

A STUDY IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

—*BELIEVING IN JESUS FOR LIFE*—



... **SETTING SAIL THAT WE MIGHT BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS
THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD ...**

BY DAVID SCOTT

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Gospel of John Study

(BELIEVING IN JESUS FOR LIFE)

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Gospel of John

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Preface to Gospel of John

(Believing in Jesus for Life)

Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. The Gospel of John is about coming to believe that Jesus is who he is and by believing have life in his name. John states his purpose very clearly as to why he has written these certain things.

- (John 20:30–31 ESV) Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.
- (John 8:24 ESV) I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins.

The unfathomable depths of the infinite wisdom and majestic power of God flowing through this gospel captured me from the very beginning of my study. The great salvation with which he blesses us by his rich mercy, great love and saving grace is joy beyond my ability to express. As is also joy beyond my ability to express the blessed teaching that he chose to love us in Christ in this way even before he created the heavens and the earth.

- (Ephesians 1:3–4a ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world.
- (Ephesians 2:4–5 ESV) But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved.

In summary I can say that I have done my best, and I pray that this work will be a blessing to the reader and doer of the truth it presents. My heart's desire is always to please and honor my Lord in everything I do.

Sincerely,
Dave Scott

PS To whom it may concern and for what it is worth to the reader: The content in these study sheets is the same content as in my message notes without an introduction and conclusion.

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THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

... IS THE REVELATION THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST WHO DIED FOR OUR SINS ...

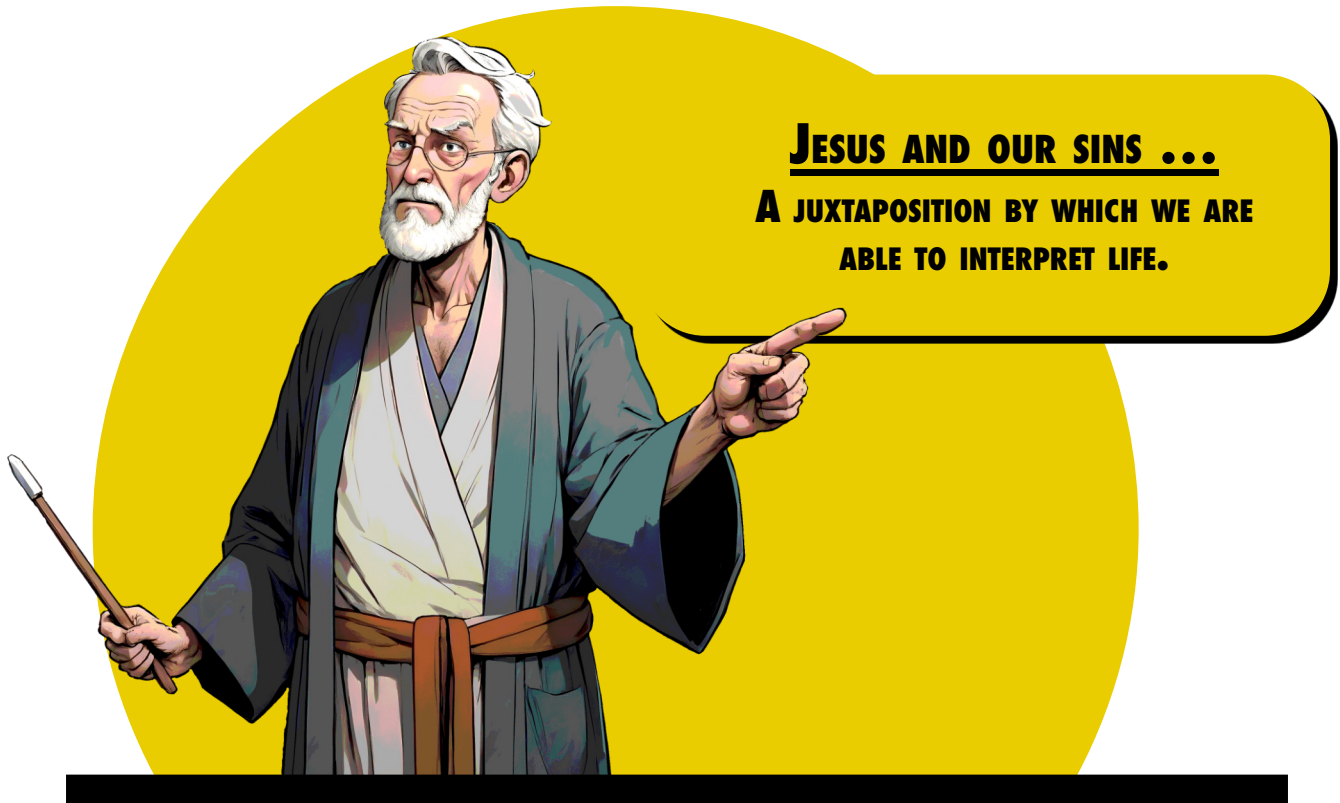
JESUS | OUR SINS

Christ died for our sins.

- (1 Corinthians 15:3 ESV) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures.

Jesus is the Christ who died for our sins.

- (John 20:31 ESV) But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.



1) Introduction – Jesus and our sins ...

The Sinfulness of Sin – J.C. Ryle ... No proof of the fullness of sin, after all, is so overwhelming and unanswerable as the cross and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and the whole doctrine of His substitution and atonement. **Terribly black must that guilt be for which nothing but the blood of the Son of God could make satisfaction.** Heavy must that weight of human sin be which made Jesus groan and sweat drops of blood in agony at Gethsemane and cry at Golgotha, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?'

Nothing, I am convinced, will astonish us so much, when we awake in the resurrection day, as the view we will have of sin and the retrospect we will take of our own countless shortcomings and defects. **Never until the hour when Christ comes the second time will we fully realize the sinfulness of sin.** [John Charles Ryle, *Holiness* (Moscow, Idaho: Charles Nolan, 2002), 8.]

- A. Jesus and our sins ... a juxtaposition by which we are able to interpret life.
- B. We can neither interpret the reality of life here and now nor life with God in eternity if we do not place these concepts side-by-side in our investigation.
- C. A juxtaposition is the act or an instance of placing two or more things side by side often to compare or contrast or to create an interesting effect; the placement of contrasting ideas or images side by side with the intent of making a text interpretable.

2) John the Apostle is the human author

- A. John the Apostle, not John the Baptist, is the inspired human author of this book.

He does not mention himself by name but by "the disciple whom Jesus loved." The John named in the gospel is John the Baptist.

- B. John is also the human author of the three letters—1 John, 2 John and 3 John—and the book of Revelation.
- C. He clearly states his purpose in writing 1 John as he has done in the gospel.
 - (1 John 5:13 ESV) **I write these things** to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, **that you may know that you have eternal life.**
- D. In Revelation the Lord himself states John's purpose and commands him to write.

- (Revelation 1:1 ESV) The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him **to show to his servants the things that must soon take place.** He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John.
- (Revelation 1:11 ESV) Saying, **"Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches,** to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

E. Christ named John and James the Sons of Thunder.

- (Mark 3:17 ESV) **James** the son of Zebedee and **John the brother of James** (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, **Sons of Thunder**).

F. At his very end on the cross Jesus entrusted the care of his mother to John.

- (John 19:26–27 ESV) When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, **"Woman, behold, your son!"** 27 Then he said to the disciple, **"Behold, your mother!"** And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

3) John's stated purpose in writing

John's stated purpose in writing this book is to reveal that Jesus is the Christ that we may believe and that by believing we may have life in his name.

- A. John's stated purpose "in this book" was to reveal that Jesus is the Christ.

- (John 20:30–31 ESV) **Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book;** 31 **but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.**

- B. Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples which are not written in this book.

- (John 21:24–25 ESV) **This is the disciple who is bearing witness** about these things, and **who has written these things,** and we know that his testimony is true. 25 Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. **Were every one of them to be written,** I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

C. These miraculous signs were performed in the presence of his disciples to transform John and the others to be compelling witnesses to the gospel.

- (1 John 1:1–2 ESV) That which was from the beginning, which we **have heard**, which we **have seen** with our eyes, which we **looked upon** and **have touched** with our hands, **concerning the word of life**— 2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it **and proclaim to you the eternal life**, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us.

D. We need to allow the Holy Spirit of God to impact our lives with the amazing significance of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus—God came to Earth and died for sinful humans.

4) A closer look at John's stated purpose

- A. These were written down to powerfully and convincingly establish the identity of Jesus as the Christ that we may believe.
- B. These were written down to powerfully and convincingly establish the identity of Jesus as the Son of God that we may believe.
- C. These were written down to powerfully and convincingly establish that everything the Bible says about Jesus is true so that by believing we may have life in his name.
- (John 20:31 ESV) But these are written **so that you may believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and **that by believing you may have life in his name**.
- D. Jesus came to live on this earth with one purpose in mind—to die for our sins that we may have life.

5) We have life in his name by believing

That is the simple truth of the gospel and it is communicated repeatedly throughout the Gospel of John and the New Testament. There are too many people who are deceived and/or confused who undermine the truth of the gospel because they refuse to accept the simple truth God gives us in his word regarding salvation.

- A. We need to pay much closer attention to what we have already heard—what has been written.
- (Hebrews 2:1 ESV) Therefore **we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard**, lest we drift away from it.

B. Christ died for our sins.

- (1 Corinthians 15:3–4 ESV) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: **that Christ died for our sins** in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 **that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day** in accordance with the Scriptures.

C. Jesus is the Christ.

- (Matthew 16:13–17 ESV) Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, **"Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"** 14 And they said, **"Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."** 15 He said to them, **"But who do you say that I am?"** 16 Simon Peter replied, **"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."** 17 And Jesus answered him, **"Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven."**

D. The strong, unmistakable, resounding, repeated statement in Scripture is that we have life in Jesus's name by believing in him.

