

# John 1:8 Commentary

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Click chart to enlarge  
Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission  
[Another Chart](#) from Charles Swindoll

## JESUS' RISE FROM OBSCURITY FOLLOWED BY OPPOSITION IN JOHN'S GOSPEL

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## THE LIFE OF JESUS AS COVERED BY GOSPEL OF JOHN (shaded area)

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John 1:8 He was not the Light, but *he came* to testify about the Light: ouk en (3SIAI) ekeinos to phos, all hina marturese (3SAAS) peri tou photos. ([NASB: Lockman](#))

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- **the Light:** John 1:20 Jn 3:28 Acts 19:4

**NAS** (1977 version - the version above is 1995) He was not the light, but *came that* he might bear witness of the light. (What's the difference? Notice that the older version retains the that which is present in the Greek text and serves to introduce a purpose clause - see terms of purpose or result).

**Barclay** - He himself was not the light; his function was to bear witness to the light.

KJV He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

NET He himself was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.

CSB He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.

ESV He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

NAS He was not the light, but came that he might bear witness of the light.

NIV He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

NLT John himself was not the light; he was simply a witness to tell about the light.

GWN John was not the light, but he came to declare the truth about the light.

NAB He was not the light, but came to testify to the light.

NJB He was not the light, he was to bear witness to the light.

NKJ He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

RSV He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light.

**Young's Literal** - that one was not the Light, but -- **that** he might testify about the Light.

## JESUS IS THE LIGHT JOHN IS THE REFLECTOR

Or Jesus is the Light and John is a Lamp (see below). The former is the essence of light, the latter is light derived, even as the light of the Sun is reflected by the moon. **Are you a "moon" for Jesus in the darkness in which He has placed you?** (cf Mt 5:16-note, Php 2:14-note, Php 2:15-note, 1Pe 2:9-note)

**Isaiah** had predicted the coming of Messiah declaring "The people who walk in darkness will see a great **light**; Those who live in a dark land, the **light** will shine on them." (Isa 9:2-note) According to Jewish tradition, **Light** was one of the names of the Messiah. (Isa 9:1, 2; 42:6; 49:6; 60:1, 2, 3; Mal 4:2; Lk 2:32). In this passage Isaiah presents an indisputable prophecy of the coming Messiah. See other allusions to **light** in reference to Jesus - Jn 1:4, 5, Jn 3:19, 20, 21, Jn 9:5. Jn 12:35, 36, 46 Ps 36:9. Ps 78:14. Is 60:1-3 Lk 1:78, 79. Lk 2:32. Acts 13:47, 48. Acts 26:18, 23 2Cor 4:6-note 1Jn 2:8-note.

John's purpose was to make the way smooth for the Light and to testify about the Jewish Messiah to the nation of Israel, who in spite of all their spiritual advantages (Ro 9:4-5-note), were for the most part spiritually blind to the truth that Jesus was their long expected Messiah! (cf Acts 26:18, 2Cor 4:4-note)

**William Barclay** explains why John the evangelist specifically says John the Witness "was not the light" - "Somewhere in the church there was a group of men who wished to give John the Baptist too high a place. John the Baptist himself gave no encouragement to that but rather did everything to discourage it. But the Fourth Gospel knew that that tendency was there and took steps to guard against it. It can still happen that men may worship a preacher rather than Christ. It can still happen that men's eyes may be fixed upon the herald rather than upon the King of whom he is the messenger. John the Baptist was not in the least to blame for what had happened; but John the evangelist was determined to see that none should shoulder Christ from out the topmost niche." ([John 1 Commentary](#))

On the other hand **Kostenberger** writes (and D A Carson has a similar note) "The disclaimer "That man was not the light; rather, he came to testify concerning the light" (cf. Jn 1:15; 3:30; 5:36; 10:41) is taken by some as evidence that there were in John's day groups that elevated the Baptist above Jesus (R. Brown 1966: 28). There is some evidence for this in Ephesus in the 50s (Acts 18:25; 19:1-7). However, it is more likely that John's primary burden is to contrast (note the strong adversative **but**) the respective ministries of John and Jesus (see Jn 1:19-51; 3:22-24; 4:1-2), whereby the Baptist is cast in a positive light as a witness to Jesus (Ridderbos 1997: 42). John is not the light, but he is a lamp (Jn 5:35) (R. Brown 1966: 9; Morris 1995: 81; Keener 2003: 393).

