

# The Light of the World

by Mariano Di Gangi

---

*Mariano Di Gangi's sermon emphasizes Jesus as the light of the world, calling believers to follow him for guidance and moral clarity in a dark world.*

**Duration:** 32:59

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:105, Isaiah 9:2, Matthew 5:14-16, John 3:19-21, John 8:12, Ephesians 5:8, Colossians 1:13, 1 Timothy 6:16, 1 John 1:5, Revelation 21:23

**Topics:** "Jesus", "Following Jesus", "Light Of The World"

---

## Description

Mariano Di Gangi emphasizes that Jesus is the light of the world, contrasting the darkness of sin and ignorance with the illuminating truth and guidance that comes from following Him. He recounts the story of the woman caught in adultery to illustrate Jesus' mercy and the call to leave a life of sin. Di Gangi explains that true faith involves a commitment to follow Jesus, which leads to spiritual enlightenment and moral clarity. He warns against the temptation to prefer darkness over light, highlighting the consequences of ignoring Christ's guidance. Ultimately, he encourages believers to embrace the light of life that Jesus offers, leading to freedom from sin and a relationship with God.

---

## Transcript

Reading this evening from the Gospel According to John, the 8th chapter, at verse 1, Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery.

They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. What do you say? They were using this question as a trap in order to have a basis for accusing him.

But Jesus went down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, If anyone of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her. Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you? No one, sir, she said. Then neither do I condemn you, Jesus declared.

Go now and leave your life of sin. 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.

The Pharisees challenged him, Here you are, appearing as your own witness. Your testimony is not valid. Jesus answered, Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going.

But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going. You judge by human standards. I pass judgment on no one, but if I do judge, my decisions are right, because I am not alone.

I stand with the Father who sent me. In your own law it is written that the testimony of two men is valid. I am one who testifies for myself, and my other witness is the Father who sent me.

Then they asked him, Where is your father? You do not know me or my father, Jesus replied. If you knew me, you would know my father also. He spoke these words while teaching in the temple area near the place where the offerings were put, yet no one seized him because his time had not yet come.

Jesus said, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. Here we have the second self-portrait of Jesus hung in the gallery of the Gospel of John.

I've always been fascinated by galleries of art ever since I could walk. I grew up in the days of the Great Depression of the 1930s, and every Saturday my father would take me on the New York City subway system all the way from Brooklyn, New York, where we lived, to the island of Manhattan across the East River, upwards to midtown Manhattan to get to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It only used to cost us a nickel each on those days, one way to get up to the art gallery, and each Saturday we would visit one wing of the gallery, and then it was time to begin all over again because of new accessions and exhibits.

I thank God for a father with whom one could have a very close, warm relationship. And so I got my first exposure to the art of the Middle Ages, the art of the Renaissance, the Baroque period, the Rococo period, and all the effects that have dribbled out since then, from the time that my father began to take me to art galleries. I've been fascinated by sweeping landscapes and by portraits which give you an insight into the soul of the subject.

Pictorial art has to have at least three elements in it. One is line, either straight or curved, otherwise there's no form. Another is color, the primary colors of red and blue and yellow, and the colors that come from mixing these and all the infinite variety of shades across the spectrum in between.

The third element has to do with contrast. To have a picture of a white swan eating marshmallows in the midst of a blinding whiteout snowstorm would be no picture at all. You need a bit of contrast to get the picture, and here's something thrown in absolutely free.

You're going to learn a very high-grade Italian word, *chiaro scuro*. *Chiaro* means clear or luminous. *Scuro* has to do with that which is dark.

It's the interplay of light and dark which someone in the Netherlands named Rembrandt used to the utmost advantage in giving you darkness in the background and then in the foreground the features of the portrait. That is the way that Jesus proceeds tonight in describing himself. He relies on *chiaro scuro*, on light and dark, on sharp contrast, in order to tell us what the world is like, namely a world of darkness, and what he is like, the light of the world.

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. Right at the very beginning of the Bible, we hear the voice of God resounding at the dawn of creation, saying, let there be light.

