**I am the Light of the World**

 John 8:12-20

 On the Feast of Tabernacle, there were two specific events: pouring of water on the altar that commemorates water gushing out of a rock and kindling the 75 feet high gold lampstands that commemorates the Lord who led the Israelites in the desert by the pillar of fire. When the Feast was over, the priest would blow out the lampstands. Then the temple would be dark. Though it became bright morning, the temple was still full of darkness as the religious authorities brought the woman caught in the act of adultery and tried to seize Jesus. After helping the woman with His forgiveness, He declared that He is the light of the world. He was saying that He is the Lord who led the Israelites in the wilderness. He alone is the true light. In this dark world, we need His leading.

**1. Receive Jesus as the light of the world**

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” (12). In the gospel of John, we see three important L words: Life (54), Light (23), and Love (60). All three words, ultimately refers to Jesus. In John’s gospel, “darkness” refers to the misery of a broken relationship with God. On the other hand, “light” refers to the blessing of having God’s life. John earlier testified Jesus as the true light (1:9). Here, Jesus Himself testifies that He is the light of the world. The real cause of darkness in this world is “sin.” It broke our relationship with God. Only Jesus, who alone is without sin, can solve our sin problem. In Him, we have forgiveness from all our sins, we restore our relationship with God and we live in the joy of eternal life. The woman who was caught in the act of adultery found God’s forgiveness in Jesus and received a new life. Jesus is the true light.

At that time, the Pharisees challenged Him, “Here you are, appearing as your own witness; your testimony is not valid” (13). In the OT law, one needs at least two witnesses to be valid of his or her testimony (17; Dt 19:15). To them, Jesus was fanatic for He was testifying himself to be the divine one (I am the bread of life 6:35; I am the light of the world 8:12). Jesus said, “Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going” (14). Here, Jesus was saying that He was with God in eternity but came to this world. Soon He will die according to God’s will and enter into His eternal glory. Humans need other people’s testimony but God who is perfect doesn’t need witnesses. Jesus also said, “If I do judge, my decisions are true, because I am not alone. I stand with the Father, who sent me” (16). “I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me” (18). In Jesus’ life and ministry, it was obvious that God was with Him. Who can change water into wine? Who can instantly heal the 38 year invalid? Who can open the eyes of the man born blind?

700 years before Christ, the prophet Isaiah prophesied, “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned” (Isa 9:2). Before 6 months of Jesus’ birth, Zechariah prophesied for the coming Messiah in Luke 1:78-79, “because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.” Simeon met the baby Jesus in the Jerusalem temple and he testified Jesus as the coming Messiah in Luke 2:30-32, “For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.” Matthew proclaimed that Jesus is the great light, the very one whom Isaiah prophesied about (Mt 4:14-16). Yes, Jesus is the true light. When we receive Him, we overcome all of our darkness such as sin, the devil, death and despair. We walk on the path of righteousness and find the comfort of Immanuel. Because Jesus is the great light, we have no reason to wander in darkness.

**2. Follow Jesus, the light of the world**

Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (12). Receiving Jesus as your light is not enough. You also need to follow Him. What does it mean that we follow Jesus? It is to have the Lordship of Jesus in your life. You seek Jesus’ will, His desire and His purpose and live accordingly. If you live according to your will, you are serving yourself not the Lord Jesus. The authentic Christian life is that the Lordship of Jesus is restored in your life. Jesus says in Luke 9:23, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.” We tend to seek our will and desires first. We want to enjoy an easygoing life. Jesus tells us to deny ourselves and take up our cross daily. Following Jesus is walking on the narrow path; there are self-denial, sufferings and even persecution. Is it worth that we follow Jesus? Yes, if you do not follow Jesus, you live according to your sinful instincts. You only spread dirty smell of ditchwater. When you follow Jesus, you have the light of life. You experience the joy of eternal life. You emit beautiful aroma of Jesus.

**3. Shine the light of life to the world**

What does it mean that you will have the light of life? It means that you will have Jesus’ life in you. What did God first create in the beginning? On the first day when the earth was formless and dark, He said, “Let there be light” (Ge 1:3) and there was light. Why did He create light first? It is because the light enables all things to live. Thus, light means life itself in the Bible (Ps 4:6; Jn 1:4-5). When you follow Jesus who is the light, your life becomes vital. God’s gifts that had been dead are alive in you. Your passion in life is revived. Your life is blossomed like that of spring plants and bloom like flowers and bear fruits. When Jesus, who is the light, is in us, we become the light of the world for we reflect Jesus’ love. When the people in Jerusalem followed Jesus daily through apostles’ teaching, fellowship and prayer, they had favor with all the people. The Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved (Acts 2:47). In other words, people spoke well of the believers and even desired to be like them. Have you ever heard that someone told you, “Your life causes me to desire to be a Christian someday”?

A sixteen year-old young boy was captured by the Irish pirates. Till this time, his faith was superficial. He spent six years in Ireland as a slave. In this difficult time, he met Jesus as his personal Lord and Savior. By God’s help, he fled. He studied theology in England and became a Catholic priest. Then one day, he heard the cry of an Irish man, “Holy slave boy, we beseech you to come and walk among us once more.” He went back Ireland and served barbarians through the gospel for 30 years. This was what Irish people said, “Before he came to us, we were darkness itself. After he came, we became light in Jesus Christ.” He is St. Patrick (386-461). He is known as one of the greatest missionaries in church history.

Ephesians 5:8 says of a Christian life: “for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.” It is true. My life before Christ was utterly dark. After receiving Christ, my life became light to shine the light of Jesus, the light of life. Have you received Jesus who is the light of the world? If you didn’t, receive Him right now. If you did so, follow Him daily. You’ll have the light of life in Him and live as His light. Praise be to Jesus. He is the light of the world! He is the light of life.