**He was not the Light** (the light - Jn 1:4, 5, 7, 8) - John the Baptist was not Jesus, as he himself clearly "confessed, and did not deny, and he confessed, **"I am not the Christ"**" (Jn 1:20)

**He (1565)** (**ekeinos** from **ekei** = there) a demonstrative pronoun which is used to emphasize the subject = the one there, that man, woman, thing). **BDAG** says **ekeinos** is a "demonstrative pronoun pertaining to an entity mentioned or understood and viewed as relatively remote in the discourse setting = that person, that thing, that."

Examples of uses of **ekeinos** in the NT - Mt 3:1 = "in **those** days"; Mt 7:22 = "on **that** day"; Mt 7:25 "burst against **that** house"; Lk 15:14 "famine occurred in **that** country"; Jn 1:18 = "**He** (that One) has explained Him." Jn 1:39 "stayed with Him **that** day" Jn 3:30 "**He** (that One) must increase" Jn 8:44 "**He** (that one) was a murderer from the beginning." Jn 10:1 "**He** (that one) is a thief and a robber." Jn 14:26 = "**He** (that One) shall teach you all things." Jn 15:26 = "**He** (that One) will bear witness of Me." Jn 16:13 = "but when **He** (that One), the Spirit of truth, comes" Jn 16:14 = "**He** (that One) shall glorify Me." Jn 20:16 = "**She** (that one) turned"; Last use in Scripture = Rev 11:13 "And in **that** hour" (What hour? [see note](#))

Examples of uses of **ekeinos** in the **Septuagint (Lxx)** - Ge 2:12 = "**that** land", Ge 6:4 = "in **those** days", Ge 10:11 = "**that** land"; Ge 15:18 = "on **that** day"; Ge 17:14 = "**that** person shall be cut off", Deut 1:9 = "I spoke to you at **that** time"; Zech 14:3 = "against **those** nations"; Zech 14:6 = "in **that** day".

**Westcott** adds that **ekeinos** is a "pronoun of reference which is used **ekeinos** isolates and so fixes attention upon the person referred to." For example in John 14:21 "**He** is the one who loves Me" is more literally "**that** (ekeinos) is the one who loves me."

**Leon Morris** adds that **ekeinos** "is a favorite with John, who uses it 70 times, more than any other New Testament writer (Matthew 54 times, Mark 23 times, Luke 33 times, Acts 22 times, Paul 21 times). He uses it significantly often **of Christ** (10 times), **of the Father** (6 times), and **of the Holy Spirit** (5 times). The pronoun is often a way of giving emphasis. Indeed, except when it is used in dialogue it is usually emphatic in this Gospel."

**Vine** - ekeinos denotes "that one, that person"; **its use marks special distinction**, favorable or unfavorable; this form of emphasis should always be noted; e.g., John 2:21 "(But) He (spake)"; Jn 5:19, "(what things soever) He (doeth)"; Jn 7:11; 2Cor. 10:18, lit., "for not he that commendeth himself, he (ekeinos) is approved"; 2Ti 2:13, "He (in contrast to "we") abideth faithful"; 1Jn 3:3, "(even as) He (is pure)"; 1Jn 3:5, "He (was manifested)"; 1Jn 3:7, "He (is righteous)"; 1Jn 3:16, "He laid down"; 1Jn 4:17, "(as) He (is)."

**Gilbrant** - Occurring alone as a pronoun ekeinos may refer to a person, thing, or idea—a usage limited mostly to John and 1 John. As an adjective describing another word it refers to "that man, those days." Nearly four-fifths of its occurrences are in the Gospels and Acts. Often writers attach ekeinos to kai ([2532](#)) meaning "and," to form kakeinos ([2548](#)) when the words would otherwise appear side by side. Related New Testament terms are ekei (1550), "there"; ekeithen (1551), "from there"; and ekeise (1553), "there, to

there." **Ekeinos** has three main applications. **First**, since pointing to something involves separation, ekeinos appears in statements of contrast or differentiation and denotes "the person or thing considered more remote": "This man went down to his house justified rather than the other" (Luke 18:14). **Second**, it often contrasts present time with past or future: "At that time the disciples came to Jesus" (Matthew 18:1, NIV); "Then shall they fast in those days" (Luke 5:35). Differentiation tends further to draw attention to an item. As a result, a **third** use of ekeinos often comes up in situations where emphasis is appropriate. The word may then refer to a well-known person, whether in respect (1 John 3:3,7) or contempt (John 9:28). (The Complete Biblical Library)

