



TEEN TREE OF LIFE

The Light of the World Part 2

December 12, 2021

Before you begin, ask yourself a very important question: Do you believe that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins? If you answered yes, you will need to be sure that you are filled with The Holy Spirit. How do you do this? You name your sins to God The Father in His Son's Name. This is called Rebound. As a Christian, you must rebound any time you sin. This is taught in 1 JOH 1:9: *If we confess [name] our sins [directly to God], He [God] is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Now, if you have never believed that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins, all you have to do is say to yourself that you believe in Him and you are saved! The Bible verse which teaches us this is ACTS 16:31: *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."*

We ended last week's Teen Tree with a beautiful statement about the coming Messiah in LUK 1:78 (New International Reader' Version): *All of that will happen because our God is tender and caring. His kindness will bring the rising sun to us from heaven.* As we learned, this is part of John's father Zechariah's prophecy. It's a verse which compares Our Lord and Savior to the sun which literally lights up our world!

Now, let's look at how light is often used as an analogy to describe God or what extends from Him to us. PSA 27:1 (New International Reader' Version) is a good example of this: *The Lord is my light, and he saves me. Why should I fear anyone? The Lord is my place of safety. Why should I be afraid?* If you think about it, there's a great deal of comfort in light because without it, we'd be in total darkness and that is a scary place to be!

PSA 119:105 (The Message Bible) is also a wonderful example of the use of light in Scripture: *By your words I can see where I'm going; they throw a beam of light on my dark path.* This is such an important message written by King David. God's Word shows us the way during the darkest times of our lives. Yes, it's true, His Word guides us during prosperous and happy times, as well. But it's during the difficult, dark times that we truly appreciate His Messages and Guidance. As the Living Word, The Lord Jesus Christ was sharing this same message when he said: *"I am the Light of the world; the one who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."* (JOH 8:12 New American Standard Bible) Those listening to His Message that day in the temple near the Mount of Olives should have understood clearly that He was making a proclamation concerning Himself that He was The Promised Messiah and the fulfillment

of the prophecies of Isaiah and Malachi. Those with Him that day were people who had been following Him to hear His Messages and were clamoring for more. **The Message Bible** describes them as “**swarms of people.**”

The analogy of light used in **PSA 119:105** is in reference to it providing the illumination needed to find your way. Most of us have tried at one time or another to navigate through a dark room only to find ourselves bumping into something. Usually if we lose electricity and can't switch on a light, we frantically search for a flashlight or a lighter and candle. It's during these moments that we are truly reminded just how important light is in our lives. Stumbling around in the dark is the way it is spiritually for those who are without Christ. Satan has blinded the eyes of the unbelieving, leaving them in darkness: **The god of this world has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They can't see the light of the good news that makes Christ's glory clear. Christ is the likeness of God. (2 COR 4:4 New International Reader' Version)** They cannot perceive the truth. They stumble around in their sin and cannot find the path of righteousness. They need a light to show them the way, but some can't even see it!

Look at the cool translation of **2 COR 4:1-4** in **The Message Bible**: **Since God has so generously let us in on what he is doing, we're not about to throw up our hands and walk off the job just because we run into occasional hard times. We refuse to wear masks and play games. We don't maneuver and manipulate behind the scenes. And we don't twist God's Word to suit ourselves. Rather, we keep everything we do and say out in the open, the whole truth on display, so that those who want to can see and judge for themselves in the presence of God. If our Message is obscure to anyone, it's not because we're holding back in any way. No, it's because these other people are looking or going the wrong way and refuse to give it serious attention. All they have eyes for is the fashionable god of darkness. They think he can give them what they want, and that they won't have to bother believing a Truth they can't see. They're stone-blind to the dayspring brightness of the Message that shines with Christ, who gives us the best picture of God we'll ever get.**

What a translation – especially with the additional verses included at the beginning.

