

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### John: Believing On The Christ, The Son Of God, For Eternal Life

#### Part XXIV: Trusting In Christ Due To His Teaching On Being The Light Of The World

##### C. Trusting In Christ As The Light Of The World Who Revealed His Eternal Deity

(John 8:51-59)

### I. Introduction

- A. As we have before learned in this lesson series, Jesus said that He was the "Light of the world" in John 8:12, the Great Light of Isaiah 9:1-2 that Isaiah 9:6 also identified as the "Mighty God" of Israel.
- B. However, **IF** Jesus as the "Light of the world" **IS** that "Mighty God," we should expect Him to assert this fact in His earthly ministry, and He did so in John 8:51-59. We view that passage for our edification (as follows):

### II. Trusting In Christ As The Light Of The World Who Revealed His Eternal Deity, John 8:51-59.

- A. Continuing with His long explanation about being the "Light of the world" (John 8:12), which "Light" we note in the context of John 7:52 was the "Great Light" predicted to arise in Galilee in Isaiah 9:1-2, Jesus made the startling claim to His lost hearers that if a man kept His word, he would never "see" death, that is, that he would never "be eternally separated from God" in *spiritual* death, John 8:51; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 306.
- B. The unbelieving crowd thought He meant *physical* death (Ibid.), so they objected to the claim: they said that now they knew He had a demon, for Abraham was dead with the prophets, and Jesus had said if a man kept His word he would never "taste" of death, or experience physical death (as in Hebrews 2:9; Ibid.), John 8:52.
- C. Accordingly, Jesus' critical hearers asked Him if He was claiming to be greater than their patriarch Abraham who was dead, or greater than the deceased godly Old Testament prophets, John 8:53a. They asked Jesus Who He made Himself out to be if He implied He was greater than Abraham and the prophets, John 8:53b.
- D. Jesus replied that if He honored Himself, His honor would have no value to it, John 8:54a, Ibid. Rather, the Father was the One Who honored Him, the God Whom Jesus' hearers claimed to be their God, John 8:54b.
- E. Yet, Jesus added His hearers did not know the Father as He did, and that if Jesus said He did not know Him, He would be a liar like His hearers, Jn. 8:55a. Jesus said He knew the Father and kept His Word, Jn. 8:55b.
- F. Jesus also claimed that Abraham rejoiced "to see my day: and he saw it and was glad," John 8:56. This claim may refer to the Genesis 12:3 revelation in the Abrahamic Covenant that "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you [Abraham]," which blessing will occur in the Messianic Kingdom of Christ, Ibid. However, "(h)ow much of the messianic times God revealed to His friend Abraham is unknown" to us, Ibid.
- G. To this answer by Jesus, His unbelieving critics retorted that He was not yet fifty years of age, so how could He have seen Abraham who had been deceased for over 2,000 years, John 8:57; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 2021-2017 Bible timeline chart.
- H. Jesus then replied in John 8:58 with a very important answer that we need to view from the Greek text:
  - 1. Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say unto you, before Abraham **came to exist** (2nd aorist infin. *genesthai* from *ginomai*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 361; Arndt & Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the N. T., 1967, p. 157-159; The Analyt. Grk. Lex., 1972, p. 77), **I Myself AM** (*ego eimi*, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.)
  - 2. This was **not** a claim that before Abraham's birth Jesus had existed for a time as a created being like the Jehovah's Witnesses teach, for **then** Jesus would have to say *ego emen*, "I was existing" with *emen* in the imperfect tense, denoting continued past action, J. G. Machan, N. T. Grk. For Beginners, 1951, p. 250, 65.
  - 3. Rather, the *ego eimi* expression has the verb *eimi* in the **present** tense of the verb "be," so Jesus was saying that before Abraham came into existence, "I **Am Being**" as **Eternal God!**
  - 4. Also, the Greek translation of the Old Testament in Jesus' day, the Septuagint, at Exodus 3:14, renders the Hebrew "I AM" expression as *ego eimi* (Sir Lancelot C. L. Brenton, The Septuagint With Apocrypha: Greek and English, 1998, p. 73), so His *ego eimi* expression was **Jesus' claim to be the Eternal God!**
  - 5. Jesus' unsaved hearers certainly understood this claim, and took up stones to cast at Him in belief that He had committed blasphemy in claiming to be the Eternal God when they thought He was just a human being, John 8:59a. Jesus however eluded them because His time to die had not yet arrived, John 8:59b.

**Lesson:** *Jesus clearly claimed to be the Eternal God of the Old Testament Who would give eternal life to whoever heeded His Word, that word being the Gospel of salvation by faith in Him, cf. John 3:16; 20:31.*

**Application:** *(1) May we trust in Christ to be saved. (2) May we believe that before Abraham came into existence, Jesus was always eternally existing, NEVER having been CREATED, that He is the Eternal God, cf. John 1:1-3.*