



John 1:6-13
“The True Light”

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

“Light” is a term that the Apostle John uses frequently in reference to Jesus Christ. It refers of course to Jesus’ role as the illuminator and revealer, the one in whom there is no darkness, but it is also yet another way that scripture is telling us that Jesus is God. I remember a while back I was having an argument with someone over whether we should believe that the days of the creation account in Genesis 1 are a literal sequence. I remember being amazed when he said *“well of course they aren’t the literal order of creation, after all we have God creating light on Day 1 and yet He doesn’t create the Sun, Moon, and Stars until Day 4 and of course you can’t have light without the Sun!”* And I said to him, haven’t you read what it says in Rev. 21:23-24 about the Heavenly City? *“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.”* When God said let there be light, and there was light, it was because He himself illuminated his creation. As impressive as the Sun is, it is a mere candle compared to the original Light that Created it.

Here in his Gospel John wants to draw the same kind of comparison between Jesus and John the Baptist, and if you bear with me I’ll explain what I mean. John the Baptist was a prophet, Jesus tells us in Luke 7:28 that John was not only the last but the greatest of the Old Testament prophets. He was a man who did not appoint himself. He was commissioned by God to fulfill an important role, John was to be the one spoken of in Malachi 3:1 *“Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,” Says the LORD of hosts.”*

Notice that the verse says “to prepare the way before ME” He will prepare the way for the advent of the coming not of another prophet, but of God Himself. John did that by bearing witness to the fact that the true light had come at last, and that Jesus, the Son of God, was in the world.

There is an ancient Chinese proverb that says *“when a finger points at the moon, the fool looks at the finger”* and one of the great problems that has always attended the spread of the gospel is that the greater the messenger the more likely it is that men would look to him instead of the one He is pointing to. For instance, when Paul and Barnabas came preaching the gospel and doing miracles in Lystra in Acts 14 the crowd attempted to worship them and the evangelists had their hands full stopping them from sacrificing to them. To this day you will find that a great many gospel preachers end up creating their own followers instead of followers of Christ, every gospel minister needs to be on his guard in

that respect. John the Baptist had specifically pointed his followers to Jesus saying “**Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!**” In other words, don’t follow me, follow him and in fact the Apostle John as we shall see when we get to verse 35 was probably one of those disciples of John who listened to his teacher and followed Jesus. But there were still many other disciples of John the Baptist who either didn’t know or didn’t believe Jesus was the Christ, for instance Acts 18:25 tells us Apollos was originally one of them, and so that is why in verse 8 John is stressing the point, that Jesus is the light not John the Baptist. John the Baptist was a prophet a messenger of God, but not the Light of the World. The huge difference between Jesus and John the Baptist can be seen from what John has already written. It is the difference between Creator and Creature and Message and Messenger. That is what I meant about John drawing a comparison as great as the difference between God and the Sun, between the original light, and copy of it.

Now starting in verse 9 John wants you to know to Amazing things about the Word, first that God the Son, the True light of the world, the one who had been giving the scripture, speaking through the prophets, became incarnate, and he came into the world, I think sometimes we miss out on how truly amazing the idea summed up in the name Immanuel meaning God with us given to Christ in Isaiah 7:14, “God with Us” really is. Jesus who made the world put on flesh and stood upon the same earth you and I do. **Christ Jesus** was as David Brown put it “**breathing His Own air, treading His own ground, supported by substances to which Himself gave being, and the Creator of the very men whom He came to save.**”

But then John also wants you to know the truly tragic thing as well, God came near, and His own did not know Him, nor received Him. Now Brothers and Sisters, the immensity of the tragedy it wasn’t just that Jesus came into the world generally, it was as though he went to an alien people like the Romans who didn’t have the old testament, hadn’t been given all of the promises of scripture. John draws out the tragedy in verse 11 – Jesus came to his own people the Jews and they rejected Him. The phrase there, he came to his own could be translated He came Home – S.D. Gordon example, Doorstep

After all those promises the hope of the ages comes and is rejected. An incident as tragic as the Jews coming to the very edge of the promised land – and then because of lack of faith and trust in the promises of God, failing to enter in. Notice also, that it isn’t that they rejected the ethical teachings of Jesus – they rejected Jesus. He is the gift. Because he brings in salvation and light.

I labor that because of what is said in the next verse, not all rejected him, some received Him. Not his teachings but HIM. I want you to see that, people are always saying “O well I believe in the things Jesus taught” but I don’t believe he was the son of God. Well brothers and sisters, the message of the Gospel is not some ethical teachings that Jesus shared, it is Jesus himself, and you haven’t received Him if you haven’t received Jesus as God and Savior.

Believing in Jesus means more than a mere profession of faith, saying I am a Christian, it means believing in everything He says and does. Those who believe in His name have recognized who Christ is, they no longer leave Him on the doorstep but joyfully receive him as John puts it. They have put their entire trust in Him for time and for eternity. They Believe in His Name and what is His Name? Jesus – meaning literally “Yahweh is Salvation” “*you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.*” Those who have this gift *become* God’s children, it assumes they were not before. They have been adopted and have the right a change of status. Before they were children of darkness, children of the devil, and now they have become children of the light, children of God. And it was to make this change possible that Jesus came into the world.

John is going to also spend a lot of time telling us how this change of status, this new birth comes about, how we are saved. Here he wants it to be quite clear how it didn't happen:

1) It didn't happen because of blood: Here he is talking about a racial birthright: Against the Jewish idea that it is by birthright that people were saved. Jesus will stress this point as well, it will not help you that Abraham was your father. Similarly kids I hope you realize very well that you are not saved by born into a Christian family or even raised in the church.

2) It is not by the will of the flesh, or the will of the man, it wasn't a decision of the natural man to receive Christ and to believe in him. Man in his unregenerated, unrenewed state will never turn to Christ, anymore than a dead man will choose to go for a walk. He doesn't have the ability to go from child of darkness to child of light himself. S.D. Gordon pointed out in order to become a member of the family of God is not a result of campaign of self improvement. You can take the choicest line of potato and work on it and culture it and improve it all you want, but you will never change it into a Barlett Pear. As he puts it: "Only God can change the natural man, this process of being born again is a miracle that only God can bring about."

*Ephesians 2:1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,
2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,*

...

*8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,
9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

I won't leave you with any radically difficult applications:

1) Christ himself is the True Light, neither is there true light to be found anywhere else. John 1:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

2) You receive this Light only by Receiving Him, you have become a child of God, only if you have received Him.

3) If you have let me ask you are, reflecting that Light in the world. Bearing witness to it as as we have seen John's job therefore was not to be the light, but to bear witness to it. The word there for witness, incidentally, is the word Marturian, from which we get our word Martyr. The said thing is when we think of the word Martyr we tend to think of the person who suffered, but actually the emphasis is on what they suffered for - their witness, their declaration that Jesus is the Christ. To bear, to bear witness to Christ is to show your commitment to Him, your belief in Him. For instance, if I see an accident, I have not committed myself to one position or another regarding guilt until I share what I witnessed. At that point I am committed. Have you made a profession of faith before a church, have you declared what you believe concerning Christ? John the Baptist did, he told the whole world concerning Jesus – "Behold the Lamb of God Who Takes Away the Sins of the World!" Now many men today believe various false things about Jesus, many call him simply a prophet some will not even say that and openly hate Him as they did in His time. *Christ asks us as he asked Peter, but you who do you say that I am?*

Matt. 16:16 16 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

IF You have answered that way, rejoice! It is a sure sign of the new birth!

*17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed **are you**, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to **you**, but My Father who is in heaven.*