

# THE TRUE LIGHT



## **THE ETERNAL WORD BECAME A JEWISH CARPENTER ...**

The Apostle John describes the birth and the life of the baby Jesus who was born to the virgin Mary with this phrase —“the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”

The eternal Word—whose life is the light of humanity and through whom everything that was created was created through him and who upholds the universe by the word of his power—entered the world he created as a human baby and grew to be a thirty-something Jewish carpenter who lived a perfectly righteous life and revealed his glory as the Son of God and the glory of the Father in his brief time on the planet.

## 1) THE BACKSTORY ...

- (John 1:1–5 ESV) **In the beginning was the Word**, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 **In him was life, and the life was the light of men.** 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

## 2) THE WITNESS FOR THE LIGHT ...

- (John 1:6–8 ESV) **There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.** 7 He came as a witness, **to bear witness about the light**, that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.
- A. John's mission was to testify concerning the nature of the light with the purpose that people might believe through his testimony.
- B. John was not the light but the witness about the light.

## 3) THE TRUE LIGHT ENTERS THE WORLD ...

- (John 1:9–11 ESV) **The true light, which gives light to everyone**, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, **yet the world did not know him.** 11 He came to his own, and **his own people did not receive him.**

A. The true light was coming into the world of humans and was giving light to everyone.

**1:9** – “gives light” is one word – φωτίζω [photizo] – and means to give light, to illumine, to shine; to enlighten, light up; to bring to light, render evident; to cast light on something.

B. Giving light to everyone speaks of God's common grace, not his saving grace—e.g. following the life example of Jesus may make a person better but it does not save them from their sins.

C. Giving light to everyone speaks of God's mercy and compassion in caring for all his creation.

- (Psalm 145:9 NLT) The LORD is good to everyone. **He showers compassion on all his**

**creation.**

- (James 1:17 ESV) **Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above**, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.
- (Ecclesiastes 3:13 LSB) Moreover, that every man who eats and drinks and sees good in all his labor—**it is the gift of God.**
- (Ecclesiastes 5:19 LSB) Furthermore, as for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, He has also empowered him to eat from them and to take up his portion and be glad in his labor; **this is the gift of God.**
- (John 3:27 ESV) John answered, “**A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven.**”

D. The true light was living in the world that was made through him, but the world **did not know him.**

**1:10** – The word know is γινώσκω [ginosko] and means to know experientially (as acquired by experience); to get a knowledge of; to learn to know, come to know; the familiar Jewish idiom for sexual intercourse between a man and a woman.

This is the same word used by Jesus in clarifying his non-relationship to those who thought they knew him and proclaimed him to be Lord.

- (Matthew 7:23 ESV) And then will I declare to them, ‘I never **knew** you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

E. And his own people **did not receive him.**

1:11 receive ... παραλαμβάνω [paralambano] ... to take (accept) – to receive willingly something given or offered; whether physically or abstractly; to take to or with one's self, to join to one's self; to accept or acknowledge one to be such as he professes to be; not to reject; to receive something transmitted.

## 4) THE JUDGMENT REGARDING THE LIGHT ...

- (John 3:19 ESV) **And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light** because their works were evil.

A. People in general prefer darkness over light.

B. So they do not receive saving truth about Jesus because they love darkness rather than light.

C. This preference for darkness is motivated by the passionate desire to not have their evil exposed.

- (John 3:20 ESV) For everyone who does wicked things **hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.**

D. Light will be rejected every time by the person who is not willing to be changed by the light.

E. Those whose actions are evil remain firm in their preference for darkness to guide their way in life.

## 5) HAVING SOME LIGHT IS DARKNESS ...

- (John 1:9 ESV) The true light, **which gives light to everyone**, was coming into the world.

A. The true light gives everyone some light.

B. Some light does not save.

C. The many on the easy way that leads to destruction have some light but do not know Christ.

- (Matthew 7:13 ESV) Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide **and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many.**

D. Almost every person and religion includes some aspect of the light in their teachings or moral code.

E. But this selective approach to the light yields darkness and not light.

F. Choosing only aspects of the light that fit ones perspective and preferences is deadly.

- (Proverbs 14:12 ESV) **There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.**

## WHAT HAS HAPPENED? WHAT IS GOING ON?

G. A person whose light source is darkness chooses certain aspects of the light to believe and so he comes to know only a Jesus of his imagination.

H. In the final analysis the true light has been revealed to this person but he prefers to believe what fits his worldview which is a worldview of darkness.

I. This person never comes to face in a life-changing way the sharp arrow of the gospel that brings the sin

and the sinner out of the darkness and into the light of God's word.

- (1 Corinthians 15:3-4 ESV) For I delivered to you as of **first importance** what I also received: **that Christ died for our sins** in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

## 6) RECEIVING THE TRUE LIGHT ...

- (John 1:12-13 ESV) **But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name**, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

A. When confronted with the true light, some received the light that was life, and he gave them the right to become the children of God.

- (John 1:4 ESV) In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

B. Those who received him and believed in his name (everything the light revealed about him) to them he gave the right to become children of God.

C. They were not born by human means, desire or choice but by the will of God.

## 7) KNOWING JESUS WE KNOW GRACE (UPON GRACE) ...

- (John 1:14-18 ESV) **And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us**, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, **full of grace and truth.** 15 (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") 16 **For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.** 17 For the law was given through Moses; **grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.** 18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, **he has made him known.**

A. The Word came into the world, took on human flesh and lived among us.

B. He left the Father's side to make God known to us.

C. He made God known to us as he revealed his glory—

glory as of the only Son from the Father.

D. His glory was that he is full of grace and truth.

E. When we receive him, we know him and receive grace upon grace from his fullness.

**CONCLUSION — A GRACE EXAMPLE ...**

**THE SINNER WHO STEPPED INTO THE LIGHT**

**VERSUS**

**THE PHARISEES WHO REMAINED IN THE DARKNESS**

(Luke 7:36–50 ESV)

One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table.

And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment.

Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner."

And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher." "A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly."

Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered

your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment.

Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.

And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?" And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."