

# THE GREAT CLAIM OF JESUS

## JOHN 07:37–39

### *Introduction*

This is a picture of the great claim of Jesus. It is a picture that should cause every man to search his own response to Jesus.

- I. The setting: The day of the Feast (v. 37).
- II. The claims of Jesus (vv. 37-39).

### **I. *John 07:37 Feast of Tabernacles***

The Feast of Tabernacles was the most popular feast among the Jews. For that reason it was simply known as *The Festival* (1 Kng. 8:2). It was also called *The Feast of Ingathering* (Exo. 23:16) and *The Festival to the Lord* (Lev. 23:39). The Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated for seven days. Each Jewish family built a small stucco or tent-like structure in their yard or upon some other property they owned or secured for the occasion. Then they moved out of their home into the structure for the seven-day period. The Feast celebrated two significant events. Historically, it celebrated the day when Israel wandered about in the wilderness as strangers and pilgrims without a homeland. The purpose for moving into the stucco or tent-like structure was to keep before their minds the wilderness wanderings of their forefathers (Lev. 23:40-43). Secondly, the Feast was to be a period of thanksgiving for the completion of the harvest season and for the goodness of God in all of life (Exo. 23:16; Deu. 16:13, 16). The people were to give thanks for all that God had given them: all the fruit of the land that enriched life and made life possible.

The ceremony of the festival was most impressive and gives a dramatic picture of Christ's claims (Jn. 7:37-39). On each of the seven days, the people came to the temple and brought some fruit as an offering and a few palm and willow branches. The branches were used to form a roof over the altar. Then the priest took a golden pitcher and led the people in a processional down to the pool of Siloam where he filled the pitcher with water. During this march the people played the flute and sang the Hallel, which was Psalms 113-118.

It was on the return march that the significant drama took place.

- => As the pitcher of water passed through the Water Gate, the people repeated in unison: "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation" (Isa. 12:3).
- => When the pitcher reached the altar, the water was poured out over the altar as an offering to God. While this was being done, the people waved palm branches and recited the words "O Lord, save us; O Lord, grant us success" (Psa. 118:25).

The idea of the processional was a dramatic way to thank God for rain, to offer prayer to God for more rain, and for a fruitful season in the coming year. It was a dramatic way for the people to acknowledge their need and dependence upon God for the rains, the water that gave them the fruit of the ground and the bounty of life. The last day of the Feast

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was dramatic in particular, for the people repeated the processional seven times. Note a significant point: Scripture says the Feast of Tabernacles will be celebrated and fulfilled in the end time when our Lord returns. The Feast will apparently symbolize our joy, liberty, and victory through the wilderness experience of life and the glorious provision of God: the glorious provision of living eternally and worshipping and serving God throughout the universe (Zec. 14:16).

## II. *John 07:37–39 The Claims of Jesus Christ*

It was on “the last and greatest day of the Feast,” the day when the people marched in the processional seven times, that Jesus made His phenomenal claim. Some imagine Jesus shouting His claim just as the people finished saying, “Grant us success” (Psa. 118:25).

Imagine the scene: Jesus did two unusual things. He *stood* (a teacher always sat in that day), and He *cried out* (ekrazen) shouting loudly. Both actions would startle and shock the people to attention. Picture thousands of voices praying to God for the living rains in the coming season, reciting: “grant us success,” and then piercing the air comes the thundering cry:

*John 7:37-38 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.”*

Jesus made three phenomenal claims.

1. Jesus Christ is the source of life: He is the One who can quench the real thirst of man’s being, who can meet the desperate need of man for prosperity, the real fruit and bounty of life.
  - a. Men do thirst. They thirst for physical water and they thirst for spiritual life. Living water is the only water that will quench thirst. Men have two thirsts: a physical thirst and a spiritual thirst.

*Psa 42:1 As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God.*

*Zec 13:1 “On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity.”*

Men know immediately how to quench their physical thirst, but their spiritual thirst is a different matter. Within their hearts men sense a thirst for...

- purpose
- meaning
- significance
- satisfaction
- fulfillment
- something that is missing
- something to fill the void, the emptiness and the loneliness
- deliverance from a sense of lostness
- freedom from undue anxiety, stress and pressure

Men have a problem, however. They usually misunderstand the spiritual thirst and try to quench it with the stagnant waters of the flesh and of this world. The result is poison and death.

=> The stagnant waters of the flesh and sinful nature are such things as lust, immorality, drunkenness, indulgence, and pride.

=> The stagnant waters of the world are such things as the love of money, cars, houses, lands, clothes, extravagant living, position, and power.