- (John 1:12–13 ESV) But to all who did receive him, **who believed in his name**, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 **who were born**, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, **but of God**.
- (John 3:14–15 ESV) And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 **that whoever believes in him may have eternal life**.
- (John 3:16 ESV) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, **that whoever believes in him** should not perish but have eternal life.
- (John 3:18 ESV) **Whoever believes in him** is not condemned, but **whoever does not believe** is condemned already, **because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God**.
- (John 3:36 ESV) **Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life**; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.
- (John 6:28–29 ESV) Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" 29 Jesus answered them, **"This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent."**

- (John 6:35 ESV) Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.”
- (John 6:40 ESV) For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.
- (John 6:67–69 ESV) So Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?” 68 Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, 69 and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”
- (John 7:38–39 ESV) Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, “Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” 39 Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.
- (John 8:24 ESV) I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins.
- (John 11:25–26 ESV) Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”
- (John 12:44–46 ESV) And Jesus cried out and said, “Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. 45 And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. 46 I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.
- (John 5:24 ESV) Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.
- (John 6:47 ESV) Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.



A. In the beginning the Word was existing (eimi).

- (John 1:1 ESV) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- (Revelation 1:8 ESV) “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”
- (Genesis 1:1 ESV) In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

B. The Word was with God in close, intimate fellowship.

7) Conclusion – Lost in Eden but found in Christ

- A. We can once again be “with God” as Adam and Eve were in the garden before they rebelled—and actually our relationship in Christ is superior to that.
- B. This relationship is what we lost in the Garden of Eden.
- C. This relationship is what we regain through Christ.
 - (John 14:21–24 ESV) Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him. 22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” 23 Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. 24 Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me.
- D. This relationship with the Father and the Son is alive and well in those who have and keep his words.
- E. Our love for and obedience to the word of Christ is a spiritual barometer that measures our nearness to or distance from Christ.
 - (Psalm 119:47 ESV) For I find my delight in your commandments, which I love.

6) Setting sail – proving that Jesus is God

To set sail is to hoist the sails in preparation for departure; begin a voyage by water.



Will continue our voyage from here next week ...

JESUS IS GOD

SETTING OUR SAILS, SOUNDING THE DEEP



THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM
The Second Part: Of Man's Deliverance —
LORD'S DAY 5

What sort of a mediator and deliverer then must we seek for?

For one who is very man, and perfectly righteous; and yet more powerful than all creatures; that is, one who is also very God.

1) Setting our sails, sounding the deep ...

That Jesus is God is the essential truth upon which we must set our sails.

1. It seems we could even say that this truth—that Jesus is God—is both the beginning and the ending of the discussion regarding eternal life and the Apostle John's stated purpose.
 - (John 20:31 ESV) But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.
2. We sound the depths of that truth and come to a true knowledge of Jesus through studying and believing the plain statements of the written word of God which precisely define who and what he is.

To sound (fathom) – to measure the depth of (a body of water) with a sounding line. The earliest methods of sounding—measuring depth—involved the lowering of a weighted line over the side of the vessel until it hit the seabed or in the case of very shallow water, the use of a graduated pole.
3. When we sound the deep knowledge of the Jesus of the Bible, we find an ocean that is bottomless ... unfathomable because Jesus is God.

Unfathomable – incapable of being fully explored or understood; not able to be fathomed, or completely understood; incapable of being fully ascertained, explored, exhausted; infinite, endless, immeasurable, vast, limitless, boundless.
4. And that is exactly where John begins—That Jesus is God.
 - (John 1:1 ESV) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

- A. In the beginning was the Word.
- B. The Word was with God.
- C. The Word was God.

2) Jesus is the Word of John 1:1 ...

1. Jesus is the Word—the logos.
2. The logos that John refers to is not a concept unique to Christianity but finds its roots in the natural person's understanding of the supernatural—think Mother Nature or Star Wars and “the force be with you.”
 - (Romans 1:20 ESV) For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.
3. The logos could be what the natural person senses on a starry night looking into the heavens while having no firm concept of the glory of God.
 - (Psalm 19:1 ESV) The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.
4. The idea of logos may somewhat be understood as an idea borrowed from Greek philosophy but that was borrowed from God via the natural person.
 - A. The natural person does not accept God as his Creator but tries to identify and explain the wonders of creation in human ways and thoughts.
 - (1 Corinthians 2:14 ESV) The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

- (Isaiah 55:8–9 ESV) For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

B. The natural person trades the truth of God as Creator for the lie of “no God” but the wonder of creation still captures him so he worships the creation—Mother Nature, the impersonal, unknowable reason behind everything in the universe.

- (Romans 1:25 ESV) Because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

C. Human philosophy in attempting to answer the “why” of the universe reflects the natural person’s attempts to identify what he knows is beyond his grasp while still refusing to honor God as God.

- (Ecclesiastes 3:11 ESV) He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man’s heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.
- (Romans 1:21 ESV) For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

5. The conscience—moral thoughts and reasoning—may also be attributed to the logos as the innate ability of humans to choose right from wrong, good from bad, apart from accountability to a holy God.

6. But according to Paul’s gospel on the day of judgment the secret thoughts and the reasonings of humans will be judged by Christ Jesus.

- (Romans 2:14–16 ESV) For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. 15 They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them 16 on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.

7. In John 1:1 under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God John reveals the identity of the logos of the universe—his name is Jesus.

- (John 1:14 ESV) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

8. So what an amazing blessing it was when God took the guesswork out of life by coming to this earth bringing grace and truth and making himself known to us and solving the mystery as to who or what is behind the running of our universe.

- (John 1:17–18 ESV) For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.

3) The Word speaks the words of his Father who sent him ...

This Word from Father to Son to us is the only foundation upon which we must build our spiritual houses if they are to stand in the judgment.

- (John 12:48–50 ESV) The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. 49 For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. 50 And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.

1. So now we know, mystery of the universe solved—God does not speak to us through some impersonal force of nature but through his Son.

- (Hebrews 1:1–3 ESV) Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. 3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

2. This Word was the cornerstone that was rejected by the builders.

- (Acts 4:11–12 ESV) This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has

become the cornerstone. 12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

3. This Word (Jesus) is the foundation stone of our faith, the rock of our salvation.
 - (2 Samuel 22:47 ESV) The Lord lives, and **blessed be my rock**, and **exalted be my God, the rock of my salvation**.
 - (Psalm 62:2 ESV) **He alone is my rock and my salvation**, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.
 - (Psalm 62:7 ESV) **On God rests my salvation and my glory; my mighty rock**, my refuge is God.

4) Those who reject the Word of the Father through the Son will fall at the judgment ...

Those who reject the Word take refuge in lies and will be swept away at the judgment.

- (Isaiah 28:16–17 NLT) Therefore, this is what the Sovereign Lord says: “Look! **I am placing a foundation stone in Jerusalem, a firm and tested stone. It is a precious cornerstone that is safe to build on.** Whoever believes need never be shaken. 17 I will test you with the measuring line of justice and the plumb line of righteousness. **Since your refuge is made of lies, a hailstorm will knock it down. Since it is made of deception, a flood will sweep it away.**
1. All authorized builders build on the Cornerstone.
 2. Here is a list of builders who are not authorized by God to construct safe places to live—Roman Catholics, Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, liberal denominations and those in the Christian Restoration Movement.
 3. These unauthorized builders reject Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, as very God and as the cornerstone for the foundation of their structures.
 4. Even though they reject Jesus as the cornerstone they still desire to have his name out front on their building.
5. They expose their fatal, fundamental lie that they do not believe that Jesus is very God by requiring some form of human work(s) to supplement his work on the cross.
 6. These unauthorized builders all preach a gospel that includes ...
 - Faith in Jesus
 - The need to repent
 - The need to be baptized
 7. Without exception these builders insist that they are building on the truth of the Bible.
 8. They will be among the many (millions) who will not stand on the day of judgment.
 - (Nahum 1:6–8 ESV) **Who can stand before his indignation?** Who can endure the heat of his anger? His wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken into pieces by him. 7 **The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; he knows those who take refuge in him.** 8 **But with an overflowing flood he will make a complete end of the adversaries, and will pursue his enemies into darkness.**
 9. And we must not overlook the many who hear the truth of the gospel but will stumble and be shamed at the judgment because they refused to believe.
 - (1 Peter 2:7–8 ESV) **So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,** “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” 8 and “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.” **They stumble because they disobey the word,** as they were destined to do.
 - (Hebrews 4:2 ESV) For good news came to us just as to them, **but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith** with those who listened.



JESUS IS THE LIFE



ARE WE READY FOR LIFE WITH JESUS?



JESUS

I AM THE WAY

I AM THE TRUTH

I AM THE LIFE



PART ONE: JESUS IS THE LIFE.

1. **BREAKING NEWS:** The Word is a Person.

- (John 1:1–2 ESV) In the beginning **was** the Word, and the Word **was** with God, and the Word **was** God. 2 **He was in the beginning with God.**

A. **REVIEW:** The Word was in the beginning because the Word was always existing; the Word was with God in the closest possible relationship; the Word was God.

B. In verse two the Word is identified as “he.”

TRANSITION: By the use of “he” (*Gk. οὗτος-houtos*) the Word is now identified, not merely as an impersonal entity (i.e. the philosophical logos with a distinct and independent existence), **but as a person who was existing with God in the beginning.**

2. All things were made through this Person, hold together in him and through him we exist.

- (John 1:3 ESV) **All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.**

A. All things were made through him and nothing was made that was made without him.

B. All things are held together by the word of his power.

- (Colossians 1:16–17 ESV) **For by him all things were created**, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—**all things were created through him and for him**. 17 And he is before all things, **and in him all things hold together**.
- (Hebrews 1:2–3a ESV) But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, **through whom also he created the world**. 3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, **and he upholds the universe by the word of his power**.
- (Romans 11:36 ESV) **For from him and through him and to him are all things**. To him be glory forever. Amen.

C. Through him are all things and through him we exist.

- (1 Corinthians 8:6 ESV) Yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, **and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist**.

3. In this preexistent Person who is God was life ... and the life in him was the light of men.

- (John 1:4 ESV) **In him was life, and the life was the light of men.**

Life ... ζωή [zōē] ... life (literally or figuratively); the state of one who is animate—alive or having life.

Life source ... the inherent capacity for producing (and maintaining) living beings.

Light ... φῶς [phos] ... light; anything emitting light; any object that serves as a source of illumination.