**A T Robertson** commenting on the use of **ekeinos** in reference to Christ in 1Jn 2:6 explains this is "the emphatic use of the demonstrative **ekeinos** in reference to Christ as in 1Jn 3:3, 5, 7, 16; 4:17 and John 7:11; 9:12, 28; 19:21." In Jn 9:37 literally it reads "And the one speaking with thee is **that** man." In Mt 27:63 ("**that** [ekeinos] deceiver") presents "a picturesque sidelight on their intense hatred of and fear of Jesus." In Jn 5:19 "whatever the Father does" is literally "whatever that One (ekeinos) does," about which Robertson says regarding **ekeinos** = "emphatic demonstrative, **that one**, referring to the Father. This sublime claim on the part of Jesus will exasperate his enemies still more." In Jn 13:25 "He (ekeinos - literally - "that one"), leaning back thus on Jesus' breast."

**NASB Dictionary** (obviously does not have all 243 uses) Translates **ekeinos** as "that one (or neut. that thing), often intensified by the art. preceding:—once\*(3), one(4), other(1), these(1), this(2), those(35), those things(1), very(1), what(1)."

- [Click for Thayer's full definition of ekeinos - scroll down](#)
- [Click for Liddell-Scott-Jones' full definition of ekeinos - scroll down \(also has Thayer's\)](#)

**Ekeinos** - 243x in 236v -

**SYNOPTIC GOSPELS** - Mt 3:1; 7:22, 25, 27; 8:13, 28; 9:22, 26, 31; 10:14f, 19; 11:25; 12:1, 45; 13:1, 11, 44; 14:1, 35; 15:22, 28; 17:18, 27; 18:1, 27f, 32; 20:4; 21:40; 22:7, 10, 23, 46; 24:19, 22, 29, 36, 38, 43, 46, 48, 50; 25:7, 19; 26:24, 29, 55; 27:8, 19, 63; Mark 1:9; 2:20; 3:24f; 4:11, 20, 35; 6:55; 7:20; 8:1; 12:7; 13:11, 17, 19, 24, 32; 14:21, 25; 16:10, 13, 20; Luke 2:1; 4:2; 5:35; 6:23, 48f; 7:21; 8:32; 9:5, 36; 10:12, 31; 11:26; 12:37f, 43, 45ff; 13:4; 14:24; 15:14f; 17:31; 18:3, 14; 19:4; 20:18, 35; 21:23, 34; 22:22;

**JOHN** - John 1:8, 18, 33, 39; 2:21; 3:28, 30; 4:25, 39, 53; 5:9, 11, 19, 35, 37ff, 43, 46f; 6:29; 7:11, 45; 8:42, 44; 9:9, 11f, 25, 28, 36f; 10:1, 6, 35; 11:13, 29, 49, 51, 53; 12:48; 13:25-27, 30; Jn 14:20-21, 26; 15:26; 16:8, 13f, 23, 26; 18:13, 15, 17, 25; 19:15, 21, 27, 31, 35; 20:13, 15f, 19; 21:3, 7, 23;

**ACTS** - Acts 1:19; 2:18, 41; 3:13, 23; 7:41; 8:1, 8; 9:37; 10:9; 12:1, 6; 14:21; 16:3, 33, 35; 19:16, 23; 20:2; 21:6; 22:11; 28:7; Rom 6:21; 14:14f; 1 Cor 9:25; 10:11, 28; 15:11; 2 Cor 7:8; 8:9, 14; 10:18; Eph 2:12; 2Th 1:10; 2 Tim 1:12, 18; 2:13, 26; 3:9; 4:8; Titus 3:7; Heb 4:2, 11; 6:7; 8:7, 10; 10:16; 11:15; 12:25; Jas 1:7; 4:15; 2 Pet 1:16;