The stagnant waters of the flesh and the world never quench a man's thirst. They are like salt water; they only make a man crave for more and more.

***Jer 2:13*** *My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.*

b. Jesus Christ claims to be the source, that is, the Water that can quench man's thirst and give the fruit and bounty man so desperately needs in his life. He claims that He can do what water does. Water does at least three things. It cleanses or purifies; it refreshes; and it revitalizes or energizes.

=> He can cleanse and purify.

***Eph 1:7*** *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.*

=> He can refresh.

***Isa 28:12*** *To whom he said, "This is the resting place, let the weary rest"; and, "This is the place of repose" — but they would not listen.*

***Acts 3:19*** *Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.*

=> He can revitalize and energize.

***Mat 11:28*** *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."*

2. Jesus Christ is the source of abundant life. Rivers of living water can flow out from a person. An abundance of life can be experienced (see *Jesus Christ, Life*, Jn. 1:4; *Jesus Christ, Purpose of Life*, Jn. 10:10).

***Mat 5:6*** *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."*

***John 4:14*** *"But whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."*

***Rev. 7:16*** *Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat.*

***John 10:10*** *"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."*

**Rev 22:17** *The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.*

- a. The death of Jesus Christ (His having been struck for the sins of the world) is the source of the living water. Out of His death (because He died) He was able to arise, and by arising He was able to conquer sin and death and to bring forth eternal life in all of its abundance. Note: the Word of God to Moses was a picture of the living water that was to come from Christ after He was struck. (see Isa. 53:4.)

**Exo 17:6** *"I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink." So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel. (see Num. 20:11)*

- b. Living water comes only through "believing in Christ." (See *Saving Faith*, Jn. 2:24.)

**John 6:35** *Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty."*

3. Jesus Christ is the source of the Holy Spirit. Rivers of living water refer to the Holy Spirit. This is a crucial verse, for it is the only place "living waters" is defined. When Jesus spoke of giving "living water", He meant He would give the Holy Spirit to a person. The presence of the Holy Spirit, of course, meant the experience of abundant and eternal life.

Note: it is only the person who believes in Christ who receives the Holy Spirit. Belief in Him is essential. Christ is the Giver of the Spirit.

Note several facts about the living water.

- 1) The living water comes from Christ. He and He alone is its source.

**John 7:37** *On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink."*

**Rev 21:6** *He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life."*

- 2) The living water keeps a man from ever thirsting again. His inner thirst is gone forever. It is quenched and fully satisfied.

**Zec 13:1** *"On that day a fountain will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity."*

**Isa 58:11** *The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.*

- 3) The living water is "a spring of water" placed "in" the man. The well is not placed outside the man, not placed anywhere out in the world, not in his home. It is placed "in" him.

**John 7:38-39** “Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

- 4) The living water springs up and continues to spring up and bubble, flowing on and on. It is ever in motion.

Isa 12:3 With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

- 5) The living water springs up into eternal life. It will never end.

**Rev 7:17** “For the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” (See Eze. 47:1-12).

**Rev 22:17** The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

**Gal 5:22-23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

**Eph 5:9** For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth. ■

### JOHN 07:39 HOLY SPIRIT

What does the statement mean, “the [Holy] Spirit had not been given”? It does not mean the Spirit was not active in the Old Testament. He was very active (Gen. 1:2; 6:3; Job. 26:13; 33:4; Psa. 51:11; 139:7; Eze. 3:24, 27; Hag. 2:5). It seems to mean that the Holy Spirit was not *fully present* until after the death and glorification of Christ. He was not present...

- in all His fullness
- in the lives of believers all the time
- in equipping believers with permanent spiritual gifts

These three things certainly happened after the glorification of Christ.

=> He entered the world in all His fullness at Pentecost. (See *Pentecost, Coming of the Holy Spirit*, Acts 2:1-4.)

=> He entered the lives of believers at conversion, and their bodies became “the temple of the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor. 6:19).

=> He equips believers with spiritual gifts that are permanent (1 Cor. 12:1f). □

## ACTS 02:01–04 PENTECOST, COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The disciples had been deliberately prepared for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Throughout the Bible the revelation of the Spirit had been step by step, that is, progressive. Prophecy shows this clearly.

