



JOHN 8:12-20

***When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”***

(verses 12)

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I’ve always envisioned this statement to imply that Jesus’ light is bright enough and strong enough to illuminate the entire world. I know this to be true. The whole world will experience it fully at the end of all time when history is brought to a conclusion and the Kingdom of God comes in all its fullness. Then, as the book of Revelation tells us, the New Jerusalem will *“not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp”* (Revelation 21:23).

But in the meantime, not everyone can apprehend the light. The light is here, but not every eye can see. Indeed, *“the light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it”* (John 1:5).

I find, in my own experience, the darkness isn't always dispersed. Right now, I *"see through a glass, darkly"* (1 Corinthians 13:12). It's not as clear as I would like.

But still, Jesus is the light. He's the light for all. He's the light for me.

I notice that Jesus' statement here is directly linked with following him – staying close and walking in his steps. In that close proximity to the Master, he guarantees that I will *"never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life"* (verse 12).

Which then reminds me of a story my friend Dave told me.

Dave grew up in rural Africa, without street lights – indeed without streets. He followed dirt paths from one place to another, sometimes on the back of a mule, but most commonly on foot. During the day it was completely fine, because the surrounding terrain was easily seen, allowing him to get his bearings and head in the right direction.

But at night it was a different story. Night-time was the time for flashlights. The downside of a flashlight was that it only lit a short distance ahead on the path, and certainly didn't light up the surrounding terrain. Coming to an intersection of paths, there were no street signs to indicate the right way forward. Most often there was a guide with him, but still it wasn't always as clear as he'd like.

Bringing it home, Dave says: *"It strikes me that life and decision-making is often done in the dark with only the immediate path lighted for us to see the next few steps (if that). Our journey with God is like this. We need to get comfortable not knowing all the information that we might like to have, and trusting God to guide us as we travel."*

Which then brings me back to Jesus' statement: *"Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."* Following Jesus is the crucial element, because the whole life of faith is grounded in relationship. Jesus is my light. But his light is never impersonal, as if I could flip the switch and then carry along on my own. I'm always meant to be in close reliance on him. He's the Light, but he's also the Guide. He lets me see what I need to see, but he doesn't usually choose to light up the whole terrain all at once. Even as I keep my eyes open for what he illumines, I'm meant to keep my ears open to his words of direction.

*"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

Lord Jesus, I choose to trust.

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*Dear Lord Jesus, I acknowledge you as the light of the world. There is no other source but you. You have promised me light as I stay close, following in your steps. Thank you that I need not fear. You always give as much light as I need. Help me to trust when I can't see everything as clearly as I would like. Even then, you are the light. All I need is found in you.*

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Reflect:

As you look ahead to this day, what light do you need? Ask Jesus to provide.

Then, secondly, ask him to provide light for all those moments you do not yet see. Choose to trust.