclusion to this story, John 9:35-41,

"Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him." Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him. Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind." Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?" Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains."

What a lesson for everyone, those of us in the Lord's church should be very careful of our attitudes and not to think we know it all like the Pharisees. We should always be in communication with God in prayer, asking for truth and understanding. We should never be content with where we are in our knowledge of the Word of God and always continue in our learning no matter what our age. When we approach our study of God's word, our attitude should be like that of King David's, Psa 119:18, "Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous truths out of your law."

The teachers of the law didn't think they needed instruction from our Lord and he equated them as being spiritually blind. They were unwilling to believe the miracle and give glory to God. They were going to perish eternally in their stubborn and foolish ignorance of the Truth. They were fools because they not only rejected instruction and correction, but rejected the Anointed One of God, the author of wisdom.

Later, with Jesus death just days away, the apostle John again records for us Jesus teaching the crowd in Jerusalem. Because of the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread the city's population has easily doubled.

Much had transpired in the short few pages from when Jesus healed the blind man and this final Passover. Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, Mary had already anointed Jesus with the expensive perfume preparing him for his burial. What we call Palm Sunday had passed with Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a colt to fulfill scripture. Some Greek converts came to town and wanted an audience with Jesus, and our Lord starts talking to them about his coming death. Because of the crowds unbelief, he ends up arguing with the crowd again.

He spoke some rather harsh truths concerning light and darkness and judgment and it's worth our attention.

John 12:27-50, "Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, deliver me from this hour'? But for this reason I have come to this hour! Father, glorify your name!" Then a voice came from heaven, "I have both glorified it, and I will glorify it again." Now the crowd that stood there and heard it said it had thundered. Others were saying, "An angel has spoken to him!" Jesus answered and said, "This voice has not happened for my sake, but for your sake. Now is the judgment of this world! Now the ruler of this world will be thrown out! And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."~

(Now he said this to indicate by what sort of death he was going to die.) Then the crowd replied to him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever! And how do you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" So Jesus said to them, "Yet a little time the light is with you! Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness does not overtake you! And the one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.~

While you have the light, believe in the light, in order that you may become sons of light." Jesus said these things, and then he went away and was hidden from them.

But as many signs as he had performed before them, they did not believe in him, in order that the word of the prophet Isaiah would be fulfilled, who said, "Lord, who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"~

For this reason they were not able to believe, because again Isaiah said, "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, lest they see with their eyes and understand with their hearts and turn, and I heal them." Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory, and he spoke about him. Yet despite that, even many of the rulers believed in him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be expelled from the synagogue. For they loved the praise of men more than praise from God."~

"But Jesus cried out and said, "The one who believes in me does not believe in me, but in the one who sent me, and the one who sees me sees the one who sent me. I have come as a light into the world, in order that everyone who believes in me will not remain in the darkness. And if anyone hears my words and does not observe them, I will not judge him. For I have not come to judge the world, but to save the world.~

The one who rejects me and does not accept my words has one who judges him; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For I have not spoken from myself, but the Father himself who sent me has commanded me what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. So the things that I say, just as the Father said to me, thus I say."

Can you imagine? Here we have the God of Love, the Messiah that Israel has been waiting for, who has shown them miracle after miracle, teaching them the very words from God the Father, he tells them of his impending death which should have made their eyes well up with tears, they hear the Father's voice BOOM through the city,

giving a second public witness to his Son, here in Jerusalem, and before at his baptism by John the Baptist, and one privately on the Mount of Transfiguration with a few of his disciples, all declaring him to be the Son of God, the Messiah of Israel. And yet many of them did not believe. Should we be surprised at peoples disbelief today?

Jesus death on the cross effected both the physical world and the spiritual world. Jesus said darkness was coming when no work could be done. While on the cross from noon to three it was dark over the whole land and then Jesus died. The light was leaving this world.

The Lord said that if we believe in him we become children of light, so what does that entail?

Mat 5:14-16, "You are the light of the world. A city located on a hill can't be hidden. Neither do you light a lamp, and put it under a measuring basket, but on a stand; and it shines to all who are in the house. Even so, let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

We let the light that he gave us shine in our lives!

Ps. 18:28, "For you will light my lamp, Yahweh. My God will light up my darkness."

Ps. 27:1, "Yahweh is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? Yahweh is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid?"

Ps. 36:9, "For with you is the spring of life. In your light shall we see light."

Ps. 119:130, "The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple."

Pro. 6:23, "For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light. Reproofs of instruction are the way of life,"

Ecclesiastes 2:13, "I saw that wisdom is better than folly, just as light is better than darkness."

So what we see is that God's word is the only place we can get spiritual light, true enlightenment that give us the right information so that we can make a course correction getting us off of the broad way to destruction and onto the narrow path that leads to heaven. Listen how Jesus word brought enlightenment to those in the Holy Land.

Mat 4:12-17, "Now when Jesus heard that John was delivered up, he withdrew into Galilee. Leaving Nazareth, he came and lived in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles,- the people who sat in darkness saw a great light, to those who sat in the region and shadow of death, to them light has dawned." From that time, Jesus began to preach, and to say, "Repent! For the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

We have to teach the truth of God's word because it is the only way to counter-act the error that others spread in their ignorance about God's word.

Mat 15:12-14, "Then His disciples came and said to Him, "Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?" But He answered and said, "Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch."

Luke 6:39, "He also told them this parable: "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit? "

We must keep plugging away in spite of low numbers to teach the truth, it is the only thing that has true power to change lives.

2 Corinthians 4:1-6, "Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ."

Ephesians 5:8-16, "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil."

We were once the spiritually blind, and by God's grace the truth touched our hearts.

1 John 1:5-7, "This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. Invitation