1. Joel prophesied, “And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people....” (Joel 2:28-29).
2. John the Baptist said, “I baptize with water, but He shall baptize with [en, in] the Holy Spirit” (Mt. 3:11; Lk. 3:16).
3. In the early part of Jesus’ ministry, He had said that believers were to be “born again...[by] the Spirit” (Jn. 3:3- 4; see 1 Jn. 5:1).
4. During His ministry, Jesus taught that men were to receive the Holy Spirit by prayer (Lk. 11:13).
5. In the Upper Room, Jesus identified the Holy Spirit as a Person (Jn. 14:15-26), and He outlined the work of the Spirit with both unbelievers and believers (Jn. 16:7-15). Significantly, He revealed that He was praying to the Father for the Comforter to come and abide with the disciples (Jn. 14:16-17).
6. After His resurrection from the dead, Jesus appeared to His disciples in the Upper Room. There He symbolically breathed on them, saying, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (Jn. 20:22). But He insisted they not begin their ministry until they experienced the Spirit actually coming upon them with power (Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:8).
7. Right before Jesus was to ascend into heaven, He said, “John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 1:5).
8. Then, ten days after Jesus’ ascension and after much prayer, the Holy Spirit came upon and filled the whole body of believers at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4).

There are two events of the Holy Spirit’s coming that seem to hold historical significance. These two particular events are very, very special to the church, for both Jewish and Gentile believers were clearly seen to be in God’s historical plan. Both Jew and Gentile were baptized by the Holy Spirit, that is, placed into the body of Christ, His Church.

1. At Pentecost: the disciples were “filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:4).
  - a. This was in fulfilment of the prophecy by Joel. The Spirit was *poured out* upon the believers (Acts 2:16).
  - b. This was in fulfilment of the prophecies by Jesus and John. The Spirit *baptized*, that is, immersed the believers with His own presence (Acts 1:5; 10:44-48; see 11:15-16, esp. 16).



2. At Cornelius' house: the Holy Spirit "came on", had been "poured out", and was "received" by the Gentile believers (Acts 10:44-47).
  - a. Peter said to the Jews who came with him, "They have received the Holy Spirit *just as we have*." (Acts 10:47).
  - b. Peter reported the event to the Jerusalem Church: "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'"(Acts 11:15-16)
  - c. Peter used the experience to support Paul before the great Jerusalem Council:  
*Acts 15:8 God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us.*

In all three instances the idea conveyed is that of an event just like *their own* experience. It is as though Peter pointed to a Gentile Pentecost or at least an extension of Pentecost in Acts 2 to include the Gentiles.

Note two other facts:

1. At Pentecost, the account uses the word *filled*, not *baptized*.
2. At Cornelius' house, the account says the Holy Spirit *came on*, had been *poured out*, and *received*. But in reporting the experience to the Jerusalem Church, Peter used the word *baptized*. He said the Gentile believers were "baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 11:16) "as he had come on us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15). This clearly says that although the word *baptized* is not used in the Pentecost experience, the disciples were baptized or immersed with the Spirit's presence at Pentecost. The words *filled*, *received*, *poured*, *baptized*, and *came on* are all used interchangeably to describe the Spirit's presence coming into a believer's life. (If believers would heed this, it would eliminate many of the arguments that arise over terminology.)

Other than these two events Acts records only four other times that the Holy Spirit came upon believers.

1. A little prayer band in Jerusalem was "filled" with the Holy Spirit (see Acts 4:8).
2. The Samaritans (half-Jews, half-Gentiles) "received the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8:15-17).
3. Paul was "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 9:17).
4. The disciples of John experienced "the Holy Spirit came on them" (Acts 19:6).

One other fact is important. Other than Pentecost and Cornelius' house, the word *baptize* is used in connection with the Holy Spirit only once in the rest of the New Testament. That one reference is 1 Cor. 12:13: "For we were all baptized by one

Spirit into one body.” That is, the Holy Spirit takes all believers and baptizes or immerses, places, and positions them into the body of Christ — into the church, the universal church.

In conclusion, what does all this mean?

1. When a man grasps the gospel and believes, really believes, the Holy Spirit enters his life. He *comes upon, falls upon, pours, fills, baptizes* (immerses) Himself into the life of the believer. This is a personal *experience*. This act of the Spirit takes place in the life of the believer. The believer *experiences* the Spirit coming into his life. The believer receives the Spirit *experientially*.
2. When a man grasps the gospel and believes, really believes, the Holy Spirit takes him and *baptizes* or immerses, and places him into the body of Christ, which is God’s Church. The believer does not feel or experience this act. It is an act of God that takes place in heaven. The believer is *counted* as a child of God. He is *counted* as a member of the body, of the church. This is a *position*, not an experience, which the believer feels. It happens once-for-all. The believer is adopted as a child of God — irrevocably. It is an eternal *position*, an eternal sonship. The believer becomes a member of God’s Church — positionally (1 Cor. 12:13).
3. After a man is saved, he is to be filled and kept on being “filled with the Spirit” — day by day (Eph. 5:18; see Jn. 14:21, the word “manifest”). The early believers were continually filled (Acts 4:8, 31). □

### JOHN 01:04 “IN CHRIST WAS LIFE”

*“In Him was life, and that life was the light of men.” John 01:04*

The simple statement “in Christ was life” means at least three things.