And there was light. And at the beginning of 1st John, we have a magnificent description of the character of God. God is light and in him is no darkness at all.

Moral excellence, absolute purity, burning holiness, that is what we find at the very center of the being of Almighty God. And in 1st Timothy 6.16, we are told that he dwells in light inaccessible, hid from our eyes. And against that background, Jesus makes this statement, describing himself as the light of the world.

Here we undoubtedly have a revelation of Jesus Christ. Now this is what the Old Testament had prophesied. You remember that passage at the beginning of the ninth chapter of the book of the Prophet Isaiah? The people that walk in darkness have seen a great light, and upon them that sit in the shadow of death, on them has the light shined.

Isn't that what the Prophet Malachi said in the fourth chapter of his book at the second verse? That the Son of Righteousness will arise with healing in his wings, that wherever the beams of this Son of Righteousness would go, darkness would be dispelled and wholeness would return to those ravaged by the deadly disease of sin. And what Isaiah and Malachi had prophesied came to fulfillment when in the fullness of time, Jesus Christ, the light of the world, was born of the Virgin Mary, an old man named Simeon, a devout and godly man who happened to be in the temple when Joseph and Mary brought Jesus there for a ceremony. He took the child in his arms and he said, now let your servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen your salvation.

More than seen it, I have cradled the Savior in my aged arms. And then looking at the child, he said, this child is a light to lighten the pagan heathen Gentiles, and this child will be a glory to my people Israel. How does the Gospel of Matthew begin its account of the ministry of Jesus? After Jesus is baptized at the River Jordan and after the Savior comes through the encounter in the wilderness with the devil and triumphs in his moment of temptation, we read that he goes preaching, teaching, and healing, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, that they who dwell in darkness have indeed seen a great light shining forth through the ministry of Jesus.

How was it that Jesus appeared to his disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration? Peter, James, and John beheld him, and they said that when he was transfigured on the sacred mount, they had a profound revelation of his shining majesty, and his garments became glistening, more glistening than snow beneath the blaze of the noonday sun. The outshining, the radiance, veiled in flesh the Godhead see, incandescent, burning light, the moral excellence of our Lord Jesus. I find it very significant that in the ninth chapter of the Gospel of John, where Jesus is about to perform a miracle that will give a blind man sight, he prefaces it by saying, I am the light of the world.

How is it that the unknown author of the letter to the Hebrews refers to the character of Christ Jesus? He says that Jesus Christ is not only the Son of the living God, but that he is the express image and likeness of God, and that from him there shines the splendor and the brilliance and the radiance of God himself. When Paul was on his way to Damascus to round up Christians and to accuse them and to put them in prison, if not to have them executed, he was stopped dead in his tracks. How? By the appearance of the Lord of glory, the brilliant blaze of sunlight that blinded him, and in that moment of physical blindness, his soul began to see that Jesus was no imposter, but he was indeed the promised Messiah, just as he had

claimed to be.

And so in these words, I am the light of the world, we have a revelation of Jesus Christ. But the next thing that we notice in our text is more than the revelation of Christ as the light of the world, we have the response of faith, for Jesus speaks of people who are willing to commit themselves to him and become his followers. Remember in the Old Testament when the people of Israel made their way out of Egypt through the wilderness, wandering toward the promised land? God led them by the pillar of cloud by day and the luminous fiery pillar at night, the light that led the people provided by God through the wilderness journey.

And so it is that in Jesus Christ, God gives us a guiding light, God gives us a fiery pillar to follow, and it takes faith to respond to him and begin taking step after step as he leads. It's absolutely useless for us to talk about the lordship of Jesus Christ unless we are willing to follow his leadership. If he is the light of the world, then we must by an act of faith commit ourselves to him and be willing to follow him every step of the way wherever he leads.

That means that our direction must not be set by the world which would squeeze us into its mold, but our direction has to come from Jesus Christ. It means that when we make our moral decisions, his will has to be decisive for us, otherwise we are not numbered among his followers and we cannot rightly consider ourselves as Christians. This means, as one of the Puritans put it, that we do not rashly and precipitously presume to run ahead of him.