**FIRST JOHN** - 1 John 2:6; 3:3, 5, 7, 16; 4:17; 5:16; Rev 9:6; 11:13

**Ekeinos** - about 551 verses in the Septuagint -

Ge 2:12 = ("**that** land"), Ge 6:4 = ("in **those** days"), Ge 6:21; Ge 10:11 = ("**that** land"); Ge 15:18 = ("on **that** day"); Ge 17:14 = ("**that** person shall be cut off"), Ge 17:23, 26; 19:9, 22, 33, 35; 21:22, 31; 22:14; 24:65; 26:12, 21, 24, 32; 28:11, 19; 29:2; 30:16, 35; 32:2, 13, 21f, 30; 33:16f; 35:22; 37:19; 38:1; 41:13; 43:28, 34; 47:17f; 48:6, 20; Exod 1:6; 2:11, 23; 3:8; 4:19; 7:12; 8:22; 9:4; 10:13; 12:15, 19, 42, 51; 13:8; 14:30; 15:23; 17:7; 19:13; 31:14; 32:28; 34:3; Lev 7:20f, 25, 27; 17:4, 9; 20:3ff; 22:3, 30; 23:30; 27:23; Num 5:6, 31; 6:11; 9:6f, 13; 10:32; 11:3, 34; 13:24; 14:1, 38, 45; 15:30f; 16:14; 19:13, 20; 21:3; 22:4, 33; 32:10; Deut 1:9 = ("I spoke to you at **that** time"), Dt 1:16, 18f, 44; 2:7, 34; 3:4, 8, 12f, 18, 21, 23; 4:14; 5:5; 7:19, 24; 8:15; 9:20; 10:1, 8; 12:3; 13:3, 5, 15; 14:28; 17:5, 9, 12; 18:9, 20, 22; 19:17; 21:3f, 6, 23; 22:18; 24:7; 26:3; 27:11; 28:65; 29:3, 18, 20, 22, 27; 31:10, 17f, 22; 32:44; Josh 2:24; 3:4; 4:14; 5:9, 12; 6:26; 8:25; 9:26f; 10:28, 35; 11:10, 21; 14:9, 12; 15:63; 24:25, 29, 33; Judg 2:5, 10; 3:29f; 4:4, 23; 5:1; 6:20, 25, 32, 40; 7:9; 9:45; 10:8; 11:21, 26; 12:6; 14:4; 15:13, 17; 17:6; 18:1, 12; 19:1; 20:15, 21, 26, 28, 35, 46; 21:14, 24f; 1 Sam 3:1f, 12; 4:1, 12; 6:15f; 7:6, 10; 8:18; 9:24; 10:9; 12:18; 14:1, 18, 23f, 31, 37, 45; 16:13; 18:9; 19:11, 24; 20:19, 26; 21:7, 10, 13; 22:18, 22; 23:28; 27:6; 28:1, 20, 25; 29:4; 30:20, 25; 31:6; 2 Sam 2:16f, 29; 3:37; 5:8, 20; 6:8f; 7:4; 11:12; 17:13; 18:7f; 19:2f; 23:10, 19; 24:18; 1 Kgs 2:25, 37; 3:21; 8:64f; 9:9; 10:10; 11:29; 13:3, 11; 16:16, 22; 19:8; 22:25, 35; 2 Kgs 3:6; 4:25; 8:22; 10:32; 15:37; 16:6; 17:4; 18:4, 16; 20:1, 12; 23:15, 17; 24:10; 1 Chr 7:24; 10:6; 12:19; 13:11f; 14:11; 16:7; 17:3; 21:28f; 29:22; 2 Chr 1:7; 7:2, 8; 9:9; 13:18; 15:5, 11; 16:7, 10; 18:24, 34; 20:26; 21:8, 10; 28:16; 30:3; 32:24; 35:16f; Ezra 4:13, 15f, 19, 21; 5:8f, 16f; 6:7f, 12; 8:34; Neh 4:16, 22; 6:1, 17; 8:17; 12:43f; 13:1, 15, 21, 23; Esth 6:1; Job 1:1, 3; 3:4, 6f; 5:5; 15:28; 31:15; Ps 95:10; 146:4; Prov 6:6f;