1. Life is the quality and essence, the energy and power, the force and principle of being. Christ is life; He is...
  - the very quality of life
  - the very energy of life
  - the very force of life
  - the very essence of life
  - the very power of life
  - the very principle of lifeWithout Christ, there would be no life whatsoever. Life is in Him, within His very being. All things exist and have their being (life) in Him.
2. Life is purpose, meaning, and significance of being. Christ is life; He is...
  - the very purpose of life.
  - the very meaning of life.
  - the very significance of life.



3. Life is perfection. Life is all that a man must be and possess in order to live perfectly. This is what is meant by life. Life is completeness of being, absolute satisfaction, the fullness of all good, and the possession of all good things. Life is perfect love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23).

Whatever life is and all that life is, is all in Jesus Christ. Even the legitimate cravings of man that are sometimes entangled with evil — such as power, fame and wealth — are all included in the life given by Jesus Christ. Those who partake of His life shall reign forever as kings and priests (Lk. 16:10-12). This is the very thing that is distinctive about life — it is eternal. It lasts forever and it is rewarding. It will eventually exalt the believer to the highest life and place and position. (Rev. 21:lf.)

Jesus Christ is the source of life: He is the way to life, and He is the truth of life. He is the very substance of life, its very being and energy (Jn. 5:26; 1 Jn. 1:2). □

### JOHN 10:10 LIFE IN JESUS CHRIST

*“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” **John 10:10***

Life is one of the great words of the Scriptures. The word *life* (zoe) and the verb *to live* or *to have life* (zen) have a depth of meaning.

1. Life is the energy, the force, the power of being.
2. Life is the opposite of perishing. It is deliverance from condemnation and death. It is the stopping or cessation of deterioration, decay, and corruption (Jn. 3:16; 5:24, 29; 10:28).
3. Life is *eternal* (aionios). It is forever. It is the very life of God Himself (Jn. 17:3). However, eternal life does not refer just to duration. Living forever would be a curse for some persons. The idea of eternal life is also quality, a certain kind of life, a life that consistently knows love, joy, peace, power, and responsibility (Jn. 10:10).
4. Life is satisfaction (Jn. 6:35).
5. Life is security and enjoyment (Jn. 10:10).
6. Life is found only in God. God is the source and author of life, and it is God who has appointed Jesus Christ to bring life to man. Jesus Christ gives the very life of God Himself (Jn. 5:26; 6:27, 40; 10:28; 17:23).
7. Life has now been revealed. It has been unveiled and is clearly seen in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ shows man what life is (Jn. 1:4-5; 5:26; 1 Jn. 1:2).

8. Life only comes to a man by believing in Jesus Christ. A man outside Jesus Christ only exists. He merely has the existence of an animal. Real life is found only in God. This is to be expected and it is logically true, for God is the creator of life. As the creator of life, He alone knows what life really is and what it is supposed to be (Jn. 3:36; 5:24; 6:47). This is the reason He sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world: to show men what life is. When a person looks at Jesus Christ, he sees exactly what life is, exactly what it involves (Gal. 5:22-23):

=> love	=> patience	=> faithfulness
=> joy	=> kindness	=> gentleness
=> peace	=> goodness	=> self-control ☐

### JOHN 02:24 SAVING FAITH: BELIEVE, COMMIT, ENTRUST

The word commit or entrust is the very same word “believe” (see Jn. 2:23). This gives an excellent picture of *saving faith*, of what *genuine faith* is — of the kind of faith that really saves a person.