A. In him (the Word) was/is the totality—the whole, the sum—of all life both material and spiritual.

- (Psalm 36:9 ESV) **For with you is the fountain of life; in your light do we see light.**

B. The life in him is the sole source of illumination for the light that overcomes the darkness and reveals the way for us to escape the darkness.

- (1 Peter 2:9 ESV) But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, **that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.**
- (Colossians 1:13 ESV) **He has delivered us from the domain of darkness** and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.

C. The light testifies to the powerful, absolute, undivided, exclusive, unique nature of the life.

D. There is **no other light** that is light (*as in not darkness*) than that which is emitted from the life.

E. Jesus proclaimed himself to be the life.

- (John 14:6 ESV) Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. **No one comes to the Father except through me.**”

4. His life emits the only light that shines in and overcomes the darkness.

- (John 1:5 ESV) **The light shines in the darkness**, and the darkness has not overcome it.

A. There is no other light shining in the darkness because all other lights are darkness.

B. It is the Spirit who prepares a person's spiritual eye to receive the light that issues from the life.

C. The true light then overcomes the darkness so that the person may believe and receive the life.

- (Acts 26:18 ESV) **To open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light** and **from the**

power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

D. A bad eye receives light transmitted from sources other than the life.

- (Matthew 6:22–23 ESV) The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, 23 but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!
- i. If a person has a bad eye and receives light transmitted from other sources, then the light in that person is darkness.
- ii. There is no greater darkness than this.

E. EXAMPLE: The people of this world love the darkness and hate the light because they accept light that emits from sources other than the life.

- (John 3:19–20 ESV) And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. 20 For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.

F. It is only God's tender mercy that he shines his light on those who sit in darkness to guide our feet into the way of peace. [Zechariah's Prophecy regarding his son John the Baptist ...]

- (Luke 1:77–79 ESV) ... to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, 78 because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high 79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

PART TWO: JOHN THE BAPTIST WAS SENT BY GOD TO PREPARE THE WORLD FOR THE ARRIVAL OF THE LIGHT OF LIFE BECAUSE SAVING LIGHT IS BEYOND THE SCOPE OF FALLEN HUMANS.

1. John was sent by God to give witness to the light that shines in darkness to prepare people's hearts and minds to receive that light.

- (John 1:6–8 ESV) There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light,

that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

2. John was specially prepared for the work.

A. His birth was a miracle—his parents were very old and his mother was barren.

- (Luke 1:7 ESV) But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.
- (Luke 1:11–14 ESV) And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. 13 But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. 14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.

B. He was a great man who was named by God and was filled with the Holy Spirit even before he was born.

- (Luke 1:15 ESV) For he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.
- (Matthew 11:11a ESV) Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist.

C. His ministry was prophesied by Isaiah.

- (Isaiah 40:3 ESV) A voice cries: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”

3. John was a powerful, well-known prophet of God who rivaled the power of the religious elite.

A. He was challenged by the priests and Levites regarding his identity — Who are you?

- (John 1:19–23 ESV) And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” 20 He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” 21 And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” 22 So they said to him, “Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?”

23 He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said.”

B. Anticipating their most urgent question he told them he was not the Christ

C. Neither was he Elijah or the Prophet (Moses).

4. John’s purpose and authority were also challenged by the Pharisees — WHY ARE YOU BAPTIZING?

- (John 1:24–27 ESV) (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) 25 They asked him, “Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” 26 John answered them, “I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, 27 even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.”

A. John did not directly answer the question but directed their attention to Christ.

B. The purpose of John’s baptisms was preparation, not salvation.

- (Isaiah 40:3–5 ESV) A voice cries: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. 5 And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

C. His first step of preparation was to call them to humility in repenting of their sins.

- (Mark 1:1–4 ESV) The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2 As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, “Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, 3 the voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’ ” 4 John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.
- (Luke 3:2–4 ESV) During the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of

Zechariah in the wilderness. 3 And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 4 As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

- (Acts 13:24 ESV) Before his coming, John had proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

D. They did not know and would not know the Christ without this preparation.

PART THREE: HERE COMES THE TRUE LIGHT.

1. There was only one light which came into the world to give light to everyone.

- (John 1:9–10 ESV) The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.

2. The Word who is the light came to his own people but they did not receive him.

- (John 1:11 ESV) He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.

3. But to all who did receive light from his life and believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God who were born of the will of God.

- (John 1:12–13 ESV) But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

THE TRUE LIGHT



THE ETERNAL WORD BECAME A JEWISH CARPENTER ...

The Apostle John describes the birth and the life of the baby Jesus who was born to the virgin Mary with this phrase —“the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”

The eternal Word—whose life is the light of humanity and through whom everything that was created was created through him and who upholds the universe by the word of his power—entered the world he created as a human baby and grew to be a thirty-something Jewish carpenter who lived a perfectly righteous life and revealed his glory as the Son of God and the glory of the Father in his brief time on the planet.

1) THE BACKSTORY ...

- (John 1:1–5 ESV) **In the beginning was the Word**, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 **In him was life, and the life was the light of men.** 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

2) THE WITNESS FOR THE LIGHT ...

- (John 1:6–8 ESV) **There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.** 7 He came as a witness, **to bear witness about the light**, that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

A. John's mission was to testify concerning the nature of the light with the purpose that people might believe through his testimony.

B. John was not the light but the witness about the light.

3) THE TRUE LIGHT ENTERS THE WORLD ...

- (John 1:9–11 ESV) **The true light, which gives light to everyone**, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, **yet the world did not know him.** 11 He came to his own, and **his own people did not receive him.**

A. The true light was coming into the world of humans and was giving light to everyone.

1:9 – “gives light” is one word – φωτίζω [photizo] – and means to give light, to illumine, to shine; to enlighten, light up; to bring to light, render evident; to cast light on something.

B. Giving light to everyone speaks of God's common grace, not his saving grace—e.g. following the life example of Jesus may make a person better but it does not save them from their sins.

C. Giving light to everyone speaks of God's mercy and compassion in caring for all his creation.

- (Psalm 145:9 NLT) The LORD is good to everyone. **He showers compassion on all his**

creation.

- (James 1:17 ESV) **Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above**, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.
- (Ecclesiastes 3:13 LSB) Moreover, that every man who eats and drinks and sees good in all his labor—**it is the gift of God.**
- (Ecclesiastes 5:19 LSB) Furthermore, as for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, He has also empowered him to eat from them and to take up his portion and be glad in his labor; **this is the gift of God.**
- (John 3:27 ESV) John answered, “**A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven.**”

D. The true light was living in the world that was made through him, but the world **did not know him**.

1:10 – The word know is γινώσκειν [ginosko] and means to know experientially (as acquired by experience); to get a knowledge of; to learn to know, come to know; the familiar Jewish idiom for sexual intercourse between a man and a woman.

This is the same word used by Jesus in clarifying his non-relationship to those who thought they knew him and proclaimed him to be Lord.

- (Matthew 7:23 ESV) And then will I declare to them, ‘I never **knew** you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

E. And his own people **did not receive him**.

1:11 receive ... παραλαμβάνω [paralambano] ... to take (accept) – to receive willingly something given or offered; whether physically or abstractly; to take to or with one's self, to join to one's self; to accept or acknowledge one to be such as he professes to be; not to reject; to receive something transmitted.

4) THE JUDGMENT REGARDING THE LIGHT ...

- (John 3:19 ESV) **And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light** because their works were evil.

A. People in general prefer darkness over light.

B. So they do not receive saving truth about Jesus because they love darkness rather than light.

C. This preference for darkness is motivated by the passionate desire to not have their evil exposed.

- (John 3:20 ESV) For everyone who does wicked things **hates the light** and **does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed**.

D. Light will be rejected every time by the person who is not willing to be changed by the light.

E. Those whose actions are evil remain firm in their preference for darkness to guide their way in life.

5) HAVING SOME LIGHT IS DARKNESS ...

- (John 1:9 ESV) The true light, **which gives light to everyone**, was coming into the world.

A. The true light gives everyone some light.

B. Some light does not save.

C. The many on the easy way that leads to destruction have some light but do not know Christ.

- (Matthew 7:13 ESV) Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide **and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many**.

D. Almost every person and religion includes some aspect of the light in their teachings or moral code.

E. But this selective approach to the light yields darkness and not light.

F. Choosing only aspects of the light that fit ones perspective and preferences is deadly.

- (Proverbs 14:12 ESV) **There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death**.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED? WHAT IS GOING ON?

G. A person whose light source is darkness chooses certain aspects of the light to believe and so he comes to know only a Jesus of his imagination.

H. In the final analysis the true light has been revealed to this person but he prefers to believe what fits his worldview which is a worldview of darkness.

I. This person never comes to face in a life-changing way the sharp arrow of the gospel that brings the sin

and the sinner out of the darkness and into the light of God's word.

- (1 Corinthians 15:3-4 ESV) For I delivered to you as of **first importance** what I also received: **that Christ died for our sins** in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

6) RECEIVING THE TRUE LIGHT ...

- (John 1:12-13 ESV) **But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name**, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

A. When confronted with the true light, some received the light that was life, and he gave them the right to become the children of God.

- (John 1:4 ESV) In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

B. Those who received him and believed in his name (everything the light revealed about him) to them he gave the right to become children of God.

C. They were not born by human means, desire or choice but by the will of God.

7) KNOWING JESUS WE KNOW GRACE (UPON GRACE) ...

- (John 1:14-18 ESV) **And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us**, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, **full of grace and truth**. 15 (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") 16 **For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace**. 17 For the law was given through Moses; **grace and truth came through Jesus Christ**. 18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, **he has made him known**.

A. The Word came into the world, took on human flesh and lived among us.

B. He left the Father's side to make God known to us.

C. He made God known to us as he revealed his glory—

glory as of the only Son from the Father.

D. His glory was that he is full of grace and truth.

E. When we receive him, we know him and receive grace upon grace from his fullness.

CONCLUSION — A GRACE EXAMPLE ...

THE SINNER WHO STEPPED INTO THE LIGHT

VERSUS

THE PHARISEES WHO REMAINED IN THE DARKNESS

(Luke 7:36–50 ESV)

One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table.

And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment.

Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner."

And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher." "A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly."

Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered

your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment.

Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.

