

## John 8:12-38 – The Light of the World

One of the reasons that a number of people, including the religious leaders, didn't think that Jesus was the Messiah (Christ) was because he was associated with Galilee. The religious leaders claimed that no prophet was supposed to come from Galilee. They were wrong on two accounts. First, Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Second, they should have read the book of Isaiah more carefully. Matthew 4:13-16 says that Jesus' ministry in Galilee was a fulfillment of Isaiah 9:1-2. The people of Zebulun and Naphtali (the area where Jesus spend the bulk of his ministry) had walked in darkness but they would see a great light. I believe that Jesus is referring to Isaiah 9:1-2 when he said "I am the Light of the world. He who follows me will not walk in darkness."

### Read John 8:12-20.

John 1:6-7 says that God sent John the Baptist to bear witness to the Light (Jesus). What is the significance of Jesus' claim that he is the light of the world? (8:12)

Verses 13-19 deal with witnesses to Jesus. In chapter five, Jesus said that he had five witnesses. They were Jesus himself, John the Baptist, Jesus' miracles, God the Father, and Scripture. It seems that in chapter five that Jesus anticipated the Pharisees' response to his claims. They needed more than one witness to verify Jesus' claims. Why was Jesus' testimony true even without additional witnesses? (8:13-14)

How did Jesus fulfill the legal requirement to verify his claims? (8:15-18)

In chapter five, the Pharisees understood that Jesus was talking about God the Father when he said "My Father is working still, and I am working." Now they wanted to know where Jesus' father was? Why didn't they understand who Jesus was talking about? Where did this conversation take place? (8:19-20)

### Read John 8:21-30.

What did Jesus say would happen to the people after he went away? Verse 8:21 may remind us of what Jesus said in 7:34 but with some variation. In 7:34, Jesus said "where I am you cannot come". In 8:21 Jesus said "where I am **going** you cannot come". Are these statements different or is the meaning the same with slightly different wording? (8:21)

In 7:35 the people wondered if Jesus would go to the Dispersion and teach the Greeks. Now they have a different idea about what Jesus might do. What did they think Jesus might do? (8:22)

Jesus repeated to the people that they would die in their sins, but there was an exception. What was true of those who would not die in their sins? (8:24)

The people wanted to know “Who are you?” What did Jesus say about himself in response to their question? What did he say about the people? (8:25-29)

How did many people respond to Jesus? (8:30)

**Read John 8:31-38.**

This passage has caused some good people to bend themselves into pretzels (or at least their interpretation of the passage). I think it is helpful to review “people who believed” in the Gospel of John. In chapter two, “many believed in his name” when they saw his signs. This statement was followed by the cautionary remark that Jesus did not entrust himself to them because he knew what people were like. In chapter three, Nicodemus said that “we know you are a teacher come from God” because of the signs which Jesus did. Jesus said that Nicodemus did not understand and that he did not believe. In chapter six, the people saw the sign of the feeding of over five thousand people from five loaves of bread and two fish. They wanted to make him king. When they finally tracked Jesus down and asked him for more free meals, Jesus did not give them what they were looking for. As a result, many people no longer followed him. In verses 8:31-32, what did Jesus say to those who believed in him?

Who are the people who responded to Jesus in verse 33? Were they the people who just believed and whom Jesus just addressed or was it a different group of people? What got their backs up when Jesus said “the truth will make you free”? Were these people ever under servitude? (8:33)

How did Jesus respond to their objection? (8:34-38)