26:4; 28:28; 29:16; Eccl 5:14; 9:15; Isa 2:11, 17, 20; 3:7, 18; 4:2; 5:30; 7:18, 20f, 23; 10:17, 20, 27; 11:10f; 12:1, 4; 14:3f; 17:4, 7, 9; 18:7; 19:16, 18f, 21, 23f; 22:8, 12, 20, 25; 23:15; 25:9; 26:1; 27:1f, 12f; 28:5; 29:18; 30:23, 25; 31:7; 38:1, 12; 39:1; 52:6; 54:9; 57:6; Jer 3:1, 16ff; 4:9, 11; 5:18; 8:1, 3; 12:17; 18:8; 20:16; 23:34; 25:12f; 30:7f; 31:1, 29, 33; 33:11; 38:4; 39:17; 46:10; 49:22; 50:4, 20; Ezek 3:18f; 14:8f, 17, 19; 20:6; 24:26f; 29:21; 30:9; 32:31; 36:35; 38:10, 14, 17ff; 39:11; 40:1, 46; 41:15; 45:22; 46:3; Dan 2:31, 44; 3:7f, 12, 21, 27; 4:22, 36; 5:1, 5f; 6:6, 11, 15, 24; 7:11, 20f; 8:16; 10:2; 11:14, 20; 12:1; Hos 1:5; 2:16, 18, 21; Joel 2:29; 3:1, 18; Amos 2:16; 5:13; 8:3, 9, 13; 9:11; Obad 1:8; Mic 2:4; 3:4; 4:6; 5:10; 7:11f; Zeph 1:9f, 12, 15; 3:11, 16, 19f; Hag 2:23; Zech 2:4, 11; 3:9f; 6:10; 8:6, 10, 23; 9:16; 11:11; 12:3f, 6, 8f, 11; 13:1f, 4; Zech 14:3 = ("against *those* nations"); Zech 14:4, Zech 14:6 = ("in *that* day") Zech 14:6-8, 13, 15, 17, 20-21;

Later **John** declared "You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, '**I am not the Christ** (the Messiah),' but, 'I have been sent before Him.' He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. And so this joy of mine has been made full. He must increase, but I must decrease." (Jn 3:28-30-note)

**Westcott** on why John repeats the phrase "**to testify about the Light**" (also in Jn 1:7-note) - From this passage and other similar passages (Jn 1:20, Jn 3:26-36) it has been plausibly argued that the Evangelist was familiar with some who unduly exalted the Baptist. Comp. Acts 19:1-5). John was "**the lamp**" (Jn 5:35) and not **the Light**. ([The Gospel According to St John](#))

**POSB** - (John 1:8) **Humility**— Ministers: a man who was great, but he was not the Light. John the Baptist was extraordinarily great. Jesus Himself said, "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist" (Matthew 11:11). But, he was not the Light. The humility of John was striking. (Read John 1:19-23, 27 for the impact of his humility and the example he set for every servant of God.) No matter how great the ministry of a man may be in the eyes of men, that man's ministry is eclipsed by the greatness of John. Yet John says, "[His] shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose." (John 1:27) (Matthew 23:12, Phil. 2:3-4; cp. Ro 12:3, 1 Peter 5:5). ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible-John](#)) ([POSB - WORDsearch](#))

**Steven Cole** on the fact that John the Baptist **was not the Light** - John may have simply added this to make it crystal clear, or it could be that there were still some in Ephesus in John's day similar to those whom Paul found there, who held to the baptism of John, but had not believed in Jesus (Acts 19:1-7). ([John 1:6-13 God's Witness, Your Verdict](#))

Here are two other passages that suggest **John the Baptist** had considerable influence and may therefore have caused some confusion as to the identity of the Messiah. Recall that John wrote some time after the other Gospel writers, so there may have been time for the development of this problem (but this is speculation).

Luke 3:15 Now while the people were in a state of expectation and all were wondering in their hearts about **John**, as to whether he might be the **Christ**,

Acts 18:25 This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of **John**

**He came... to testify** - More literally this reads "**that** he might testify about the Light." **That** is the Greek conjunction [hina](#) which introduces a purpose clause often identified by the English phrase "so that." Here as in John 1:7, the apostle clearly emphasizes the Baptist's purpose. See discussion on the importance of observing and interrogating **terms of purpose or result**.

And so we see that while John the Baptist was a chief **agent of belief** in the beginning of Jesus' ministry, Jesus Christ is the always to be the chief **object of belief**. Although John's person and ministry were vitally important (Mt 11:11), he was merely the forerunner who announced the coming of the Messiah. Clearly John the Baptist exerted a great influence in Israel, for even several years after his death, some of his disciples still failed to understand the forerunner was the agent whose role was subordinate to Jesus

And it came about that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found some disciples, 2 and he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." 3 And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism." 4 And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus." 5 And when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. (Acts 19:1-5).