And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?" And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD



CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS

JESUS IS THE CHRIST WHO DIED FOR OUR SINS

JESUS IS THE LAMB OF GOD WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD

WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD

1. **Behold** the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, 1:29-34.

- (John 1:29–34 ESV) The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “**Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!**” 30 This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’ 31 **I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.**” 32 And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. 33 **I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’**” 34 **And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.**”

A. John the Baptist calls/urges/exhorts the people to behold (to truly see) Jesus as the Lamb of God.

Behold—GK. *οἶδα* [oida]—means to see; to truly see; to perceive with the eyes; to fix the eyes upon; to see with attention; to observe with care; to turn the eyes, the mind, the attention to; to become aware or conscious of (something) to the fullest degree in accordance with fact or truth.

People needed to truly see Jesus for who he was—the Messiah, the Son of God—and believe in his name.

B. The term “Lamb of God” was a new term in the Christian world and was not known in the OT.

C. John again emphasizes Jesus’s much higher rank—so much higher that it implicitly speaks of his glory.

D. In verses 31 and 33 John speaks of not knowing him in the sense that God must reveal to each person that Jesus is the Christ.

- (Matthew 16:16–17 ESV) Simon Peter replied, “**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**” 17 And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! **For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.**”

E. John’s purpose for baptizing with water was to prepare people to know who Jesus was when he was revealed to Israel in the coming days.

F. We previously studied John’s purpose in baptizing in 1:19-28 as preparation for people to believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

G. John boldly proclaims his witness as to what he has seen—that Jesus is the Son of God.

H. John then announces that the Lamb of God (who is Jesus) takes away the sin of the world.

That Christ died for our sins to take away our sins is sufficient for all people but it provides salvation only to those who believe in him—in his name.

2. **How** Jesus took away the sin of the world.

- (John 1:14–18 ESV) **And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us**, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, **full of grace and truth.** 15 (John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”) 16 **For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.** 17 For the law was given through Moses; **grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.** 18 No one has ever seen God; **the only God**, who is at the Father’s side, **he has made him known.**

A. He came into the world and took on a human body—becoming one of us and living among us.

B. He was made like us in every respect.

- (Hebrews 2:14 ESV) **Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.**

C. He came into the world to offer his body by the will of God as a sacrifice for sins because it was impossible for anything else to take away sins.

- (Hebrews 10:4–7, 10-14 ESV) **For it is impossible** for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. 5 Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, **but a body have you prepared for me;** 6 in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. 7 Then I said, ‘**Behold, I have come to do your will, O God,**’ as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.” ... 10 **And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.** 11 And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly **the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.** 12 **But when Christ had offered**

for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, 13 waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. 14 For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

D. He made it possible for our sin to be taken away when he died for our sins.

- (1 Corinthians 15:3–4 ESV) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

3. **Why** Jesus took away the sin of the world.

A. Jesus took away the sin of the world so that through him we could receive from his fullness grace upon grace ... as grace and truth were given through him.

- (John 1:14–17 ESV) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ... 16 For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

B. Jesus took away the sin of the world so that we might have life and have it abundantly.

- (John 10:10 ESV) The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

C. Jesus took away the sin of the world so that we may know his love and be filled with the fullness of God.

- (Ephesians 3:19 ESV) And to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Transition ... time warp ... we fast forward about fifteen years or so and find the Apostle John in tears in heaven before the throne of God. But never fear ... the Lamb of God saves the day.

4. **Why** he was worthy to open the scroll.

- (Revelation 5:1–14 ESV) Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the

back, sealed with seven seals. 2 And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” 3 And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, 4 and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. 5 And one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.” 6 And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. 8 And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, 10 and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.” 11 Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” 13 And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” 14 And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

A. He was worthy to take the scroll and open its seals because he was slain and by his blood he ransomed people for God.

- (Hebrews 9:26 ESV) But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

B. The scroll is a document of judgment and blessing that is sealed with seven seals and inaugurates the final day of the Lord in reclaiming the earth, ushering in the new heavens and new earth and the judgment of the wicked and the righteous assuring their final, eternal destinations.

5. **What** that means to those who receive him and believe in his name.

- (John 1:12–13 ESV) **But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,** 13 **who were born,** not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of *[the will]* God.

A. Those who receive the true light, who believe in his name, he gives the right to become children of God.

The high authority necessary to bestow this privilege is based on the person and the position of the One granting the right for the recipients to become children of God—John reveals this Person to be Jesus the Christ, the Son of God.

B. Those who receive this legal authority are recognized by Almighty God as children of God ... who are born by the will of God who will one day join him in his eternal kingdom in glory.

C. This is a powerful demonstration of the kind of love the Father has shown us.

- (1 John 3:1–3 ESV) **See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God;** and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2 Beloved, **we are God's children now,** and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. 3 **And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.**

D. The person who has this hope as a child of God purifies himself.

6. **What** that means to those who continue in sin and live in disobedience to God's truth.

- (1 John 3:4–7 ESV) **Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness;** sin

is lawlessness. 5 **You know that he appeared in order to take away sins,** and in him there is no sin. 6 **No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.** 7 Little children, **let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous,** as he is righteous.

A. The person who keeps on sinning is marked by a life of disobedience and also practices lawlessness.

B. Sin is lawlessness—lawlessness is sin.

The word ἁμαρτία [hamartia] means to miss the mark. Sin involves destructive and corrupt actions or thoughts that miss the mark of what God would consider right and good.

C. This person's life is characterized by an open defiance to the restraints of the law of God.

Lawlessness is the state of being or behaving in open defiance to the law. The word ἀνομία [anomia] speaks of the condition of without law; without law because ignorant of it; because of violating it.

D. **Deduction:** The Lamb of God made a sufficient sacrifice to take away sin, so if the person is still practicing sin and lawlessness, then his sin has not been taken away because of his unbelief.

E. This person has not seen and does not know God.

F. This person has been deceived and believes himself to be righteous.

What is the warning here—"let no one deceive you"? The deceived person practices sin but believes himself to be righteous. He is disobedient but believes himself to be obedient. How do we bring this person to his senses? The standard is "*as he is righteous*"—speaking of Jesus Christ.

- (2 Timothy 2:24–26 ESV) And the Lord's servant must **not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil,** 25 **correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth,** 26 **and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.**

FOLLOWING JESUS THE SON OF GOD



WHO ARE YOU FOLLOWING?

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked,
following the course of this world,
following the prince of the power of the air.

(Ephesians 2:1–2a ESV)

1. To follow Jesus we must first see Jesus for who he is.

- (John 1:35–36 ESV) The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, 36 and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, “**Behold, the Lamb of God!**”

A. We must see Jesus to know Jesus.

B. Those who have never seen Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, do not know him

C. So the first step to following Jesus is seeing him for who he truly is—the Christ, the Son of God.

- (John 20:31 ESV) **But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.**

D. Martha, Mark and Paul saw Jesus as the Christ, Son of God, and believed.

i. Martha “got it.”

- (John 11:25–27 ESV) Jesus said to [Martha] her, “I am the resurrection and the life. **Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?**” 27 She said to him, “**Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.**”

ii. Mark “got it” ... So very interesting how Mark begins his gospel.

- (Mark 1:1 ESV) **The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.**

iii. Paul eventually “got it”—Look at his amazing testimony shortly after his conversion.

- (Acts 9:19–20, 22 ESV) And taking food, he [Paul] was strengthened. For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus. 20 **And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.” ... 22 But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.**

2. Those who see Jesus see the glory of the only Son.

- (John 1:14 ESV) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, **and we have seen his glory**, glory as of the only Son from the Father, **full of grace and truth.**

A. Only in seeing **the only Son** do we see glory revealed.

B. He is the radiance of the glory of God.

- (Hebrews 1:3a ESV) **He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature.**

C. He is the Lord of glory.

- (1 Corinthians 2:8 ESV) **None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.**

D. He is the King of glory.

- (Psalm 24:7–10 ESV) Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that **the King of glory** may come in. 8 **Who is this King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty**, the LORD, mighty in battle! 9 Lift up your heads, O gates! And lift them up, O ancient doors, **that the King of glory may come in.** 10 **Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory!** Selah

Piercing Question: What does it say about your Jesus if you are willing to give up little or nothing for him? What does it say about your Jesus if he is so **un-glorious** that you can actually fit him into your plans?

3. Seeing Jesus as Scripture presents him **either** promotes allegiance **or** provokes opposition.

A. People will believe and follow Jesus or refuse to believe and oppose him.

- (Matthew 12:30 LSB) **He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters.**
- (Romans 8:7 ESV) **For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God**, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot.
- (James 4:4 ESV) You adulterous people! **Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.**

B. Many who were against him indirectly and unwittingly testified for him by their opposition.

C. Demons opposed Christ but when confronted with Christ seemed unable to restrain their terror and confessed that he was the Son of God.

- (Matthew 8:29 ESV) And behold, they cried out, “**What have you to do with us, O Son of God?**” Have you come here to torment

us before the time?”

- (Mark 3:11–12 ESV) And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, **they fell down before him and cried out, “You are the Son of God.”** 12 And he strictly ordered them not to make him known.

D. The high priest made a fool of himself and through his passionate, hateful efforts to discredit Christ unwittingly provided undeniable testimony that Jesus believed himself to be the Christ, the Son of God.

- ➔ • (Matthew 26:63–68 ESV) But Jesus remained silent. **And the high priest said to him, “I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.”** 64 Jesus said to him, **“You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.”** 65 **Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy.”** 66 What is your judgment?” They answered, “He deserves death.” 67 Then they spit in his face and struck him. And some slapped him, 68 saying, **“Prophecy to us, you Christ! Who is it that struck you?”**
- ➔ • (Luke 22:70–71 ESV) So they all said, **“Are you the Son of God, then?”** And he said to them, **“You say that I am.”** 71 Then they said, **“What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips.”**

4. John the Baptist initiates a transition of leadership.

A. John indirectly but clearly signals that it is time for his disciples to follow Jesus the Lamb of God.

- (John 1:35–37 ESV) The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, 36 **and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!”** 37 **The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.**

B. John looked at Jesus as he walked by.

To look ... to perceive with attention; direct one’s gaze towards; to turn one’s eyes on; metaphorically to look at with the mind, to consider.

