

TONIGHT'S READING



THE NEED OF THE SINFUL (4)

Scripture Reading:

- John 8:10-11 ¹⁰And Jesus stood up and said to her, Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you? ¹¹And she said, No one, Lord. And Jesus said, Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.
- John 8:24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am, you will die in your sins.
- John 8:36 If therefore the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed.
- John 8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
- John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

THE LORD JESUS BEING THE I AM

How can the Lord Jesus deliver man from sin? How can He deliver man from death? This is a great mystery. In John 8 the Lord Jesus said, “Unless you believe that I am, you will die in your sins.” In the following verse the Jews asked, “Who are You?” (vv. 24-25). The Lord Jesus can deliver man from sin and from death because He is the I Am.

What does *I Am* mean? In order to understand this, we must look at the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, God is often called by two names, God and Jehovah. God emphasizes His being the mighty Creator. *Jehovah* means “I Am,” and it speaks of God’s relationship with man. When God reveals this name to man, He tells man that He is everything to man; He can meet all man’s needs. Whatever man needs, He is. Therefore, in the Old Testament the name Jehovah is often followed by a secondary name

to form a compound name, such as *Jehovah-shalom* (meaning “I am peace”) (Judg. 6:24), *Jehovah-jireh* (meaning “I will provide”) (Gen. 22:14), and *Jehovah-nissi* (meaning “I am your banner”) (Exo. 17:15). In other words, if man needs peace, God is peace; if man needs a supply, God is the provision; and if man needs victory, God is the banner that gives man victory. God has a relationship with man because He is everything to man in such a way.

This is what Jehovah means by *I Am* (Exo. 3:14). The Lord Jesus is Jehovah who has a relationship with man. Jesus is the God, the *I Am*, who became flesh to become man’s everything. He is the great *I Am*, the all-inclusive *I Am*, who can meet all of man’s needs. By His name He tells us that He is everything to us; He is all that we need. If we are thirsty and need living water, He is the living water. If we are hungry and need spiritual food, He is the spiritual food. If we are in darkness and need light, He is light. If we are sick and need healing, He is healing. If we are under the bondage of sin and need a Savior, He is the Savior. If we are afraid of death and need life, He is life. Whatever we need, He is. His name is *I Am*. There is a blank after the *I Am* for us to fill in. This is like a blank check for us to write any amount according to our need. By faith we can write what we need after the *I Am*. Whatever we fill out by faith, He is. As much as our faith can fill out is what He will be to us. Only such a Savior, the *I Am*, is the need of the sinful. Only such a Savior, the *I Am*, can solve the problem of man’s sin. Only such a Savior, the *I Am*, can save man from sin and death.

THE LORD JESUS BEING THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

The Lord Jesus is the light of the world. Before the Lord Jesus said that He is the *I Am*, He said, “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12). His being the light of the world is related to man’s sin. John 8 is concerning the need of the sinful and how the Lord Jesus meets this need to save man from sin. The Lord Jesus saves man from sin by being light, because all who are in sin are in darkness. Darkness has blinded man so that he cannot see the defilement and dreadfulness of sin. Hence, man cannot and will not come out of sin.

The scribes and the Pharisees saw only the sins of others, and they were determined to condemn others. They did not know their own deceit, malice, and hypocrisy. They were in darkness and could not receive the Lord Jesus as the Savior to save them from sin. This is also the situation today. Man’s heart is becoming increasingly evil and morally depraved. People argue that they live by their conscience but refuse to believe in the Lord Jesus. People sin, commit evil, live in debauchery, and are utterly corrupt, but they do not feel a need for a Savior to deliver them. Even if they are exhorted to turn to the Savior, they are unwilling to take Him, because darkness has blinded them in sin. The Bible says, “The god of this age [the devil] has blinded the thoughts of the unbelievers that the illumination of the gospel of the glory of Christ...might not shine on them” (2 Cor. 4:4).

Therefore, in order to be delivered from sin, a person needs to be delivered from darkness. Only light can deliver people from darkness. People of the world cannot be delivered from darkness, because they do not have light. Without light, a person walks and lives in darkness. The Lord Jesus declared, "I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness" (John 8:12). The only way to no longer walk in darkness or no longer live in sin is by following Him and receiving Him as the light of the world. This is the way to be delivered from darkness and sin.

The Lord Jesus is the light of the world, and those who follow Him shall have the light of life (v. 12). Therefore, He is the light of life. This light is not the light of the sun, the moon, or a lamp shining on us. This light is His life entering into us and shining, inwardly illuminating us. Concerning the Lord Jesus, John 1:4 says, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." The eternal life of God was hidden in the Lord Jesus. When this life enters into us, it manifests a shining function. This shining function is light. This light is of life and is an operation of life; thus, it is called the light of life. When the light of life shines in us, we are brought out of darkness and hence out of sin.

The Lord Jesus does not save us outwardly by religious regulations or ordinances; He saves us by the light of life. The Lord does not save us by teachings, by the restriction of religion, or by religious regulations and ordinances; He saves us by the illumination of the light of life. He is life, and when He enters into us, He becomes our light of life. The illumination of this light causes us to no longer sin and to no longer want to sin. The illumination of the light of life delivers us from sin.

Before we were saved, we were in darkness. At that time the more we sinned, the more we enjoyed sinning. For example, the more we quarreled with people, the more energetic we became and the more we thought that we were right. That was to live in darkness and to not see our own mistakes. However, after we believe in the Lord Jesus and receive Him as the light of life, this light illuminates us from within when we want to quarrel with people. In this way our anger is subdued, and we can no longer quarrel with people. We are delivered from other sins in this same way. Religion cannot deliver us from sins, and neither can religious teachings, regulations, or ordinances deliver us from sins. Only the illumination of Christ's life can deliver us from sins. If we believe in the Lord Jesus, He as light will save us from every sin and enable us to live a life in the light. The salvation of the Lord Jesus is not from without but from within. It is the light of life that saves us inwardly from darkness and sin.

HOW TO BE SAVED BY THE LORD JESUS

How can we be saved by the Lord Jesus? It is very simple. There are only three steps. First, we must confess that we are sinful. We are a sinful person who should be condemned to perish. Second, we must believe in the Lord Jesus as the I Am. He is Jehovah who has a relationship with man and who wants to be man's everything. He is God, and He is the Savior who has come to be our life. He shed His blood

and died on the cross on our behalf so that our sins might be forgiven. Now He wants to enter into us to be our life, our light of life, in order to inwardly illuminate us. When we believe in Him and receive Him into us, we will be saved by Him from sin.

From the moment that we believe in the Lord Jesus, we should follow Him. He said, “He who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (8:12). Therefore, after we believe in the Lord Jesus, we still must follow Him. To follow Him is to keep His word, to accept His truth. This means that we should hear and obey His inward speaking and that we should receive the direction and leading that the light of life gives us in all things. In this way our sins will be forgiven, and the light of life will illuminate our life, dispel our darkness, and rescue us from sin. Then we will live in His life, and we will be saved from sin and death.