

The Light

Casting Out Darkness

The book of John was written to conclusively prove Jesus is God's Son in the flesh.¹ God our Creator is relationally personal. In Genesis 1, God spoke the universe into existence.² Though, man's creation was unique and personal. Man was made in the image of God and God breathed life into him. However, man was made from dust, keeping him humble.³ God spoke initially to humanity through the Old Testament prophets. Later, John wrote to show Jesus is the incarnated Word who fulfilled the Messianic description given by the prophets. 3 examples are:

1) Jesus is *the Life*... Just as repentant Israelites bitten by snakes looked upon Moses' bronze snake up on the pole for God to save them from death and live, it foreshadowed looking to Christ – He was raised up on the cross and crucified (and later exalted) for people to be saved from the eternal, deadly "snake bite" of sin to have eternal life... Have you ever wondered about the biblical understanding of the snake in the veterinary caduceus symbol?⁴

2) Jesus is *the sinless Lamb of God*...⁵ God came to humanity as Jesus being fully man and being fully God could be the perfect sacrifice on the cross (innocent human death) to pay for the death penalty of humanity's sin. In this sacrifice of God's Son, Jesus is the Father's last Word to the world.⁶

3) Jesus is *the new Temple*...⁷ Following his death to pay our sin penalty, he rose from the dead, conquering death. His death was acceptable to God the Father to cover the cost of all humanity's sin (what a gift of life!). In these last days, Christ has returned to heaven and is now victoriously seated at the right hand as our advocate. God then sent the Holy Spirit to speak to, in and through us as his children (guiding, reminding, counseling, and comforting us.⁸)

There was never a point God didn't exist, yet there was a point when the universe didn't exist.⁹ John brings into focus God as The Creator, "*in Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.*"¹⁰ Notice John specifically refers to *that life*. This anaphoric word denotes it refers to other ideas in the text for its meaning: Jesus is "the Word" and "was with God..."¹¹ Jesus is preeminent; therefore, his earthly birth was *not* when he came into being... He is eternal, not created and is called the great "I Am".¹² He is pre-existent, involved in the act of creation and therefore superior to all created beings. Jesus is light...Who is sufficient to guide us out of the darkness of this fallen world by his victory on the cross.¹³ Light (Truth) exposes whatever exists... good or evil.¹⁴ In the darkness, good and evil might look alike...¹⁵ Light differentiates the two. Just as sin cannot co-exist with a holy God, light casts out darkness.¹⁶ It shows sinners they need a Savior. The Law (Ten Commandments) *reflects* the Light needed for revealing sin, yet the Law never can remove sin. Jesus fulfilled the Law,¹⁷ that is why he *is* the Light (Savior) of the world.¹⁸ Accept him to light your life!

John 1:5 reminds us that "*The Light shines in the darkness...*" Shines is present tense revealing the continuation of light from Light. Darkness (evil) is defeated and knows it *always* will be defeated, though it has and will try to put out the light.¹⁹ The true Light is already shining! This Light (Jesus) reveals truth to confront spiritual darkness. God warns us of this,²⁰ yet directly tells

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us he is the light of the world and therefore, we who choose to follow him will have hope having the light of life.²¹

Discuss: If you were created to be something out of nothing, then do you see your value *not* in your efforts, but held by the Creator *gracefully giving* you value and uniqueness? Therefore, if God is your Creator giving you value... Do you agree without God, you are nothing? This means a life without the Lord abandons your purpose created by him and for him.²²

Ponder: Does what you love control your actions? Loving darkness is the opposite of loving light. Embracing guilt, fear or shame can be a place darkness has a stronghold, quenching the Light of God's justice, power, and honor that you are called to walk in as his child, saved by his grace.²³ Opposition comes when one does not understand Christ's light and the need for it. This is the very reason Christ died for us while we were sinning.²⁴ Jesus spoke in parables (earthly stories with heavenly meanings). Foresight is given in Genesis 1:3 when God speaks into darkness: God's first creation was light in which he then brought human (physical) life into. He separated the light from darkness. In the book of John, he shows *that light* (Greek translation of light in John 1:4 is *zoë*) means eternal life is *with* God... God sent Christ as first-born over all creation, being *the light of the world*... First, do you have this light of Jesus? If not, you can ask the Lord to come into your life and pay for your sin and accept this eternal life he offers you. That is letting his light cast out the greatest darkness – eternal separation from God. Have invited the Lord to reveal any area of darkness you have avoided inviting his light to shine into?

Believers: What situation has made you feel like you were an Israelite following the Pillar of Fire? This Exodus description of God as light is a Christophany (pre-incarnate manifestation of Jesus) as the Light. Consider when a circumstance required you to move forward only by faith because Christ was lighting the path.²⁵ Perhaps this was through specific, intentional prayer time, patience, listening and looking for His answer? Maybe a confirming of His Word hidden in your heart through outward evidence through a circumstance or another believer? Was the answer brought to you though a model in Scripture?



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Footnotes: **1)** John 1:12-14; Ps 33:6, 9; Colossians 1:15, **2)** Genesis 1:3, 14, 20, 24; **3)** Genesis 1:26; 2:7; 3:19; **4)** John 3:14; John 3:20; John 8:28; Numbers 21:8 **5)** John 1:29; **6)** Hebrews 1:1-4; **7)** John 2:19-21; **8)** Ephesian 1:20-23; John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7; **9)** Genesis 1:1-2; **10)** John 1:4; **11)** John 1:1; **12)** Exodus 3:14; **13)** John 1:4, 1 John 1:5-9; **14)** Luke 8:15; **15)** Isaiah 5:20; **16)** Ps 36:9, 1 John 1:15; **17)** Matthew 5:17-18; Romans 8:3-11; **18)** John 8:12; **19)** 2 Kings 11:1-2; Matthew 2:16; 4:1-11; **20)** John 12:35-36; **21)** John 8:12; **22)** Colossians 1:16 **23)** Ephesians 2:8-9; **24)** Romans 5:8-9; **25)** Psalm 119:105