C. He called his disciples to behold the Lamb of God—to truly see Jesus for who he was.

D. The two disciples heard John and followed Jesus.

Disciple ... μαθητής [mathetes] – a learner, pupil; a student who adheres to (and travels with) a teacher in a pedagogical relationship; especially used of students of spiritual leaders.

To follow ... to travel behind, go after, come after; to follow one who precedes, accompany him; to join one as a disciple, become or be his disciple.

5. Jesus discipulates those who follow him.

- (John 1:38–39 ESV) Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, **“What are you seeking?”** And they said to him, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?” 39 He said to them, **“Come and you will see.”** **So they came and saw** where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

A. Jesus immediately begins discipling those who follow him as he affirms his authoritative role as Rabbi.

B. He began by asking—What are you seeking?

- (Matthew 6:33 ESV) **But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,** and all these things will be added to you.
- (Matthew 7:7–8 ESV) Ask, and it will be given to you; **seek, and you will find;** knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and **the one who seeks finds,** and to the one who knocks it will be opened.
- (Psalm 40:16 ESV) **But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;** may those who love your salvation say continually, “Great is the Lord!”
- (Psalm 105:3–4 ESV) Glory in his holy name; **let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice!** 4 **Seek the Lord** and his strength; **seek his presence continually!**
- i. **“What are we seeking?”** helps us examine and clarify our motivation.
- ii. **What are we finding?** Are we finding the kingdom of God and his righteousness? Are we finding joy? Are we finding his presence?

C. As disciples they knew they needed more time with him so they asked—“Where are you staying?”

- This is how a disciple learns—he stays close to and spends time with the teacher.
- We learn from Jesus and stay close to him when we abide in his word.

- (John 8:31–32 ESV) So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”
- iii. When we abide in his word, he frees us from our sin and its influence and power over us.
- (John 8:33–36 ESV) They answered him, “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free?’” 34 Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.” 35 The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. 36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.
- iv. As we follow Jesus we grow in our freedom from sin and the effects it has on our lives mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually.
- v. And we grow in freedom socially ... the person who constantly lives with drama and dysfunction in his or her life is neither being freed by the truth of God nor assured in life by the presence and peace of the Lord Jesus.
- (Colossians 3:15–16a ESV) And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

6. The transition continues and now the followers of Jesus are finding other followers.

- (John 1:40–51 ESV) One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which means Christ). 42 He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Cephas” (which means Peter). 43 The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, ‘Follow me.’ 44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him of whom Moses in the

Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” 46 Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” 48 Nathanael said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” 49 Nathanael answered him, ‘Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!’ 50 Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” 51 And he said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

- A. This is all according to plan as John the Baptist, the preparer of the way, must decrease and Jesus, the Way, must increase.
- (John 3:30 ESV) He must increase, but I must decrease.
- B. The Lord begins assembling his disciples.
- C. Upon finding and beholding Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, those who followed him began finding others to bring to him.
- D. We see that Jesus planned his route at times with the purpose of finding disciples.
- (John 1:43 ESV) The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.”
- E. We also see some who in contrast with their religious leaders consulted and believed the Scriptures and were anticipating his coming.
- (John 1:45 ESV) Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

#1

JESUS PERFORMED HIS FIRST SIGN AT A WEDDING AT CANA IN GALILEE

MANIFESTING HIS GLORY



WATER INTO WINE

SETTING OUR CONTEXT ...

- I. In the beginning was the Word and in him was life which was the light of men, 1:1-5.
 - (John 1:1–5 ESV) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
- II. A man named John was sent by God to bear witness about the light, 1:6-8.
- III. The true light was coming into the world, 1:9-13.
- IV. The Word who is the true light became a human and lived among us—he was called Jesus, 1:14-18.
- V. John the Baptist gave testimony that he was not the Christ but the one who was prophesied to prepare the way of the Christ, 1:19-28.
- VI. John calls people to behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, 1:29-34.
- VII. John calls his two disciples to behold the Lamb of God and they did and followed Jesus, 1:35-37.
- VIII. We “hear” the Word who is Jesus speak his first words as he interacts with his disciples, 1:38-39.
- IX. The first two disciples begin finding others to follow Jesus, 1:40-42.
- X. Jesus joins his disciples in recruiting others as his core group begins forming, 1:43-51.

The disciples beheld Jesus and were awestruck. They had encountered God himself and were filled with awe; overwhelmed with a feeling of reverence, admiration, fear, and wonder. They were amazed, astonished, astounded, stunned and shocked. Coming into the presence of Majesty does that to a person.

So no wonder they followed him.

WE COULD MAYBE ASK OURSELVES THESE QUESTIONS ...

- a. Have we beheld Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, and been awestruck?
- b. If not, could that explain why we are not following him as we should? Has it been too long since we have encountered God in his glory?
- c. Does that type of thing even still happen today?

1. Jesus’s public ministry began with his disciples at a wedding at Cana in Galilee, 2:1-2.

- (John 2:1–2 ESV) On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. 2 Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples.

A. Cana was an insignificant, rural town.

B. The mother of Jesus was at the wedding.

C. Jesus and his disciples were also there.

2. Jesus is given the news of the very embarrassing development that the wine had run out, 2:3-5.

- (John 2:3–5 ESV) When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” 4 And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.” 5 His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

A. The mother of Jesus tells him—“They have no wine.”

B. This was a serious embarrassment to the groom and a social disaster.

C. Jesus speaks to his mother as a woman and not as his mother.

D. His hour had not yet come.

Jesus answers his mother with a degree of separation to ease the transition for her as he is entering the period of his public ministry. This means it is necessary that she learns to relate to him as her Lord and not as her son.

Her prompting could not interfere with his divine schedule and his earthly mission which would climax at the cross.

E. However ... interestingly what seems to have happened is that Mary’s prompting fit into the Lord’s divine plan after all.

But doesn’t this fit with the overall context for his first sign—a wedding disaster in a nowhere town in the country and a mom hoping her son can make things better for all concerned.

F. It seems that Mary understood Jesus’s intent and accepted her new role while at the same time demonstrating her trust in her son as she instructed the servants to do whatever Jesus tells them.

Background: Since there is no mention of Joseph

several commentators believe that he had been dead for a while and that Jesus, being the oldest son, had been the man of the house. Consequently, him being God, Mary had come to observe and rely on his wisdom.

What this may mean is that Mary did not necessarily expect Jesus to perform a miracle as we might first think but that Jesus would possibly have some wise solution to the dilemma. Supporting evidence for this would be that turning water to wine was "the first of his signs" which means that Mary had not before observed Jesus performing miracles so she would not have had that as a basis for her request.

3. The occasion in which Jesus turned water into wine is described in very mundane, everyday, simple terms, 2:6-10.

- (John 2:6–10 ESV) **Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons.** 7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. 8 And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. 9 **When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from** (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom 10 and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. **But you have kept the good wine until now.**"

A. Six stone water jars were at the wedding venue for the guests for ritual cleansing.

- (Mark 7:1–5 ESV) Now when the Pharisees gathered to him, with some of the scribes who had come from

Jerusalem, 2 **they saw that some of his disciples ate with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed.** 3 **(For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands properly, holding to the tradition of the elders,** 4 **and when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they wash. And there are many other traditions that they observe, such as the washing of cups and pots and copper vessels and dining couches.)** 5 And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, **"Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?"**

- (Luke 11:37–38 ESV) While Jesus was speaking, a Pharisee asked him to dine with him, so he went in and reclined at table. 38 **The Pharisee was astonished to see that he did not first wash before dinner.**

- B. The six stone water jars had a capacity of twenty or thirty gallons for a total of 120-180 gallons of water.
- C. Jesus told the servants to fill the jars with water.
- D. They filled them to the brim.
- E. Jesus told them to draw some out and take it to the master of the feast.
- F. The master of the feast commented as to the excellent quality of the wine.
- G. The sign/miracle seems to have just happened and possibly not observed by anyone.

4. The facts and the purpose of the occasion perfectly fit the divine progression of John's stated purpose in the Gospel, 2:11-12.

- (John 2:11–12 ESV) This, **the first of his signs**, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, **and manifested his glory.** And his disciples believed in him. 12 After this he went down to Capernaum, with his mother and his brothers and his disciples, and they stayed there for a few days.

- A. This was the first sign that Jesus performed.
- B. This sign manifested his glory.
- C. His disciples believed in him but there is no mention of anyone else having been affected.
- D. They went "home" and stayed there a few days.
- E. The symbolism of the event—that drastic change was inevitable, old to new, human works to miracle of God—fits perfectly with John's stated purpose.
- F. We must acknowledge that this first sign that Jesus performed would have been selected according to the infinite wisdom of God and his sovereign plan and in conformity to the stated purpose.

- (John 20:30–31 ESV) Now Jesus did **many other signs** in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these **[signs] are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,** and that by believing you may have life in his name.
- (Daniel 2:20 ESV) Daniel answered and

said: “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might.”

- (Romans 16:27 ESV) To the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.
- (Romans 11:33 ESV) Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

G. This is the first of the signs that were written down by John so that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

H. John used the word sign—σημεῖον [semeion], not miracle, because it better fit his stated purpose.

I. But to be clear this sign was a miracle.

5. The symbolism of the sign had much greater significance than the miracle of the sign itself.

A. Jesus manifested his glory when he turned the water into wine.

- (John 1:14 ESV) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- (John 2:11 ESV) This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

Manifest ... φανερόω [phaneroō] ... to make visible or known, actual and visible, realized; expose to view so to be plainly recognized, thoroughly understood; to cause to become clearly revealed to the mind, the senses, or judgment; to show plainly; to make evident.

B. So when Jesus manifested his glory he made it visible and known; clear and obvious; evident; on display and exposed to view.

C. The significance of the event is that Jesus in turning water into wine signaled a massive change of direction from the law to grace and truth in him.

- (Hebrews 8:13 ESV) In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

D. The shadow (the law) will never make perfect.

- (Hebrews 10:1 ESV) For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.

