



February 25-26, 2023

John 8:12-30

Ice Breaker Questions

- In this text Jesus employs metaphors of light and darkness. Is there a particular time when you realized how much you needed physical light (eg. a time when you were lost in the dark, or when you lost something or someone (!) in the dark, or when you needed light to be able to distinguish one thing from another)? If so, share your experience with the group. What feelings or emotions stick with you, as you think about this experience?

Understand Their Story

John 8:12-30 continues where John 7:1-52 left off.¹ It's the last and greatest day of the Feast of Booths (John 7:37), and Jesus is in the temple. He has just invited the crowd to come to him for living water. In John 6:48 he had declared, "I am the Bread of Life"; in today's text we see his second "I am" statement. Read John 8:12-30.

1. Who does Jesus say he is?
2. What is Jesus calling people to do in response to this claim?
3. What will be the result for those who don't believe this claim?
4. When will people understand the truthfulness of Jesus' claim?
5. What two responses to Jesus do you see in this text?

Connect to His Story.

Jesus' claim to be the light of the world is packed with imagery from the Old Testament, and is developed later in the new testament. Below is a sampling of some texts:

6. Read Exodus 13:21-22. What gives light to Israel in this text? What is the significance of Jesus saying that he is the light of the world, during the last day of the Feast of Booths (a festival which commemorates the time that Israel spent in the wilderness)?
7. Read Isaiah 42:1-9. Who is the light in this text? What will the light do?
8. Read Isaiah 60:1-5, 19-22. Who is the light? What will happen as a result of the light appearing?

¹ If you wonder why we aren't preaching on John 8:1-13, feel free to read this article from GotQuestions.org: <https://www.gotquestions.org/John-7-53-8-11.html>

9. Read Revelation 21:22-27 and 22:1-5. Who is the light in this text? What will happen as a result of the light dwelling once again with people?
- a. Which of these visuals or promises encourages you the most today? Why?

Apply to Our Story

John has talked about responses to the light several times already in his gospel. Re-read the following texts and then merge them with what you've learned in John 8:12-30.

10. John 1:4-13. How does John 8:12-30 build on, or display what people already heard in John 1?
11. John 3:19-21. How does John 8:12-30 build on, or display what people already heard in John 3?

In our text, Jesus invites people to follow him so that they don't walk in darkness (John 8:12), and calls them to believe so that they don't die in their sins (John 8:24).

- Pray for each other. If there are areas in your life in which you feel like you are walking in darkness, pray for Jesus to lead and guide you, to reveal truth, and to heal you.
- Read 2 Corinthians 4:1-6 and pray for those who you know who don't believe. Pray that the God would shine the light of the gospel into their hearts so that they trust in Jesus rather than dying in their sins.

God's work and our Work

How All of Life Connects to the Gospel - in John 8:12-30

Biblical authors, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, use light imagery to teach us about God's character, and they also call us to represent God's character in the world, by *walking in the light*.

In Ephesians, Paul writes: "*Walk as children of light* (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them...when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light." Ephesians 5:8b-14a

In 1 John, the apostle John writes: "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we *walk in the light*, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin." 1 John 1:5b-7

To *walk in the light*, means to live your life with integrity. If you *walk in the light*, your private thoughts, actions and deeds (in your workplace, neighbourhood, and family), will line up with your profession of Christian faith, so that you aren't worried about being 'exposed'. Does this describe you? Are you walking in the light?

The great news is that God knows we can't do this perfectly - that's why Jesus came! 1 John 1 continues: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:8-9). So...

- Is there an aspect of your own life (at work, at home, in your neighbourhood) which needs to be confessed and exposed to the light so that it can be cleansed by Jesus?
- Is there a practice or policy at your workplace which is wrong: is dishonest, or dehumanizes people who are God's image bearers? Do you believe God is calling you to expose or address this area of darkness? If so, we'd encourage you to pray and discuss your concerns with trusted Christian friends or co-workers, and work in a redemptive way to bring it into the light.