1. Saving faith is not head knowledge, not just a mental conviction and intellectual assent. It is not just *believing the fact* that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world. It is not just believing history, that Jesus Christ lived upon earth as the Saviour just as A J Abdul Kalam lived upon earth as the President of India. It is not just believing the words and claims of Jesus in the same way that a person would believe the words of Abdul Kalam.
2. Saving faith is believing in Jesus, *who* and *what* He is, that He is the *Saviour* and *Lord* of life. It is a man giving and turning his life over to Jesus. It is a man casting himself upon Jesus as Saviour and Lord.
3. Saving faith is commitment — the commitment of a man’s total being and life to Jesus Christ. It is a man’s commitment of all he *is and has* to Jesus. It gives Jesus everything; therefore, it involves all of a man’s affairs. The man trusts Jesus to take care of his past (sins), his present (welfare), and his future (destiny). He entrusts his whole life, being, and possessions into Jesus’ hands. He lays himself upon Jesus’ keeping, confiding in Him about his daily necessities and acknowledging Him in all the ways of life. He follows Jesus in every area and in every detail of life, seeking His instructions and leaving his welfare up to Him. It is simply commitment of a man’s whole being, all he is and has, to Jesus.

There are three steps involved in faith, steps that are clearly seen in this passage.

1. There is the step of *seeing* (Jn. 2:23) or *hearing* (Rom. 10:16). A man must be willing to listen to the message of Christ, the revelation of truth.

2. There is the step of *mental assent*. A man must agree that the message is true, that the facts of the case are thus and so. But this is not enough. Mere agreement does not lead to action. Many a person knows that something is true, but he does not change his behaviour to match his knowledge. For example, a man knows that eating too much harms his body, but he may continue to eat too much. He agrees to the truth and knows the truth, but he does nothing about it. A person may believe and know that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world and yet do nothing about it, never make a decision to follow Christ. This man still does not have faith, not the kind of faith that the Bible talks about.
3. There is the step of *commitment*. When the New Testament speaks of faith, it speaks of *commitment*, a *personal commitment to the truth*. A man hears the truth and agrees that it is true and does something about it. He commits (entrusts) and yields his life to the truth. The truth becomes a part of his very being, a part of his behaviour and life. □

# MAN'S NEED: THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD JOHN 8:12–20

## ***Introduction***

Man has great need. He is not always aware of it, but the need is still there. Man is in darkness.

=> He cannot see into the future nor into the next world. He cannot see God, who He is and what He is like.

=> He cannot see the real meaning, significance and purpose of life.

=> He cannot grasp perfect knowledge nor assurance of eternal life.

Therefore, man's great need is to see "the Light of the world."

I. Jesus made a great claim and promise (vv. 12-13).

II. Proof 1: Jesus' great knowledge of His origin and destiny (vv. 14).

III. Proof 2: Man's incompetence and inability to know Christ's origin and destiny (vv. 14-15).

IV. Proof 3: Jesus judges not by appearance but in the righteousness and justice of God (v. 16).

V. Proof 4: The law's testimony (vv. 17-18).

VI. Proof 5: The Father's presence within (v. 19).

VII. The tragic conclusion: Jesus was rejected in the temple (v. 20).

## ***I. John 08:12–13 Jesus' Claim and Promise***

Jesus made a great claim and promise.

1. The great claim was, "I am the Light of the world" (See *Light*, Jn. 8:12.) Note that He made the great claim of deity: "I Am." The Lord's claim to divinity was emphatic. The claim was the very first thing He said in this passage (See "*It is I*," Jn. 6:20).
2. The great promise was twofold: "Whoever follows me..."
  - will never walk in darkness." (See *Darkness*, Jn. 8:12.)
  - will have the light of life."

Note two critical points.

- a. A man does not possess light, not within himself, not by nature. Men are in darkness by nature.
  - b. A man is delivered "out of darkness" by following Jesus Christ. Note the word "follows" is continuous action. A man must continue to follow in order to receive light.
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**Col 1:14-15** *In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.*

3. Jesus used the term “*light of life*.” A man exists in darkness until He follows Christ. The meaning, purpose, and significance of life cannot be seen and known apart from following Christ. It is Christ who throws light upon life, revealing what life really is.
4. The religionists (Pharisees) objected to the claim of Jesus. They knew exactly what He was claiming: that He was the Messiah and that He alone could give light to the world. In their minds, only God could give light to the world. Note their charge against Him: He alone was bearing witness to His claim. He had no other witnesses; therefore, His claim was false.

A man's testimony is unacceptable and suspicious. The witness of a man has to be supported by other witnesses, and at least two witnesses are required. This is one of the most fundamental laws of society throughout the world. (See Deu. 17:6; 19:5; Mt. 18:6 ; 2 Cor 13:1; 1 Tim 5:19).

