

## Teaching Points

In this section we come across another “I AM” saying of Jesus. We first observed this language back in chapter 6 when Jesus said, **“I am the bread of life.”** In this statement Jesus was declaring Himself to be equal with Yahweh - the Great I AM of Exodus 3:14. Here, in verse 12, Jesus uses the same language once again, **“I am the light of the world.”** And, once again, He’s declaring His equality with God the Father.

In addition to proclaiming His divinity, each of these “I AM” statements portrays a profound aspect of Christ’s saving work. Tonight’s saying illustrates the illuminating power of Christ. **He is the light of the world.**

**Discussion Question:** In what ways does Christ provide light for those who follow Him?

***Thoughts:** Those who follow Jesus are able to see clearly. That is to say, we are able to understand life in true terms. Followers of Christ are no longer blind. We are not wandering through life being bound by the deceptions of darkness. By following Jesus we are able to recognize the truth and walk safely through this life. Jesus Himself is the source of light - and His light is clearly revealed to us in His word. Following Him means walking a path of light and truth that ends in eternal glory in God’s presence. Those who don’t follow Him are bound in darkness and headed for eternal condemnation.*

We’ll revisit this claim later on in John 9:5, **“As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”**

The Pharisees aren’t willing to accept Christ’s claims. They reject His testimony of Himself - citing His lack of a corroborating witness. **“You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true.”** Basically, they were not willing to admit His testimony because there wasn’t anyone else who could validate His bold claims. “You say You are the light of the world, but You don’t have anyone who can vouch for what You say!”

Jesus proves them wrong in two ways.

**First,** His testimony of Himself is valid because of His divine origin. Jesus isn’t a mere man making unsubstantiated claims about Himself. As God, He knows Himself and can bear witness to Himself in ways that no mortal can. We could describe this as the “self-attesting” nature of Christ’s claims. That is to say, He speaks with an authority that stands on its own and doesn’t need validation from lesser sources.

**Second**, He actually does have another witness. God the Father Himself bears witness to the authenticity of Christ's claims. ***"It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me."*** (vs. 17)

What credentials! Christ speaks with self-attesting authority as the Great I AM and God the Father bears witness to Him as His true Son and equal.

**Discussion Question:** Does it make sense to take Christ at His word? Don't we need confirmation from experts (scholars, theologians, historians, scientists, philosophers, etc.) before we can trust what Jesus says?

**Thoughts:** *Jesus claims to be God incarnate. If that's true then there is no authority equal to or greater than Him. If God is speaking to us in the Person of His Son - then the only reasonable thing to do is to believe what He says on His own authority. If we appeal to some human expert to validate what Jesus says - then we're actually treating that human authority as ultimate! There is no greater foundation for faith than the self-attesting words of Jesus and the divine witness of God the Father.*

Also, see how Jesus contrasts His own certainty with the ignorance of the Pharisees:

***"...I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I came from and where I am going."*** (vs. 14)

***"...I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent Me..." "You know neither Me nor My Father."*** (vs. 16, 19)

These statements demonstrate what John writes in 3:19, ***"...this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light..."*** The Pharisees can't recognize the light of the world standing right in front of them! They don't understand His divine origin and they can't perceive His relationship to the Father.

**Discussion Question:** Why was it so hard for them to understand what Jesus was saying?

**Thoughts:** *The problem here is not intellectual. Jesus wasn't speaking in terms that were too hard to comprehend and the Pharisees were not uneducated men. The problem had to do with their hearts. They were unable to receive what Jesus was telling them because of their self-righteousness. They were unwilling to hear Christ because they were self-confident and self-reliant. They were doing what Paul writes about in Romans 1:18 - suppressing the truth in unrighteousness. In other words, they were actively pushing aside the truth that was right in front of them. This is what it means to love darkness rather than light.*

Once again, no one was able to apprehend Jesus at this time. ***“...no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come.”*** (vs. 20). This is the same as what we saw back in 7:45-46. Even though the Pharisees were frustrated with Him - they couldn't silence Him. His hour to be delivered into their hands would come - but only at His Father's appointed time and no sooner.

### **Prayer Focus**

Worship Christ as the light of the world. Pray through the ways this truth blesses us and helps us navigate life.