As we learned in last week's Teen Tree, God provided the pillar of fire which guided the nation of Israel through the wilderness. The pillar of fire not only illuminated their camp and provided safety, but it also led them to where they needed to go. But the people didn't use the light from the pillar to find their own way. They followed the pillar of fire. That is an important aspect of this analogy Jesus is making about Himself. Notice that He says in **JOH 8:12** that **“the one who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”** Jesus is not a light you use for your own purposes to see your own way. He is a Light that you follow. He is lighting your path so that you are not in darkness and can go His Way. In fact, if you try to go your own way, you will not be following Him and you will end up stumbling around in darkness, completely lost.

The Lord Jesus Christ claimed to be The Messiah – The Promised One that would be The Sun of Righteousness Who would shine on those living in darkness. He would bring the light of life. John mentioned this aspect of Our Savior's Ministry at the beginning of chapter 1: **Life was in him, and that life was the light for all people. The light**

shines in the darkness. But the darkness has not overcome the light. (JOH 1:4-5 New International Reader' Version) Further on, in **JOH 1:9 (New International Reader' Version)**, John calls Jesus Christ "**The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.**"

We learn that there were some Pharisees present during His teaching that day who challenged Jesus Christ's Claim to be The Messiah. They understood what His claims meant so they could not let them go undisputed. John wrote: **The Pharisees argued with him. "Here you are," they said, "appearing as your own witness. But your witness does not count."** (JOH 8:13 New International Reader' Version) It's important to note here that the Pharisees aren't saying that they believe that what Jesus is saying is true and that He just needs an additional witness for it to be legally true. They are literally disputing Him. The idea here is that they have rejected what Jesus is saying and are charging Him with unsupported boasting. In their eyes, Jesus would need additional confirmation for His statement to be true. They believed He didn't have it so His was a lie!

But Jesus takes up their challenge and shows that what He is saying is true and that He does have the witnesses to prove it. His assertion that His Testimony is true, based on three arguments: His own testimony because He knows His Origin and Destination; His Intimate Union with God The Father; and God The Father's Witness.

The first argument is found in **JOH 8:14 (New International Reader' Version): Jesus answered, "Even if I am a witness about myself, what I say does count. I know where I came from. And I know where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going.** The Lord Jesus Christ most certainly knows Himself, but the Pharisees do not know Him. They have not even bothered to find out where He was physically born much less about His Origin in Heaven. Look at what they said in **JOHN 7:52 (New International Reader' Version): "Are you from Galilee too? Look into it. You will find that a prophet does not come out of Galilee."**

Jesus knows that He will be returning to Heaven and the Pharisees are ignorant of this. Jesus is from heaven and will be going back there. And as a heavenly being who dwells in the presence of God, He must be sinless. So, He does not lie. His Testimony is true.

The second argument is in **JOH 8:15-16 (New International Reader' Version): The Jews there were amazed. They asked, "How did this man learn so much without being taught?" Jesus answered, "What I teach is not my own. It comes from the one who sent me.** Notice that Our Lord doesn't mince words in His counter argument with these Pharisees. They are judgmental with the wrong basis for their judgments. They judge by how they perceive things and do not investigate the reality. They had judged Jesus Christ as disqualified from being The Messiah because He appeared to be from Galilee. Although He had grown up in Nazareth, His friends were Galileans and He probably had a Galilean accent. They judged by the appearance rather than investigating to find out that He had actually been born in Bethlehem in Judea – just as the prophecy had said He would. This is a good warning to us as well, because it's easy to fall into this trap of judging others by appearance rather than the truth!!

Jesus' final argument is in **JOH 8:17-18 (New International Reader' Version)** where we read: ***"Your own Law says that the witness of two people proves the truth about something. I am a witness about myself. The other witness about me is the Father, who sent me."*** The Lord Jesus Christ is referring to **DEU 17:6 (New International Reader' Version)** showing His argument is in keeping with the Law: ***Two or three witnesses are required to put someone to death. No one can be put to death because of what only one witness says. Two or three witnesses are required.*** Can you imagine what the Pharisees were thinking at that moment? What more trustworthy witness could there be than God the Father?

{to be continued}