### JOHN 06: 20 “IT IS I” (EIMI)

*But he said to them, “It is I; don't be afraid” John 06:20*

This is one word in the Greek, *eimi*, which is simply “I AM” (Jn. 18:6). Jesus was saying, “I AM” has come — fear not. He was reminding the disciples who He was: the Son of God Himself. He possessed all power; therefore, there was no need to fear. This was the same message that God gave to Moses at the burning bush, “I AM WHO I AM” (Exo. 3:13-15, esp. 14). It was the same message that Jesus used as a defence against the religionists, “Before Abraham was born, I am” (Jn. 8:58). It is the same message that Col. 1:15-17 claims for Him; and it is the same message that is proclaimed by the book of *Revelation*, He “who is and was and is to come” (Rev. 1:4, 8; 11:17; 16:5).

There are several “I Am's” claimed by Christ.

- => I Am the Messiah (Jn. 4:26).
- => I Am (It is I); don't be afraid (Jn. 6:20).
- => I Am the Bread of Life (Jn. 6:35).
- => I Am from Above (Jn. 8:23).
- => I Am the Light of the World (Jn. 8:12; 9:5; 12:46).
- => I Am before Abraham was born, I am (eternal) (Jn. 8:58).
- => I Am the Gate or Door (Jn. 10:7).
- => I Am the Good Shepherd (Jn. 10:14).
- => I Am the God's Son (Jn. 10:36).

- => I Am the Resurrection and Life (Jn. 11:25).
- => I Am the Lord and Teacher (Jn. 13:13).
- => I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life (Jn. 14:6).
- => I Am the True Vine (Jn. 15:1).
- => I Am the Alpha and the Omega (Rev. 1:8).
- => I Am the First and the Last (Rev. 1:17). □

## JOHN 08:12 JESUS THE LIGHT

*When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the Light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." **John 08:12***

Jesus is said to be the *Light of men* (Jn. 1:4) and the *Light of the world* (Jn. 8:12; 9:5; 12:46). It is possible for the Light, Jesus Himself, to be *in men* (Jn. 11:10; see Col. 1:27) and for men to become children of Light (Jn. 12:34-36).

Apparently, Jesus used the word *light* often. John uses the word twenty-four times. What is meant by calling Jesus the Light?

1. Jesus, the Light, is light by nature. Light is what He is within Himself, within His being. His nature, His essence, His character. Scripture says...
  - that "God is Light" (1 Jn. 1:5);
  - that Jesus is "the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15);
  - therefore, "Jesus is Light." He is "the Light of the world."
2. Jesus, the Light, tells us that He is holy, righteous and pure. Light is the symbol of purity and holiness. Light means the absence of darkness and blindness; it has no spots of darkness or blackness, nor of sin and shame.
3. Jesus, the Light, reveals. His light shows clearly the nature, the meaning, and the destiny of all things. His light shines in, spots, opens up, identifies, illuminates, and shows things as they really are. The light of Jesus Christ shows the truth about the world and man and God. The light of Jesus Christ reveals that He loves and cares for man and wants man to love and care for Him.
4. Jesus, the Light, guides. His light allows a man to walk out of darkness. Man no longer has to grope, grasp, and stumble about trying to find his way through life. The path of life can now be clearly seen.
5. Jesus, the Light, does away with darkness and with chaos. His light routs, wipes out, strips away, and erases the darkness. The empty chaos of creation was routed



by the light given by God (Gen. 1:3). Jesus Christ is the Light that can save man from chaos (Jn. 14:1, 17; 12:46; 16:33).

Jesus proclaimed Himself to be the Light of the world at the great Feast of Tabernacles (Jn. 7:2). The very first ceremony of the Feast holds great significance for Jesus' claim. It was called "The Illumination of the Temple" and was held in the Court of the Women. The centre of the Court was surrounded by large sections of stadium-like seats. In the open space of the Court sat four huge candelabra. When darkness fell the candelabra were lit, and the elders danced and led the people in singing psalms before the Lord all night. The brilliance and glow from the burning flames of the huge candelabra were said to be so bright that the light could be seen throughout the whole city. It was against this background that Jesus cried out, "I am the Light of the world." □

### JOHN 08: 12 DARKNESS (SKOTOS, SKOTIA)

The word is used in Scripture to describe both the state and the works of man. Darkness is very real in Scripture.

1. The darkness refers to the world of the natural man who does not know Jesus Christ (Jn. 8:12). The natural man walks in ignorance...
  - of Jesus Christ
  - of God as revealed by Jesus Christ
  - of the real purpose and destiny of life as shown by Jesus Christ

The natural man stumbles and gropes about in this world. He knows nothing other than the things of this world as he sees them. His only hope is the hope of living a long life before death overtakes him. He walks in darkness, ignorant of real life now and hereafter (see Jn. 12:35, 46).