E. The shadow must give way to the true light that has entered the world and is now manifesting his glory.

- (John 1:9 ESV) The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

F. All religions of human works and religious ingenuity must be set aside to find life in the light.

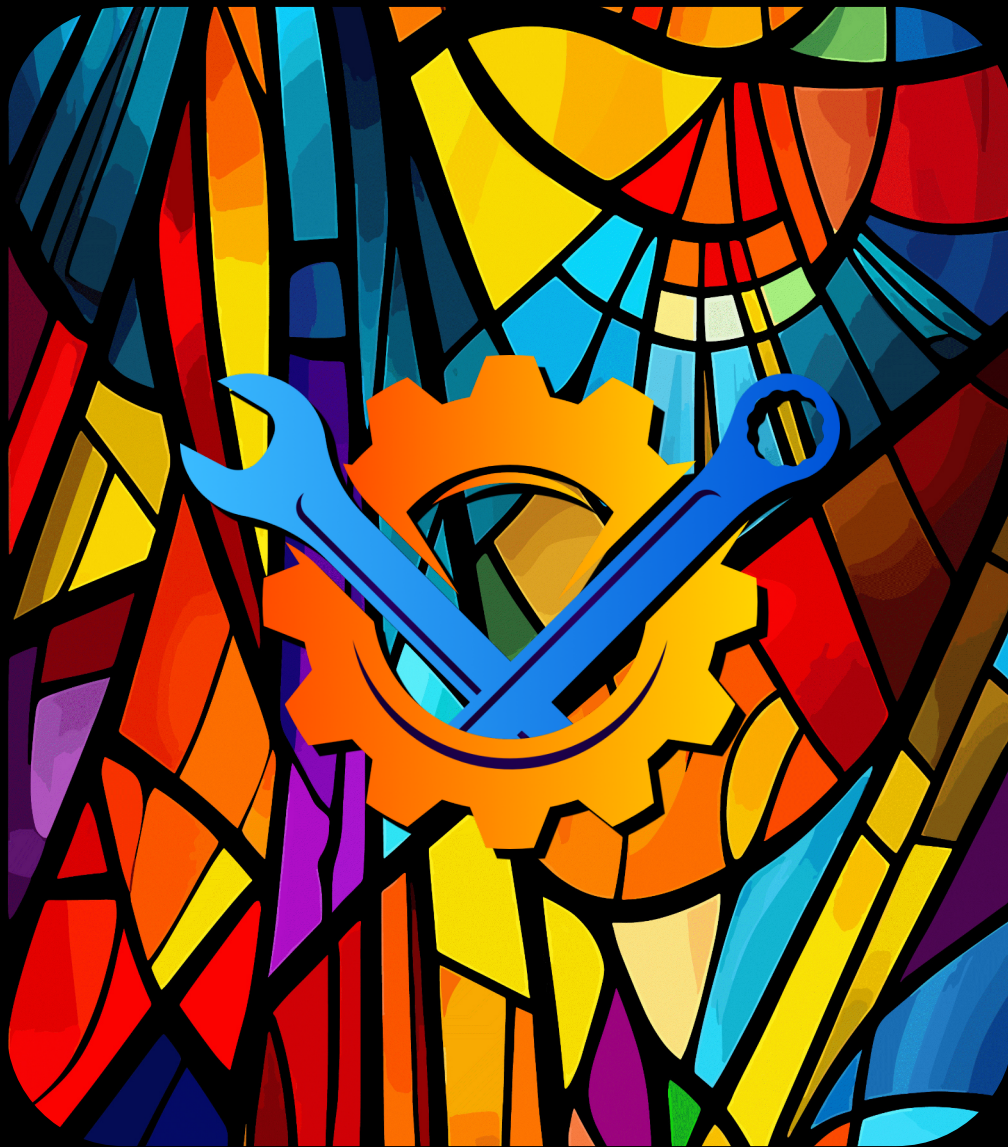
Ingenuity ... skill or cleverness in devising; inventiveness; aptness of design or contrivance.

- (Ephesians 4:14 ESV) So that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.
- (2 Corinthians 4:2 ESV) But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.
- (2 Corinthians 11:3 ESV) But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

G. We must flip the script and reject the traditions of humans to establish the commandment of God.

- (Mark 7:6–9 ESV) And he said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, “ ‘This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; 7 in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’ 8 You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.” 9 And he said to them, “You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition!”

ZEAL FOR OUR FATHER'S HOUSE



Temple Maintenance





1. Temple Maintenance 101—Cleaning: Jesus went up to Jerusalem to clean the temple, 2:13-17.

- (John 2:13–17 ESV) The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. 15 And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. 16 And he told those who sold the pigeons, “Take these things away; do not make my Father’s house a house of trade.” 17 His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.”

I. THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS ...

- A. Jesus went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover and found the court of the Gentiles to be more a place of livestock sales and money changing than worship.
- B. He made a whip and drove them all out of the temple.
- C. He poured out the coins and overturned the tables of the money-changers.
- D. He told those who sold the pigeons to take those things away and not make his Father’s house a house of trade.
- E. His disciples remembered the OT prophecy that “zeal for your house will consume me.”

II. OBSERVATIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS ...

- A. Jesus went to Jerusalem knowing what he needed to do when he arrived.
- B. Two reasons for this. 1) he is God, and 2) this practice of selling and money changing would have been well known throughout the land.
- C. Jesus went with the purpose of directing people away from the old covenant of law and works to the new covenant of grace.
- D. He made a whip of cords and miraculously drove them all out of the temple—those who were selling, the livestock, the money changers.
- E. The temple area in which this happened was the court of the Gentiles—the large area around the temple and the other courts.
- F. The court of the Gentiles was the area designated for non-Jews that desired to worship the Lord.

2. Why some regard this as a miracle (and I agree).

A. The text is very clear—Jesus singlehandedly drove them **all** out of the temple.

- (John 2:15 ESV) And making a whip of cords, **he drove them all out of the temple**, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables.

B. This would have taken a supernatural effort.

C. He cleared the massive area called the Court of the Gentiles that was filled with people and livestock.

The Court of the Gentiles was the outer perimeter of the temple and measured approximately 900 by 1200 feet. The most conservative estimates of those in Jerusalem for the Passover event range from about 100,000 to upwards of 1,000,000 people.

D. Jesus drove them all out and there is no biblical record of harm coming to people or animals.

E. There is no statement in Scripture of any opposition during the event.

F. Even those who challenged him afterwards did not seem to offer any resistance in the moment.

G. Those who disapproved of his actions would have made up a formidable opposition.

- i. The large number of capable men (*and women?*) selling livestock who would have been physically able to handle livestock in a crowded area.
- ii. The Jewish religious leaders and their followers.
- iii. The temple guard possibly numbering 300.

H. This outburst of righteousness revealing the glory and power of God Almighty in the Person of Jesus Son of God must have surprised and stunned them into submission—think shock and awe.

I. We find a similar and related event later in John.

- (John 18:4–6 ESV) Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, “Whom do you seek?” 5 They answered him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “**I am he.**” Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. 6 **When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they drew back and fell to the ground.**

J. The Roman garrison assigned to oversee the activity at the temple for incidents such as an insurrection or any other civil disturbance never came to intervene.

3. What was Jesus's motivation in cleansing the temple and what does that mean for us?

- (John 2:17 ESV) His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."
- A. When Jesus made water into wine, he signaled that change was coming.
- B. With this sign he set the change in motion.
- C. His disciples witnessed this amazing event and remembered what was written in the OT Scriptures and came to realize what had happened.
- D. Jesus's passion to do what was necessary to establish true worship of the Father consumed him.
- E. To understand what this means we need to define our terms: zeal, house and consume.

Zeal ... ζήλος [zelos] ... excitement of mind, passion; intense emotion that compels action; excessive fervor to do or accomplish some end.

House ... οἶκος [oikos] ... a dwelling (literal or figurative); a dwelling that serves as living quarters for one or more families; the place where one has fixed his residence, one's settled abode.

Consume ... κατασθίω [katesthiō] ... to eat up, i.e. to devour (literally or figuratively); to consume by eating; to utterly consume, destroy.

4. Temple Maintenance 102–Thoroughness: Jesus knew he needed to cleanse the temple of everything that was desecrating it.

Desecrate ... to profane; to violate the sacred character of (an object or place) by blasphemous, or sacrilegious action; to treat something sacred or solemn in an irreverent or disrespectful way.

- A. Christ's zeal consumed him as he felt in the depth of his being the reproaches with which the Jews were reproaching the Father.
- (Psalm 69:9 ESV) For zeal for your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me.
- B. This cleansing was an act of love for the Father.
- C. Christ's zeal consumed him as he saw the arrogance of his foes on display as they forgot and no longer trembled at God's words.
- (Psalm 119:139 ESV) My zeal consumes me, because my foes forget your words.
 - (Isaiah 66:2 ESV) All these things my

hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

5. The Jews demanded a sign to prove that Jesus had the authority to do these things, 2:18-22.

- (John 2:18–22 ESV) So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" 19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 20 The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" 21 But he was speaking about the temple of his body. 22 When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

- A. Only after Jesus accomplished his task of clearing the temple did his challengers dare approach him.
- B. They asked what sign he could show them that he had the authority to do these things.
- C. Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."
- D. The Jews were incredulous that he could think he could rebuild what had taken forty-six years to build.
- E. They didn't realize he was speaking about the temple of his body.
- F. When his temple was raised up in three days, his disciples remembered this and believed Scripture (the OT prophecy) and believed Jesus's words.

6. Many believed in his name when they saw the signs he was doing, 2:23-25.

- (John 2:23–25 ESV) Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing. 24 But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people 25 and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.
- A. Many believed but Jesus knew that some who "believed" did not truly believe because he knew what was in people.
- B. Those who believe to salvation follow him and do the will of the Father—the perseverance of the saints.



MAINTENANCE PROGRAM FOR THE TEMPLE OF GOD TODAY



1. We, as the Church and as individuals, are God's temple and are commanded to keep the temple free from any destroying influences.

- (1 Corinthians 3:16–17 ESV) Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? 17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.
- (1 Corinthians 6:19–20 ESV) Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, 20 for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

Temple ... ναός [naos] /nah-os/] ... a building considered as the house or dwelling place of a deity where the deity could be worshiped; used of the temple at Jerusalem; metaphorically the spiritual temple consisting of the saints of the Church age.

