

the **'I AM'** sayings

The Light of the World

The last in these guides focuses on Jesus' claim to be the light of the world. The return of Christ, anticipated in Advent, will flood this world with his light.

The inspiration for this Advent theme has been the 'I am' calligraphic artwork dedicated to God on Advent Sunday and displayed in St John Chapel.

what's needed?

- Bible
- about 30 mins of your time
- being up for a challenge

Week 4 – The Light of the World

Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'

Today as I write there is less than 8 hours of daylight from dawn to dusk with two thirds of each day currently in darkness. With plenty of access to electric lights, it's a fact that doesn't really impact our daily lives. Light is vital for life both physical and spiritual. Jesus can claim to be the source of 'light for *all*

life', because through him the sun was created and in him, we have eternal life.



The Light of the World
"I am come to light unto the world,
that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness."
JOHN 1:9

For many people, this painting by Holman Hunt epitomises Jesus as the light of the world. As a product of its time, it consequently emphasises a somewhat

romantic view of Christ patiently waiting to bring light to someone's life.

It's true that the teaching and fine moral example of Christ throw light on the way we should live, but I would prefer to see the light radiating from Christ himself as the main source of light in this painting.

In Jesus' day, many people found it hard to understand his teaching, yet they still followed him, attracted to his character and charisma. This radiance is represented by a halo, but I can't imagine anything like this was visible to those who followed him, or worked with him in the carpenter's workshop! Whatever the means of representation, he claimed to bring light to every situation, to the extent that his followers 'will never walk in darkness' - light in their lives 24/7!

This painting illustrates another verse from scripture – Revelation 3.20. 'Here I am. I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the

door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.' One translation begins with 'Behold', but the NIV uses the paraphrase 'Here I am' instead. The 'I AM' stands at the door of our lives wanting to fill our lives with the light of his life.

He might be waiting patiently, but there is nothing meek and mild about the 'light of the world' in Revelation 3. Via a vision, Jesus speaks directly to the church in Laodicea and rebukes them for their complacency, and concludes that 'Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent'. (Rev 3.19)

In Advent we look back to re-live the first coming of Christ, concurrent with looking forward in hopeful expectation of his second coming. It'll be an era of continuous spiritual daylight when Jesus the Light of the World appears. Preparation requires discipline and repentance as well as welcoming the light of the world into our lives.

Thinking, acting and praying:

- Meditate on Holman's Hunt painting as you read John 1.1-9.
- Look up John 9.5 and Matthew 5.14. What role do followers of Christ have in bringing light into the world?
- Is God calling you be his light in a situation in your family, work or neighbourhood? Our role is to reflect Jesus' light in a way similar

to how the moon reflects the light of the sun.

Prayer Suggestion:

Look for a news story this week needing illumination from the light of Christ. Commit yourself to prayer for that situation each day this week, and as you pray visualise the light of the world overcoming the darkness.