2. The darkness symbolizes unpreparedness and unwatchfulness. It symbolizes the time when evil occurs (1 Th. 5:4-8).
3. The darkness is loved by men. Sinful men do their evil deeds under the cover of darkness. Men therefore hate the light because the light uncovers their evil behaviour (Jn. 3:19-20).
4. The darkness is hostile to light. □

## II. *John 08:14 Jesus' Knowledge of His Origin and Destiny*

The first proof of Jesus' claim is His great knowledge. He knew His origin and destiny. He declared, "I am the Light of the world," and He declared that His witness was enough. He said, "My testimony is valid [true]" (alethes).

=> It is not false.           => It is not a lie.           => It is not a deceptive claim.

=> It is not the claim of an egomaniac setting Himself up as a god.

=> It is not the claim of a man who is out to shatter men's dreams.

=> It is not the claim of a man who is set on destroying other men.

The witness of Jesus Christ was valid; it was true, and His witness was sufficient evidence for a very strong reason. Jesus knew His origin and destiny, where He had come from and where He was going. He was “*out of*” heaven, “*out of*” the spiritual dimension of being, and He was to return to heaven.

Man could not tell where Jesus had come from nor where He was going. Why? For a very simple reason: man cannot penetrate nor see the spiritual world. Physical eyes are blind to the world of the Spirit (see Jn. 1:18). If there is to be communication with the spiritual dimension, the spiritual world must come into this world, into the physical dimension. This is exactly what has happened; this is just what Jesus was saying. He had come from heaven, from the spiritual dimension of being. He had been an eyewitness of heaven. He had been in the very presence of God Himself, and God had sent Him from heaven into this world to declare the glorious message of salvation:

**John 8:12** *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”*

**John 3:11** *“I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony.”*

**John 8:14** *Jesus answered, “Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going.”*

**John 18:37** *“You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”*

**Rev 1:5** *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood.*

### **III. John 08:14–15 Man's Inability to Know Jesus' Origin and Destiny**

The second proof of Jesus' claim is man's incompetence. Again, this is because of the difference between the two worlds, the difference between the physical and spiritual worlds or dimensions of being.

Men judge by human standards, that is, by appearance. Men judge by what they see and know. The only evidence they have is what they see in their world, the world of the physical. However, if men are to judge Jesus' claim, they cannot do it on the basis of

physical evidence. Why? Because Jesus is not of this world. Men have to judge Him by faith. They either accept His testimony or reject it.

*John 7:24 Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment.*

#### **IV. John 08:16 Judgement of Jesus Christ is Done in God's Presence**

Jesus' judgment was true. He did not judge by human standards — not by appearance — but by God's presence. This was a phenomenal claim. Jesus was saying that He was not alone. He did not speak nor act alone. The Father was *with Him* and the Father *sent Him*; therefore, what He claimed and did was of the Father. Note two points.

1. Jesus said that what He claimed was *right, true (alethes)*...
  - it was not false
  - it was not a lie
  - it was not a deceptive claim
2. Jesus called God "Father" and referred to His mission: "the Father who sent me." He had a Father-Son relationship with God. He knew God in a very personal and intimate way as "Father." He *had come* from the presence and the household of His Father, that is, from heaven or from the spiritual world and dimension of being. Therefore, He *alone* could know all the facts. He had come, being *sent* by the Father to proclaim the glorious message of salvation: "I am the Light of the world: whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (Jn. 8:12).

*John 10:30 "I and the Father are one."*

*John 10:37-38 "Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father."*

*John 14:10 "Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work."*

*John 17:11 I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name — the name you gave me — so that they may be one as we are one. (see Jn.17:22)*

#### **V. John 08: 17—18 Testimony According to the Law**

The third proof of Jesus' claim is the law's testimony. Jesus appealed to the law of man. The law required two witnesses to validate a claim (Dut. 19:15). Jesus met the demand of the law, for He was one witness, and "the Father who sent" Him was the second witness.

Now note two clear facts that man should see.

1. Jesus' testimony was valid, true. It is perfectly clear that He spoke and acted only for God. Everything He said and did was to glorify God and to lead men to God: to worship and praise and to honour and serve God. It is also clear that He spoke and

acted only for men. Everything He said and did was to save men, to awaken them and to show them compassion and mercy, meeting their desperate needs.

Very simply, everything Jesus said and did bore witness that His claim was true, that He was *of God* and *sent from God* to be “the Light of the world.”