A. We are God's temple—The Spirit dwells in us.

B. Those who would destroy this temple are warned.

Destroy ... to corrupt, to mess up – to make a mess of or create disorder in; perhaps with the idea of ruining or making useless by its disorder.

C. The warning is severe because God's temple is holy.

D. Our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and has been bought with a price so it must be maintained as such since we are not our own but God's.

E. We maintain regular cleansing of the temple of God by walking in the light and confessing sin.

- (1 John 1:7–9 ESV) But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- (2 Corinthians 7:1 ESV) Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit,

bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.

- (Psalm 32:5 ESV) I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah

F. We are commanded to separate ourselves from the corrupting influences of unequal alliances.

- (2 Corinthians 6:14–18 ESV) Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? 15 What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, “I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, 18 and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.”

2. Temple Maintenance 103–Ultimatum: We clean up the mess or Jesus will, Revelation 2-3.

- (Revelation 2:1 ESV) To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ‘The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands.
- (1 Corinthians 11:30–32 ESV) 30 That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. 31 But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.
- (Revelation 2:2 ESV) I know your works.
- (Revelation 2:14 ESV) ... I have a few things against you.

SEEING AND ENTERING

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN



WE MUST BE BORN AGAIN
(from above)

1) Nicodemus comes to Jesus ...

Nicodemus' faith is shaken, and so he comes to Jesus hoping for some answers.

1. Nicodemus approaches Jesus and states what he believes to be true about Jesus, 3:1-2.
 - (John 3:1-2 ESV) **Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus**, a ruler of the Jews. 2 **This man came to Jesus by night and said to him**, "Rabbi, **we know** that you are **a teacher come from God**, for no one can do these signs that you do unless **God is with him**."
 - A. Nicodemus seems to have been experiencing doubt, fear, confusion and hope.
 - B. Nicodemus openly expressed belief in two true things about Jesus—that Jesus was a teacher come from God and that God was with him.
 - C. His problem was that believing some things about Jesus is not enough.
 - D. It also seems probable that Nicodemus was one of the many referred to in 2:23-25 who also only believed some things about Jesus.
 - (John 2:23 ESV) Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, **many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing**.
 - E. Jesus did not trust these "believers" because he knew that they were not believing in him for the salvation God offered—forgiveness of sins.
 - (John 2:24-25 ESV) But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, **because he knew all people** 25 and needed no one to bear witness about man, for **he himself knew what was in man**.
 - F. They were believing in him for the salvation that they hoped for—that he would use his miracle working power to establish a kingdom for them on the earth.
2. Compare Nicodemus' statements of belief with the statements others made about Jesus.

Nicodemus ...

- (John 3:2 ESV) ... **we know** that **you are a teacher come from God**, for no one can do these signs that you do unless **God is with him**."

John the Baptist ...

- (John 1:29 ESV) ... "**Behold, the Lamb of God**, who takes away the sin of the world!"

Andrew ...

- (John 1:41 ESV) ... [Andrew] ... said to him, "**We have found the Messiah**" (which means Christ).

Philip ...

- (John 1:45 ESV) Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "**We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph**."

Nathaniel ...

- (John 1:49 ESV) ... "**Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!**"

Simon Peter ...

- (John 6:69 ESV) And we have believed, and have come to know, that **you are the Holy One of God**.

Martha ...

- (John 11:27 ESV) She said to him, "Yes, Lord; **I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God**, who is coming into the world."

John's statement of purpose ...

- (John 20:31 ESV) ... **these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God**, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

2) Jesus answers Nicodemus ...

Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born again to see the kingdom of God.

1. Jesus answered the question that was on Nicodemus' heart, 3:3.
 - (John 3:3 ESV) Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God**."
 - A. The question that was on Nicodemus' heart was — How can a person see the kingdom of God?
 - B. We know this is the question on his heart because it is the question Jesus answered.
 - C. Jesus knew what was in Nicodemus (see 2:24-25 above) and so he knew what was on his heart.
 - D. So Jesus begins to prod Nicodemus toward the truth—that his work for the kingdom of God was fruitless ... and that he had spent his entire life with his religious ladder leaning against the wrong wall.

2. He told Nicodemus that for a person to **see** the kingdom of God that he needed to be born into a new life from above.

A. Important Note: Here Jesus speaks of **seeing** the kingdom and later speaks of **entering** the kingdom.

The word John used [οἶδα - oida] means to perceive with the eyes; to perceive by any of the senses; to notice, discern, discover; to turn the eyes, the mind, the attention to anything; observe.

To see spiritually is the ability to know and understand spiritual truths.

B. A new birth from above was necessary to bring about **a new life** and then the person would have the ability to perceive spiritual truth, e.g. he or she could now see the reality of the kingdom of God.

- (1 Corinthians 2:12–13 ESV) **Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.** 13 And we impart this in words **not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.**

C. This helps to explain the misguided efforts of those who had not yet experienced this new birth in seeking salvation in a king and kingdom on earth.

D. Nicodemus and the others could only see what their natural minds were capable of seeing—they could not see past earth and the things of earth.

- (1 Corinthians 2:14 ESV) **The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them** because they are **spiritually discerned.**

E. It was impossible for them to seek the kingdom of God or set their minds on things that are above.

- (Matthew 6:33 ESV) But **seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness**, and all these things will be added to you.
- (Colossians 3:1–2 ESV) If then you have been raised with Christ, **seek the things that are above**, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 **Set your minds on things that are above**, not on things that are on earth.

3. So what does it mean to be born again?

- (John 3:3 ESV) Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.**”

A. To be born again means to be regenerated; formed or created again; be conceived again; to be brought into existence afresh, or become new.

B. The words may also be translated to be born from above; from a higher place; of things which come from heaven or God.

C. We are born into the reality of a new person—we are born into a new creation.

- (2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creation.** The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

D. We are born again (from above) by the will of God.

- (John 1:12–13 ESV) But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 **who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.**

3) Jesus and Nicodemus continue their dialogue regarding the nature of the new birth ...

Nicodemus has not yet reached the place of believing what he needs to believe and so is still not connecting the dots.

1. To see the kingdom of God we must be born again.
2. It is only by the work of God alone (here the Spirit's work) that we are born into this new life.
3. The analogy of being born into life as a human teaches us the impossibility of attaining the new birth—salvation—by any effort of our own, 3:4-8.

- (John 3:4–8 ESV) Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?” 5 Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.** 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, **and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.** 7 **Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’** 8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

A. Jesus used the example of being born by natural birth to explain what he meant regarding being born again (from above) spiritually.

B. Nicodemus understood his point that it is impossible for a person to do such a thing—to be born again.

C. Salvation by human effort is as impossible as a person being born again from his mother's womb.

D. Jesus answers that this rebirth only happens by the washing of regeneration and being made into a new person by the work of the Spirit .

- (Ezekiel 36:25–26 ESV) **I will sprinkle clean water on you**, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. 26 And I will give you **a new heart**, and **a new spirit**. I will put within you. And I will **remove the heart of stone** from your flesh **and give you a heart of flesh**.
- (Titus 3:5–6 ESV) He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, **by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit**, 6 whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

E. We are born again (from above) to a living hope through the resurrection of Christ.

- (1 Peter 1:3 ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, **he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**.

F. We are born again (from above) of imperishable seed—the living and abiding word of God.

- (1 Peter 1:23 ESV) Since you have been **born again**, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, **through the living and abiding word of God**.

4) Nicodemus voices his frustration ...

Nicodemus exclaims ... “How can these things be?”

1. Nicodemus has not yet come to saving faith and so he sincerely asks the question.

- (John 3:9 ESV) Nicodemus said to him, **“How can these things be?”**

2. It seems from the following text that Nicodemus finally arrives at saving faith—but not on this particular evening.

- (John 19:38–40 ESV) After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body. 39 **Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night**, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. 40 So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.

5) To be continued ...

Jesus proceeds to rebuke and instruct Nicodemus ...

CONCLUSION

This is how God so loved the world ...

Jesus clearly tells us that we must be born again to see and enter the kingdom of God, but that is mission impossible for mere humans.

So God loved the world in this way. He sent Jesus from heaven to save us from our sins.

- (John 3:16 ESV) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.
- (1 Corinthians 15:3–4 ESV) For I delivered to you as of **first importance** what I also received: **that Christ died for our sins** in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 **that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day** in accordance with the Scriptures.

JESUS— THE WITNESS FROM HEAVEN

HEAVEN



WHO IS
YOUR WITNESS?

VERSUS



TO WHOM
ARE WE
LISTENING?

EARTH

FOR THIS PURPOSE I WAS BORN AND FOR THIS PURPOSE I HAVE COME INTO
THE WORLD—TO BEAR WITNESS TO THE TRUTH. EVERYONE WHO IS OF THE
TRUTH LISTENS TO MY VOICE (JOHN 18:37A ESV).

REVIEW ... 3:1-8

We must be born again from above to have the new life that enables us to see the kingdom of God.

This new birth is the work of God alone without human effort.

This is a work of the Spirit which we can neither understand nor explain any more than we are able explain the movement of the wind.

SETTING OUR CONTEXT ...

I. What heaven knows **VERSUS** What earth knows!

A. Witness—to testify to or affirm what one has seen or heard or experienced.

B. Nicodemus—**witness representing earth.**

- (John 3:2a ESV) This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, **we know** that you are a teacher come from God.

C. Jesus—**witness representing heaven.**

JESUS IS LITERALLY THE WITNESS FROM HEAVEN.