This means that we do not lag and loiter behind him. This means that we are not distracted from him who is our only lead. This means that we will not be misled by the false leaders who try to recruit their cults today.

It means that when he who is the light shows us what to do, we'll do it. We know how the traffic moves or should move. There's a system of lights.

When the lights are out, you've got absolute chaos. You can have chaos even before the lights go out, but imagine what happens when they're not functioning. It's the game of chicken.

Everybody waits at the intersection to see who's going to do it. Well, we all know that the light can be green or amber or red. He who is the light of the world gives us a green light and gives us our orders and he says, go, go into all the world and evangelize the whole creation.

Every time he gives us a positive command in Scripture, every time he tells us what we ought to do, he's giving us a green light and we've got no reason to lag behind but get on with it. Love one another. Serve one another in love.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and mind and soul and strength. Love your neighbor as yourself. That's the green light.

He wants us to get moving, to act on what he says. He may also give us an amber light, raise questions in our mind, disturb our consciences, alert us to be sensitive to the issues as they are developing, and to withdraw while there is time. An amber light to slow down because things are going to change and sometimes he gives us a red light, flashing, warning.

How else do you understand all those strong negatives in the Ten Commandments? That's the red light. Thou shalt have no other gods before me, beware of idolatry. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy

God in vain.

When you call God to be your witness, you better be sincere and honest. Thou shalt not commit murder. Thou shalt not commit adultery, no matter how fashionable it may be in the eyes of the world.

Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not covet. Thou shalt not bear false witness.

The light is red and you don't presume to cross. Light of the world? Absolutely. And he requires of us that we follow his lead, or in vain do we call him Lord.

The tragedy is not that God hasn't given us guidance, that God hasn't provided leadership. The tragedy is that there are many people in our world today who choose to disregard and defy Jesus Christ as Lord and leader. I'm sure that practically everybody here flawlessly could quote John 3.16 and that many of you could quote or at least paraphrase John 3.17. But do you know what comes after that in John 3.18 through 21? One of the most startling passages in the entire Bible.

Jesus is the light of the world, but says the Bible, there are those who prefer darkness to light. There are those who will not come to the light because their deeds are evil. And so God provides him who is the light.

God challenges us to make a faith commitment and follow him, but there are those who will not follow him, who will not come to the light. Why? Because their deeds are evil and would be exposed in that light. I remember that when I pastored a church in the city of Hamilton, we came across a man who rebelled at the sound of the bells that were played on Sunday morning from the church tower.

The bells weren't loud, the hymns were listenable, but there was something about that that bothered him. It reminded him of the Lord whom he knew till he quit Sunday school and chose to go his own way. And he rebelled against the light.

He refused to follow it. He would suppress it if he could. That's why some people are hostile to the idea of going to church, because their evil deeds might be exposed in the light of the Word of Jesus Christ.

That's why some people decline to read the Bible, because the Bible reveals the truth about you and about me, and it may be more than we can stand unless we are willing to do what it asks and with brokenness of heart repent and find the remission of sins. That is why some people get very jumpy and very fidgety and very upset when you begin to discuss Jesus Christ. Politics? Sure.

Getting a hockey team to Toronto? Sure. World soccer? Absolutely fanatical. But discuss the Lord Jesus or his claims on your life, and you will find that like some insects under a rock who are exposed when the rock is lifted and they see the light and they scurry in every direction.

That's the way people are. And we have it on the authority of Jesus that they prefer darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil and they will not be exposed in the light of his countenance. Faith? Coming to the light, following the light.

That is the only right response to him who is the light of the world. I have found over and over again, particularly with college students, that in some cases they raise a whole list of intellectual difficulties about the Christian faith, and you get behind those intellectual difficulties and find that they are simply a smokescreen because of a moral problem that they refuse to face. They will not come to the light because

their deeds are evil, and coming to the light would mean a radical rearrangement of the furniture of their lives.

The revelation of Jesus Christ, I am the light of the world. The response of faith, following him regardless of what others may do. The third and last thing that comes through the words of our text tonight is this, here we have the result of obedience.

