

Imagine being at the Feast of Tabernacles/Booths in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus.

- The final of the 7 Jewish feasts of the year in early October.
- It was the 7th feast, for 7 days, in the 7th month of the year!
- This was a celebration of the completion of harvest time.
- It was a joyous celebration of God's provision of harvest and to look toward the day when all nations would be ingathered, "end time harvest," which anticipated the Messiah reigning over his people and all nations.
- In John 8, Jesus was there with his disciples, celebrating the feast.
- As part of the celebration, each night huge lamp stands were lit. Singing, praising, etc. 4, 75 foot lamp stands.
- They sang and read Scripture, one verse they read is Zechariah 14:5–7,

"Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him. On that day there shall be no light, cold, or frost. And there shall be a unique day, which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but at evening time there shall be light."

- These readings were intended to point the people to the future Messiah, pointed to a time where there would be no more darkness because of sin.
- On the 8th day would be a solemn assembly. Everyone would gather and the huge lamp stands would be extinguished and darkness would fill the area.
- Where there just was blazing light, filling the entire area, now only darkness.

It may have been then, in the darkness in the temple court, Jesus spoke these words for all to hear!

"I am the Light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." **John 8:12**

Now, think about the significance of this I Am statement in light of the context of the feast of Tabernacles!

Quick question – what does it mean that Jesus is the light of the world? How would you explain this concept to someone?

- World is in darkness of sin, ignorance, aimlessness. (MacDonald, William)
- Apart from Jesus, there is no deliverance from the darkness of sin, nor true knowledge of truth, nor is there any guidance for life.

Five P's of the significance of the phrase, "I am the Light of the World."

1. Jesus is the **Personal** light of God.
2. Jesus is the **Perpetual** light of God.
3. Jesus is the **Perfect** light of God.
4. Jesus is the **Pure** light of God.
5. Jesus is the **Powerful** light of God.

Nadler, *Messiah in the Feasts of Israel* (165-166)

Light in the Storyline of Scripture

- Walk through Scripture with an eye on this theme of light.

Quick things to think about - In the storyline of Scripture, what concept(s) does light symbolize? Think about it (underline) and jot down as we go.

CREATION – LIGHT AND LIFE

Genesis 1:1–5

1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

FALL - DARKNESS

John 3:19–20

19 And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. 20 For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.

REDEMPTION - LIGHT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Exodus 13:21–22

21 And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. 22 The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.

Leviticus 24:1–4

1 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 “Command the people of Israel to bring you pure oil from beaten olives for the lamp, that a light may be kept burning regularly. 3 Outside the veil of the testimony, in the tent of meeting, Aaron shall arrange it from evening to morning before the LORD regularly. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations. 4 He shall arrange the lamps on the lampstand of pure gold before the LORD regularly.

Psalms 27:1

1 The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Psalms 119:105

105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Isaiah 9:2–7

2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. 3 You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are

glad when they divide the spoil. 4 For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. 5 For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. 6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Isaiah 42:5–9

5 Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it: 6 “I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, 7 to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. 8 I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols. 9 Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them.”

Isaiah 49:6

6 he says: “It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”

Zechariah 14:5–8

Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him. 6 On that day there shall be no light, cold, or frost. 7 And there shall be a unique day, which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but at evening time there shall be light.

REDEMPTION IN CHRIST, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

John 1:1–5

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

John 9:1–7

1 As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” 3 Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. 4 We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” 6 Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man’s eyes with the mud 7 and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

REDEMPTION – WALKING IN THE LIGHT

Matthew 5:14–16

14 “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Acts 26:14–18 (18)

14 And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’ 15 And I said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. 16 But rise and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, 17 delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you 18 to open their eyes,

so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

2 Corinthians 4:6

6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5:8

8 for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light

1 John 1:5–7

5 This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

NEW CREATION – LORD GOD WILL BE THE LIGHT

Revelation 21:22–26

22 And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. 23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24 By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, 25 and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. 26 They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations... They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever (22:4-5).

Thoughts from the group, what does light symbolize in the story of Scripture?

- Goodness.
- Knowledge of truth vs. reasoning in the darkness.
- Scripture is light, Jesus fulfilled Scripture.
- No in between, either in Jesus or in darkness.
- Context – authoritative teachings of Jesus, in temple – Jesus is the light of the knowledge of God, the revelation of God (John 8:19).
- Symbolizes eternal life in Jesus.
- Light, first and most basic concept. Spiritual and physical light and darkness. Gospel truth is light and life, represents truth.
- Bridegroom comes out like the sun – Jesus is the light.

SUMMARY– big truths

Jesus gives the light of life! We no longer have to live in darkness. He provides truth for us to walk in today and gives us hope for a bright future. So when we feel in the dark, confused about life or discouraged because of sin... Jesus provides truth, understanding, and his firm promises to lean on.

SUMMARY – LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Lighting Ceremony	The Prophesied Messiah	Jesus' Words During the Feast	New Jerusalem
Seventy-five-foot high lamp stands were placed in the court of the women in the temple grounds.	"I will also make You a light of the nations. So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth." (Isa. 49:6)	"I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life" (John 8:12).	"And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light" (Rev. 21:23–24)

(Adapted from Nadler, *Messiah in the Feasts*)

DISCUSSION AND PRAYER

1. Share a verse, thought, or idea from the material this evening that you think is important for people to grasp or that is especially meaningful to you.
2. Our big truths for tonight: Jesus gives the light of life! We no longer have to live in darkness. He provides truth for us to walk in today and gives us hope for a bright future. So when we feel in the dark, confused about life or discouraged because of sin... Jesus provides truth, understanding, and his firm promises to lean on. Are there any areas of life where you would like to apply these principles? How might you apply this?
3. Spend some time in prayer together. Pray about these verses we read, that God would do these things in us.