

Your Life: In the Light of Jesus Christ

John 8 Part 2

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Jesus wants to change your point of view. He wants to open your eyes to a radically different way of seeing our world and your own life in this world. Jesus has come to shine the light of His truth into the darkness and confusion of life.

*"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."
John 8:12 NIV*

This incredible promise of Christ is for each of us. But to really grasp the significance of these words, we must set them within the context in which they were spoken. John 8 is a chapter filled with intense language and conflict. As it develops we begin to understand more fully the words of Christ about light and darkness.

Ultimate Value, Meaning, Consequences

In John 8, Jesus shines the light of His truth on life. He does this by consistently speaking of life in terms that seem so "ultimate." Jesus presents life as a series of extreme contrasts: faith or unbelief, light or darkness, truth or lies, God or Satan, freedom or slavery, life or death. There are no shades of grey in this chapter, or indeed anywhere in the Gospel of John. It all seems so extreme, so absolute.

People in our world are often uncomfortable with such language. For them, life is not so black and white. Our culture loves to explore the themes of moral ambiguity and intellectual uncertainty. Often the one thing that seems certain is that nothing is actually truly certain. Soon we are uncertain of the value or meaning of life itself. Does my life really matter in this huge universe? Do my choices really count? Can I really know anything with certainty? Are there any ultimate eternal consequences to my choices and actions in this life? Does it really matter what I believe or who I follow? But the words of Christ cut through all this like a knife. Jesus' view of your life and your choices in this life is radically different.

Step one in living your life in the light of Jesus Christ is to listen carefully to the extreme language Jesus uses when He talks about your life and your choices. If you do, you will be struck with the powerful Gospel perspective that your life has ultimate value and meaning. Your faith and your choices in this life have ultimate consequences. It matters what you believe and it matters who or what you follow in this life. This is the message of Christ in the Gospel of John

Ultimate Gift, Promise, Hope

Step two in living your life in the light of Jesus Christ is to listen carefully to the extreme language Jesus uses when He talks about Himself. Remember, in all the intensity of the words and conflict of John 8, Jesus is leading us to a carefully planned climax where He will reveal the ultimate truth about Himself. You'll find it in John 8:58, where Jesus says: "Before Abraham was, I AM." The Jews responded to this by picking up stones to stone Jesus for blasphemy. This is because they understood the radical and ultimate claim that Christ was making. He was claiming to be almighty, sovereign God standing right in their midst. We will explore the meaning of this claim and its biblical background in today's sermon. The important thing to recognize is that Jesus, having presented us with the radical, ultimate nature of each of our lives in this world, now presents Himself to us as the radical and ultimate Savior for our lives. What could be more ultimate than this? God Himself has invaded our world in Christ. God Himself has come to save us. God Himself has intervened on our behalf. This is the ultimate gift...promise and hope. Jesus doesn't simply come and show us that life has ultimate significance and eternal consequences. He does that...but then goes on to show us that

God has given us the ultimate way of salvation – Jesus Himself, the great I AM, the Lamb of God, the Bread of Life, the Light of the World. This is extreme beyond measure.

And Now it's Time to Follow

Back in John 8:12 Jesus said that we must follow Him if we want to walk in the light of life. We are learning what it means to follow Christ as we study the Gospel of John. It means so much more than modeling our lives on the example of Jesus. It means hearing and believing His words. It means coming to Him personally in faith and trusting in Him for forgiveness and new life. It means seeing Him for who He truly is and confessing Him as our living Lord. It means taking up His mission as our own. This is the way we follow. This is your life in the light of Jesus Christ.