**John 3:34** *“For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.”* (see Jn 7.29)

**John 8:42** *Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me.”*

**John 14:24** *“He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.”*

**John 17:8** *“For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.”*

2. God's testimony was valid, true. It is perfectly clear that God acted in and through Jesus. The life, the words, and the works of Jesus demonstrated God's presence and power. The presence and power of God were in and upon Christ “without limit” (Jn. 3:34). There is no other sensible explanation. “The Father who sent Him” bore clear, indisputable testimony that He is “the Light of the world.”

**Mat 3:17** *And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”*

**Mat 17:5** *While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”*

**John 5:32** *“There is another who testifies in my favour, and I know that his testimony about me is valid.”*

**John 5:37** *“And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form.”*

**1 John 5:9-10** *We accept man's testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son.*

## **VI. John 08:19 The Father's Presence**

The fourth proof of Jesus' claim was the Father's presence *within Him*. The religionists mocked Jesus. They told Him to present His Father: “Go get Him and bring Him, so He can testify of your claims.” Note how they proved Jesus' words: they judged by the human standards, by sight and appearance. They wanted physical evidence. (Of course

they had physical evidence in Christ Himself and in the working of God's power through Him, but obstinate unbelief blinded them.)

Jesus answered three things to *mocking unbelief*.

1. The unbeliever *does not know Him*. He was Man standing before them, and they could see and know Him as Man, but He was also the Son of God. If they rejected His claim and refused to accept Him as Lord, they naturally did not know Him. The only way to know Jesus is to follow Him as Lord, as "the Light of the world." (Note: no person knows any other person until he spends time with that individual — getting to know him, associating with him, and learning all about him.)

**John 4:10** *Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."*

**John 8:19** *Then they asked him, "Where is your father?" "You do not know me or my Father," Jesus replied. "If you knew me, you would know my Father also."*

**John 9:30** *The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes."*

**John 14:9** *Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"*

**Acts 13:27** *The people of Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize Jesus, yet in condemning him they fulfilled the words of the prophets that are read every Sabbath.*

2. The unbeliever *does not know God*. "No one has ever seen God" (Jn. 1:18). The only conceivable way a man can ever know God is for God to reveal Himself: God must come from the heavenly world, the spiritual dimension of being, and enter this world, revealing the truth about Himself to man. But note: *if God does come* and a man does not accept and believe Him, then that man will never get to know God.

**John 1:18** *No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.*

**John 5:37** *"And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form."*

**Col 1:15** *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.*

**1 Tim 1:17** *Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

**1 Tim 6:16** *Who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honour and might forever. Amen.*

**John 15:21** *"They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me."*



**John 16:3** *"They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me."*

**Jer 4:22** *"My people are fools; they do not know me. They are senseless children; they have no understanding. They are skilled in doing evil; they know not how to do good."*

**Jer 8:7** *Even the stork in the sky knows her appointed seasons, and the dove, the swift and the thrush observe the time of their migration. But my people do not know the requirements of the Lord.*

**Jer 9:3** *"They make ready their tongue like a bow, to shoot lies; it is not by truth that they triumph in the land. They go from one sin to another; they do not acknowledge me," declares the Lord.*

**John 1:18** *"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."*

3. God is in Christ. If a man knows Christ, He knows the Father *also*. This is a phenomenal claim. Christ said that He was the revelation of God; He was "God incarnate" in human flesh.
  - a. He was the express "image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15) (see Heb. 1:3). Therefore, the only way to know God is to know Christ. (Jn. 14:6.) The way to God is through Jesus Christ Himself. This is a critical verse, for Jesus said that no man could reach God unless he approached God through Jesus Himself. Jesus made three phenomenal claims: (1) I am the Way. (2) I am the Truth. (3) I am the Life.

**Col 1:6** *That has come to you. All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth.*

**Col 2:9** *For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.*

**John 14:6** *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

- b. He is the One who instructs men in the truth of God.

## **VII. John 08:20 Response of the Religionists**

The great tragedy was that Jesus was rejected in the temple. The religionists wanted nothing to do with Him. They rejected and opposed Him, desiring to get rid of Him. And note: it was in the temple where He was rejected, yet they could not destroy Him. "His time" had not come. God protected Him.

**Thought 1.** How often this scene of unbelief among religionists is repeated in the church. Down through the centuries many religionists have wanted nothing to do with Christ, choosing self over Him.

**Mat 7:21** *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.*



**Mark 7:6** *He replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: 'These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.'"*

**Titus 1:16** *They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.*

**2 Tim 3:5** *Having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them. ■*