

NEW TESTAMENT



GOSPEL DOCTRINE CLASS

Lesson 15: "I Am the Light of the World" (John 7-8)

- Jesus attends the Feast of Tabernacles and teaches in the temple.
- A woman taken in adultery is brought to Jesus.
- Jesus declares, "I am the light of the world."

A study of this lesson will help strengthen our testimonies that Jesus Christ is our Savior and that by following him we can gain true freedom.

Introduction

the purpose of a lighthouse is to warn ships of danger and guide them to safety. Then explain that light was one of the symbols Jesus used in teaching about his mission and his relationship to us.

This lesson will discuss how Jesus is a light that shows us the way to spiritual safety.

Jesus attends the Feast of Tabernacles and teaches in the temple. (John 7)

The Feast of Tabernacles was an annual Jewish feast held six months after the Feast of the Passover. It lasted eight days and commemorated the Lord's blessings to the children of Israel during their travels in the wilderness. It also celebrated the year's harvest and marked the end of the harvest season. The Jews considered this feast the greatest and most joyful of all their feasts. (See Bible Dictionary, "Feasts," 673; see also Lev. 23:34-43.)

John 7:1-10 Jesus traveled from Galilee to Jerusalem to attend this feast at the temple.

John 7:12 The people at the feast murmured about Jesus as they waited for him to arrive—some saying he was a good man, others calling him a liar.

John 7:14-15 People were amazed when Jesus began to teach because they did not think he was educated.

John 7:16 Jesus told the people in the temple that his teachings were not his, but "his that sent me".

John 7:17 He instructed the people to gain a testimony of his teachings by doing them.

Elder John K. Carmack of the Seventy said:
"Jesus explained, 'If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself' (John 7:17). In other words, as you try it you can know it is true. This requires the faith to try, but it yields spiritual evidence. To the disciple who tries the experiment will come conviction, knowledge, and light" (Ensign, Nov. 1988, 26).



Think about how your testimony of a gospel principle was strengthened as you lived it. The opposite of the promise in John 7:17 is also true: if we do not live the principles of the gospel, our testimonies will weaken.

As Jesus taught, the people continued to be divided in their opinion of him.

NEXT WEEK:
#16 "I Was Blind, Now I See"
(John 9-10)



John 7:31, 37-41 Some of the reasons people believed he was the Christ included his power to work miracles and their belief that he spoke as a prophet.

John 7:27, 41-42, 52 One of the reasons people did not believe he was the Christ was a question about his connection to Galilee.

John 7:28-29; 8:14, 19, 23-29 In one sense the people knew where Jesus was from because they knew his family and his hometown. But in another sense they did not know where he was from because they did not understand that Heavenly Father sent him.

In one of the ceremonies conducted during the Feast of Tabernacles, a priest put water from the pool of Siloam on the altar. This offering was made to request rain and the success of the next year's crops. As Jesus taught in the temple on the last day of the feast, he invited the people to partake of 'living water' (John 7:37-38).

John 4:5-15 records another setting in which Jesus mentioned living water—as he conversed with the Samaritan woman at the well. "Living water" is a fountain of life enjoyed by becoming a true disciple and making the teachings of Christ an integral part of our lives.

A woman taken in adultery is brought to Jesus. (John 8:1-11)

John 8:4-6 The scribes and Pharisees brought an adulterous woman to Jesus. They wanted to trap Jesus into condemning the woman to death or contradicting the law of Moses.



John 8:7 Jesus' counsel to the scribes and Pharisees questioned their right to judge anyone else.

John 8:9 tells us why they didn't stone the woman.

John 8:10-11 While Jesus did not approve of the woman's sin, he did not condemn her for it. Think about what we learn from the Savior's example about how we should respond to people who have sinned seriously as you consider these words from an apostle:

Elder Marvin J. Ashton explained: *"The scribes and Pharisees brought before the Savior a woman taken in adultery. Their purpose was not to show love for either the woman or the Savior, but to embarrass and trick Jesus. ... Jesus did not condone adultery; there is no doubt about His attitude toward proper moral conduct. [But] He chose to teach with love—to show the scribes and Pharisees the need of serving the individual for her best good and to show the destructive forces of trickery and embarrassment"* (Ensign, May 1981, 24).

Jesus declares, "I am the light of the world." (John 8:12-36)

During the Feast of Tabernacles, the temple in Jerusalem was illuminated by the flames from four enormous candelabra. These flames could be seen throughout the city. (See Bible Dictionary, "Feasts," 673.) This provided an appropriate setting for Jesus to announce, "I am the light of the world" (See John 8:12).

John 8:12; Alma 38:9; 3 Nephi 15:9; and D&C 88:6-13 help us understand what it means when Jesus

says he is the light of the world.

Matt. 5:14; 3 Nephi 18:24 teach that as people strive to be like Jesus, they too become the light of the world, reflecting his light.

Matt. 5:16; Matt. 28:18-20; Philipians 2:14-15 show us how we can help others see the light that Christ offers.

John 8:29 Jesus told the people in the temple that he always did the things that pleased his Father.

How can we become more committed to doing things that please Heavenly Father?

John 8:30 As Jesus testified of his Father in Heaven, "many believed on him".

John 8:31-32 Jesus promised these people that if they would continue to follow him they could be free.

John 8:33-34 He taught that the truth frees us from the consequences of sin.

Alma 12:11; Alma 34:35 teach that committing sin places us in bondage to Satan.

John 14:6 Jesus later called himself “the truth”. This affects our understanding of the promise in John 8:32 as we realize that knowing the Savior makes us free.

John 8:39-40 Jesus told the unbelieving Jews that they were not children of Abraham because even though they were literal descendants of Abraham, they did not do righteous works as Abraham did.

John 8:41-44 Jesus told them they were not children of God because he said that they did the works of

Satan—and they were therefore the children of the devil. Obviously, we need to demonstrate by our actions that we are Heavenly Father’s children.

John 8:51-53, 56-57 teaches that the Jews were upset by the Lord’s comments about Abraham. They did not realize that Jesus was referring to his ability to overcome spiritual death [verse 51] and to his pre-mortal life [verses 56-57].

John 8:58 Jesus’ statement, “Before Abraham was, I am” helps us understand that he was a God before coming to earth. (See footnote 58b; see also Exodus 3:13-14.

Jesus is Jehovah, the Great “I Am,” the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.) It important to know that Jesus was Jehovah before his mortal life to recognize his mission as law-giver and Savior for this earth.



Conclusion

Jesus Christ is our Savior and only he can free us from the bondage of sin. We must remember to follow Christ, “the light of the world,” so he may guide us to spiritual safety.