Negatively, if we follow him who is the light of the world, we shall not walk in darkness. Positively, we shall have the light of life. The result of obeying, the result of believing and obeying, the result of following him who is the light of the world is that we shall no longer walk in darkness.

When you study the use of darkness as a metaphor in Scripture, and the concordance incidentally is a half a mile long on that subject, what do you find? You find that darkness is a symbol for ignorance. Ignorance of spiritual truth. A person may be skilled in political science, a person may be skilled in biochemistry, a person may be skilled in engineering, a person may be a mathematical wizard, but concerning spiritual truths, that person is ignorant.

That person is in a state of spiritual darkness. The understanding has been darkened, and they simply cannot see what this is all about. It's a symbol of ignorance.

It's also a symbol of iniquity. In the letter to the Ephesians, in the letter to the Thessalonians, in the letter to the Romans, the Apostle continually analyzes the human condition apart from the grace of God, and he speaks of the pagan, heathen, Gentile world as a world which is characterized by deeds of gross darkness. It's not merely ignorance of spiritual truth.

It's a matter of depravity of soul, of immorality of life, of iniquity of conduct, what Scripture calls the works of darkness. Moreover, darkness is symbolic of death. We all know the passage, Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, an overpowering shadow that blots out the light of the sun and makes one feel that the end is dreadfully near.

And darkness in Scripture is also a symbol for divine judgment, final catastrophic judgment. One of the most majestic passages of the Old Testament deals precisely with the day of judgment. It deals with the day of wrath which inspired a famous medieval hymn, and it describes the day of judgment when God will finally rouse himself to final battle against the forces of evil as a day of darkness and not of light.

If we follow him who is the light of the world, we shall not walk in darkness. We will be delivered from spiritual ignorance. We will be delivered from the bondage of corruption.

We will be delivered from death itself if we follow him who is the light of the world. Positively, the benefit to be reaped on the other side is this, that if we follow him who is the light of the world, we will not only no longer walk in darkness, but we shall have the light of life. The people of Israel, if they followed the cloud by day and the fiery pillar by night, came at last to the land of Canaan.

It's interesting that when the book of Revelation speaks of the future of the new heavens and the new earth, it does so in terms of darkness and light. For in that holy city of God, the new Jerusalem that comes down from God out of heaven, in the new heavens and the new earth, there shall be no more darkness, no more sin, no more sighing, no more pain, no more death, and they will have no need of sun or moon or stars in that city. It's a city whence comes no night, because God is its glory, and Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, is its light.

And that truth stated in Revelation 21 is reiterated in the 22nd chapter with which the Bible concludes. Already those who are genuinely converted to Jesus Christ have experienced what is written in Colossians chapter 1, that we have been taken out of the kingdom of the power of darkness and transported into the kingdom of God's dear Son and given a share of the inheritance with the saints in everlasting light. Already we who have been converted can sing the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Already we who have been converted can reflect the radiance of Jesus Christ as the moon reflects the brightness of the sun, and we can let our light so shine before men that they, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father who is in heaven. The choir sang beautifully for us tonight, a verse that sums up the teaching. I heard the voice of Jesus say, I am this dark world's light.

Look unto me, thy morn shall rise and all thy day be bright. I looked to Jesus and I found in him my star, my son. And in that light of life I'll walk till traveling days are done.

That's the way that Wesley put it. Long my imprisoned spirit lay fast bound in sin and nature's night. Thine eye diffused a quickening ray.

I woke the dungeon flamed with light. My chains fell off. My heart was free.

I rose, went forth, and followed thee. Jesus said, I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Let us pray. Lord, we thank you for the revelation of Jesus Christ which we find in the Scripture. Enable us by an act of faith to decide to follow him faithfully, and enable us to experience in our own lives what it means to be delivered from the power of darkness, and to experience and enjoy a foretaste of heavenly glory as we walk in the light in fellowship with our God.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, amen.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/30/SID30670.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/mariano-di-gangi/the-light-of-the-world/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**