What a testimony to John the Baptist, that he was so Christlike in his life and teachings that people kept mistaking him for the promised Messiah, requiring John in his Gospel (inspired by the Holy Spirit) to assure people that, despite all appearances, John the Baptist was not Christ (John 1:20). Would it be true of us that others would see Christ in us to such a degree as John!

**Spurgeon** - There was no light from John except what he reflected from his Lord. All the light comes from Jesus. Every man who comes into the world with any light borrows his light from Christ. There is no other light; there can be no other. He is the "Light of the World."

**To testify** (3140)(**martureo** from **martus** = witness = one who has information or knowledge of something and can bring to light or confirm something) in its most basic sense refers to a legal witness. Thus the verb **martureo** means to be a witness, to testify, to give evidence, to give a testimony, to bear record, to affirm that one has seen or heard or experienced something. The words testified relate to fact, not opinion, even as they would in a courtroom setting.

**The Light** - This is the Logos (Jn 1:1), the Light of the world, Jesus (Jn 8:12).

**Light** (5457)(**phos** from **pháo** = to shine) is defined by many lexicons as that which contrasts with darkness. Light is the medium of illumination that makes sight possible or makes things visible. In Scripture **phos** can refer to literal, physical light (Ge 1:3), but often is used metaphorically or symbolically, the greatest metaphorical use being used to symbolize Jesus as "the Light of the world." (Jn 8:12).

**But - term of contrast** - This conjunction occurs over 4100 times in Scripture and should always prompt a pause to ask the simple question of "What is the author contrasting?"

**That** (**hina**) is not translated in the newer (1995) version of the NASB. The old 1977 is actually more literal and more accurate = "but came **that** (**hina**) he might bear witness of the light." Compare Young's Literal translation = "that one was not the Light, but -- **that** (**hina**) he might testify about the Light. **Hina** is a **term of purpose or result** which should always prompt a pause to ponder the purpose. The purpose may be obvious, but it is never a waste of time to ask "*What is the purpose or result,*" for it will force you to stop and think about the passage instead of reading over it quickly. In a very real sense you are practicing **meditation**, even if only a "mini" meditation. The purpose of John's life (his "life purpose") is to testify about the Light, Jesus.

**APPLICATION - Beloved, can we not apply this to our lives?** Peter says "you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, that (**hopos = "denotes the purpose or end, in order that; with the design or to the end that; that" - Thayer** = see discussion of **terms of purpose**) you may **proclaim the excellencies** of Him Who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." (1Pe 2:9-note)

**What is our purpose?** The same as John the Baptist! Give an honest, open testimony of the One Who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light! And not just with our life, but also with our lips! Have you ever heard the quote "**Preach the Gospel at all times. Use words if necessary!**" Two points need to be made -(1) This is often attributed to Francis of Assisi but there is absolutely no record of him ever uttering or writing these words. In fact, he was apparently quite a vocal preacher of the Gospel! (2) This saying is catchy and compact, but it is not really Scriptural. Certainly Jesus, the One we should seek to emulate, constantly used words and His life was the essence of the Gospel! So a better saying is preach the Gospel with your life AND your lips! Thomas of Celano in his biography of Francis of Assisi wrote "*His words were neither hollow nor ridiculous, but filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, penetrating the marrow of the heart, so that listeners were turned to great amazement.*" To quote **Glenn Stanton's** excellent (and pithy) short discussion of this topic - "Duane Liftin, president emeritus of Wheaton College, recently addressed the trouble with this preach/practice dichotomy in an important article. Of preaching the Gospel in deed (Ed: with our life only), he explains, *It's simply impossible to preach the Gospel without words. The Gospel is inherently verbal, and preaching the Gospel is inherently verbal behavior.* And the "deed" proclamation of the Gospel is not biblical either. Paul asks the Church at Rome (Romans 10:14-note): "*How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?*" So next time you hear one of your brothers or sisters in Christ use this quote to encourage or challenge you in your labors for our faith, gently guide them from the land of misinformation and make believe into truth. (**FactChecker- Misquoting Francis of Assisi**)

