

JESUS: THE LIGHT

Thursday, February 7
Reading: John 12:44-50

John 12:46 *I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness. 47 "If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge that person. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.*

Jesus as the light is a common theme in John's gospel (and his letters). He began by presenting Jesus as the Light (1:1-9). In chapter three, he declares that "Light has come into the world" (3:19-21). Twice Jesus Himself says, "I am the light of the world" (8:12; 9:5).

Here, Jesus pleads with the people to Believe in the Light (12:35-36) because their time is limited. Within a few days He will die. They are in danger of rejecting Him and living in the power of sin and Satan – walking in darkness instead of becoming children of light.

Sadly most of the people are Blinded to the Light (12:37-43). Jesus quotes Isaiah 53:1 and Isaiah 6:10 to show that even their rejection was prophesied in the Old Testament. They had hardened their hearts against Jesus and for many of them it was now too late.

Jesus' last appeal Bids Them Come to the Light (12:44-50). Those who believe in Him will receive the light of eternal life. But those who reject Him are judged by the words He has spoken; for they are the very words of God. Jesus' words point to His equality with the Father and His power to bring salvation. Ultimately, Jesus does not condemn people. People condemn themselves for rejecting His free gift of salvation (see John 3:16-21).

LESSON ONE: "See Jesus; See God." Jesus is very clear, "The one who looks at Me is seeing the One who sent Me" (12:45). This means Jesus is equal with God the Father. One cannot believe in God without believing in Jesus Christ! What does this tell us about people who say they believe in God but will not trust in Jesus as their Lord and Savior?

LESSON TWO: "Faith or Fear." John 12:42-43 introduce us to some leaders who believed in Jesus but because of fear of the Pharisees kept it quiet. "They loved human praise more than praise from God." Do you "hide" your faith in Christ for fear of what others might think? Do you remain quiet about Jesus because you don't want to stir up controversy at work, home, or the community? Do you care more about what people think of you than what God thinks of you?

LESSON THREE: "Time is Short." Jesus warned this crowd that "you are going to have light just a little while longer" (12:35). Shortly Jesus would die, rise again, and ascend into heaven. Their time of opportunity would soon come to an end. It is a sobering thought to realize that those who persistently harden their hearts to Christ may find it too late. The Apostle Paul wrote, "For He says, 'In the time of My favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.' I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2). Have you accepted God's gift of salvation?

THRU THE BIBLE Readings: Leviticus 25-27; Mark 1