Love is giving for the world's needs,  
Love is sharing as the Spirit leads,  
Love is caring when the world cries,  
Love is compassion with Christlike eyes.  
—Brandt

**To be a channel of blessing,  
let Christ's love flow through you.**

Listen to Paul's "commissioning ceremony" -

Saul (Paul) "was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a **LIGHT** (Jesus) from heaven flashed around him; 4 and he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" 5 And he said, "Who art Thou, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus Whom you are persecuting, 6 but rise, and enter the city, and it shall be told you what you must do." (Acts 9:3-6)

(Jesus to Ananias) "But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name

before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; 16 for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake." (Acts 9:15-16)

Recalling this event years later Paul explained to King Agrippa

"While thus engaged (Acts 26:11) as I was journeying to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, 13 at midday, O King, I saw on the way a **LIGHT** from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining all around me and those who were journeying with me. 14 "And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' 15 "And I said, 'Who art Thou, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. 16 But arise, and stand on your feet; **for this purpose** I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; 17 delivering you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom **I am sending (apostello)** you, 18 to open their eyes (it is not Paul who opens their eyes but Paul's Gospel) so that (**term of purpose**) they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion (**exousia** - cf John 1:12) of Satan to God, in order that (**term of purpose**) they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.' (Acts 26:12-18)

Or as our Lord Jesus commanded...

**"Let** your light (**phos**) **shine** (aorist imperative - can convey the idea of urgency!) before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify (**doxazo** = give a proper opinion) your Father who is in heaven." (Mt 5:16-note)

As **Alistair Begg** once quipped "If you can't shine, at least twinkle!"

**Steven Cole** - C. H. Dodd (cited by James Boice, The Gospel of John) observes that the apostle John's three points in 1:6-8 outline the development of the rest of the chapter. First, John the Baptist is not the light (developed in 1:19-28). Second, John was sent to bear witness to the light (Jn 1:29-34). Third, John's aim was that all may believe through him (Jn 1:35-51). Those three points are helpful to keep in mind whenever you have an opportunity to bear witness of Christ. First, the message is not about you. It's fine to give your testimony, but keep the focus on Christ. Second, tell people who Jesus is. John testified that Jesus is the Lord (Jn 1:23). John said that he wasn't worthy to untie the thong of Jesus' sandal (Jn 1:27). He said of Jesus (Jn 1:29), "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" He said that Jesus was of higher rank than he (John) because He existed before John, even though John was older than Jesus (Jn 1:30). He testified that he saw the Spirit of God descending on Jesus as a dove out of heaven (Jn 1:32). He said (Jn 1:34), "I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God." He said (Jn 3:30), "He must increase, but I must decrease." Tell people who Jesus is. Third, seek to bring people to faith in Jesus. Don't just have a nice discussion and leave it at that. Encourage people to put their trust in Jesus Christ for salvation before it is too late. ([John 1:6-13 God's Witness, Your Verdict](#))

John testified about the **Light**...

Mark 1:2 As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "BEHOLD, I **SEND** (apostello) MY MESSENGER BEFORE YOUR FACE, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY;

3 THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT:'"

4 John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

5 And all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

6 And John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist, and his diet was locusts and wild honey.

7 And he was preaching, and saying, "After me One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to stoop down and untie the thong of His sandals.

8 "I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

**Comment:** What a testimony to John's spiritual walk that he would have to explain that "he was not that Light!"  
**Would it be that we each would seek to imitate our Lord to such a degree as John obviously did**

**Bob Utley summarizes John's record of witnesses to Jesus**

The noun (*marturia*) and its verb (*martureo*) “witness” is a key term in John. There are many witnesses to Jesus:

1. John the Baptist (cf. John 1:7, 8, 15; 3:26, 28; 5:33)
2. Jesus Himself (cf. John 3:11; 5:31; 8:13–14)
3. the Samaritan woman (cf. John 4:39)
4. God the Father (cf. John 5:32, 34, 37; 8:18; 1John 5:9)
5. Scripture (cf. John 5:39)
6. the crowd at Lazarus' raising (cf. John 12:17)
7. the Spirit (cf. John 15:26–27; 1John 5:10, 11)
8. the disciples (cf. John 15:27; 19:35; 1John 1:2; 4:14)
9. the author himself (cf. John 21:24)