- (John 3:11 ESV) Truly, truly, I say to you, **we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen.**
- (John 18:37a) For **this purpose** I was born and for **this purpose** I have come into the world—**to bear witness to the truth.** Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.
- (John 12:49–50 ESV) **For I have not spoken on my own authority,** but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—**what to say and what to speak.** 50 And I know that his commandment is eternal life. **What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.**
- (John 7:16–17 ESV) So Jesus answered them, “**My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me.** 17 **If anyone’s will is to do God’s will, he will know** whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority.
- (John 8:26 ESV) **I have much to say about you and much to judge, but he who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him.**
- (John 8:42–43 ESV) Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, **for I came from God and I am here.** I came not of my own accord, but **he sent me.** 43 **Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word.”**

II. **Basic Fact:** Everyone knows some things about God, but not everyone knows God.

- (Romans 1:18–19 NLT) **But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who suppress the truth by their wickedness. 19 They know the truth about God because he has made it obvious to them.**

III. There are two general groups of people on earth.

A. **GROUP 1:** Those who know some things about God but do not know God.

B. **GROUP 2:** Those who know some things about God and know God.

IV. **GROUP ONE:** Those who know some things about God but do not know God may be divided into two subgroups.

A. Subgroup 1: Agnostics and atheists who have **no interest** in what God says in the Bible.

- i. **Agnostics**—people who believe that nothing is known or can be known of the existence or nature of God.
- ii. **Atheists**—people who disbelieve or lack belief in the existence of God or gods.

B. Subgroup 2: Religious (or spiritual) people who have **some interest** in what God says in the Bible.

- i. This group would include all religious people such as Nicodemus who seemed (as a Pharisee) to have great interest in what God says in the Bible.
- ii. However the people in this subgroup are no more capable of seeing the kingdom of God than are the agnostics and atheists.

iii. The people in this group may even fiercely defend the Bible but they have added to or taken away from what God says by bringing the witness of Scripture under the authority of humans.

- (Deuteronomy 4:2a ESV) **You shall not add to the word** that I command you, **nor take from it.**

- See also Revelation 22:18–19.

iv. They do not realize what they are doing.

v. They do not know what has happened and do not know what will happen.

vi. They will one day hear Jesus judge them as those who were a law unto themselves because they rejected the witness of heaven.

- (Matthew 7:23 ESV) And then will I declare to them, “I never knew you; **depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.**”

C. Subgroup 2 also includes religious people who have great interest in the Bible and study it diligently.

- (John 5:36–41 ESV) But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me. 37 And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen, 38 and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent. 39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. 41 I do not receive glory from people.

- Christ's works, the Father himself and the Scriptures bear witness but they refuse to believe this three-fold witness from heaven and come to Christ to have eternal life.
- What Christ means when he says—"I do not receive glory from people"—is that he will not adapt his witness to please or satisfy people.
- Meeting the expectations of their peers is exactly what this group has done which has kept them from believing.

- (John 5:44 ESV) How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?

- They remain blind to the kingdom of heaven because they submit the heavenly witness to the authority of humans and so the light that is in them becomes darkness.

- (Luke 11:34–35 ESV) Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. 35 Therefore be careful lest the light in you be darkness.

- Submitting God's word to our humanity reveals a bad spiritual eye that transforms incoming light into darkness which then becomes our light which is great darkness indeed.

V. GROUP TWO: Those who know the things of God, know God and see the kingdom of God.

- They are born again and live a new life in view of the kingdom of God.
- Because they see the kingdom of God they do not modify the witness of Scripture to fit the human standards of life on earth.
- They hear the voice of God and know what has happened and will happen.

BACK TO JOHN ... 3:9-18

1. Nicodemus could not understand "these things" because he was still restrained by the earthly witness and not yet able to fully receive the truth from the witness from heaven, 3:9-11.

- (John 3:9–11 ESV) Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" 10 Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? 11 Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony.

A. Jesus is the powerful witness of heaven—he is the truth and he is full of grace and truth.

- (John 14:6 ESV) Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."
- (John 1:14 ESV) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

B. Jesus knows the things that are true and he is giving testimony to what he has seen above.

C. Nicodemus had not yet been born again so he could only receive the testimony of this world and not the testimony of the witness from heaven.

2. The witness from heaven—Jesus, the Son of Man—is the ultimate authority on eternal life as the one who has ascended into and descended from heaven, 3:12-15.

- (John 3:12–15 ESV) If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? 13 No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

A. If Nicodemus cannot believe based on the simple example of being born again, then how can he believe Jesus' witness about eternal life.

B. Jesus has ultimate authority as the only witness who has come down from heaven and has been given dominion and glory and a kingdom.

- (Daniel 7:13–14 NIV) In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the

clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. 14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

3. The Jesus we preach must be the Jesus who has passed through and is exalted above the created heavens and who sits at the right hand of God.

A. He must be lifted high above human belief and opinion by the witness of Scripture.

B. We must present him as high and holy far above all other names and authorities so that people may see him for who he is and believe in him for eternal life.

C. We must preach the Jesus who has been presented to us by the heavenly witnesses so people may believe and have life in his name.

- (John 20:31 ESV) But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.
- (Ephesians 1:20b–21 ESV) ... Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.
- (Ephesians 4:10 ESV) He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.
- (Philippians 2:9–11 ESV) Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
- (Hebrews 4:14 ESV) Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

- (Hebrews 7:26 ESV) For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.
- (Hebrews 8:1–2 ESV) Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, 2 a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man.
- (Hebrews 9:24 ESV) For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.

4. We dare not change the witness of heaven but stay true to the testimony and preach the true gospel of God which offers eternal life and warns of condemnation and judgment, 3:16-18.

- (John 3:16–18 ESV) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

A. Believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, and have eternal life.

B. Do not believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, and remain under the condemnation of God.

CONCLUSION: Who is your witness? To whom are you listening?

THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD'S LOVE



-AND WHY PEOPLE HATE IT-

1) GOD LOVED THE WORLD AND GAVE HIS SON THAT WE MIGHT HAVE LIFE IN HIM.

The context for John 3:16 is that a new life by a new birth was necessary for humans to see and enter the kingdom of God but this was impossible for humans so God gave his only Son.

- I. The good news of God's love is that God made a way for people to escape condemnation and have eternal life by giving his only Son, John 3:16-18.
 - (John 3:16 ESV) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.
- II. God did what we could not do for ourselves.
 - A. People could now be born into a new life and be able to see and enter the kingdom of God.
 - (John 3:3 ESV) Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."
 - B. God did this because people were (and are) totally incapable of doing anything to have this new life.
- III. God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world but to provide salvation by way of a new life.
 - (John 3:17-18 ESV) For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.
 - A. Whoever believes in God's only Son is not condemned, but whoever does not believe in God's only Son is already condemned.
 - B. He is condemned because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

The phrase "believed in the name of the only Son of God" provides the necessary, absolute specificity as to whom the person must believe in.

Specificity ... the quality of being clear and exact; of belonging to or relating uniquely to a particular subject or individual.

- C. God so loved the world that he gave his only Son—specifically the Son who is fully revealed as God and as the Jesus of Scripture who is the Christ.
- D. When people allow their thoughts to be led away from the specificity of the revelation of Jesus Christ in the

Scriptures, they are deceived and put up with false teaching regarding Jesus, the gospel and the Spirit.

- (2 Corinthians 11:3-4 ESV) But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. 4 For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough.

E. These people remain under the condemnation of God.

2) MOST PEOPLE HATED WHAT GOD DID.

The Verdict: The context for John 3:19-20 is that of a judgment being given for those who do evil—that although light came into the world they loved the darkness rather than the light.

- I. Light came into the world but people chose to [agape] love the darkness rather than the light, 3:19-20.
 - (John 3:19-20 ESV) And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. 20 For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.
 - A. Light is ultimate truth, ultimate reality, which most specifically in this context is Jesus.

Reality is the state of things as they actually exist, as opposed to an idealistic or notional idea of them; the world as it is, not as one may hope or wish for it to be.
 - B. God gave people the opportunity to live in the light.
 - (John 1:4, 9 ESV) In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.
 - C. But people [agape] love darkness rather than the light which is Jesus because their works are evil.

Agape love ... - choose to have a great affection or care for or loyalty towards; to be fond of, to love dearly; to be well pleased, to be contented at or with a thing.
- II. People who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light because they and their works will be exposed by the light for what they are—**evil**.

A basic meaning of work – ἔργον [ergon] – is an act or deed; something that people do or cause to happen;

any thing accomplished by hand, art, industry, or mind.

A more religious meaning of work – a duty that a person is obliged to perform for moral or legal reasons.

A. The world hated what God did, hated him for doing it and hated the Son.

B. God's plan of salvation by grace alone not only leaves absolutely no place for human works but exposes human works as evil.

- (Ephesians 2:8–9 ESV) For by grace you have been saved through faith. And **this is not your own doing**; it is the gift of God, **9 not a result of works**, so that no one may boast.
- (2 Timothy 1:9 ESV) **Who saved us** and called us to a holy calling, **not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace**.
- (Titus 3:5a ESV) **He saved us**, **not because of works done by us in righteousness**, but according to his own mercy.

C. Lovers of darkness hate the light because God leaves them and their works out of his plan of salvation by grace alone.

D. Lovers of darkness hate the light because the light exposes them for what they are—self-righteous, prideful religious people who hold to a false gospel.

- (Ephesians 5:13–14a7 ESV) **But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible**, 14 for anything that becomes visible is light.

III. The world hates Jesus, the world hates the Father and the world hates you who believe.

- (John 15:18–19 ESV) If the world hates you, **know that it has hated me before it hated you**. 19 **If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own**; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, **therefore the world hates you**.
- (John 15:23 ESV) **Whoever hates me hates my Father also**.
- (John 17:14 ESV) **I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world**, just as I am not of the world.

3) SOME PEOPLE DID WHAT WAS TRUE AND CAME TO THE LIGHT WANTING GOD TO GET FULL CREDIT FOR THE WORK THAT WAS DONE.

The person who comes to the light lives in transparency before all so that every good thing in his life can be seen as the work of God to his glory.

I. Those who do what is true come to the light, are exposed by the light and prosper in relation to the light, 3:21.

- (John 3:21 ESV) **But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God**.

II. The person who comes to the light does so that his works may be clearly seen for what they are—the grace work of God.

- (John 3:21 MSG) **But anyone working and living in truth and reality welcomes God-light so the work can be seen for the God-work it is**.

4) WE FULFILL OUR CALLING AND COMPLETE OUR JOY WHEN CHRIST INCREASES AND WE DECREASE.

Our joy is complete when we stay true to our calling and the heavenly witness and serve Jesus in humility.

I. John the Baptist provides clarity and direction to his disciples, 3:22-30.

- (John 3:22–30 ESV) After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he remained there with them and was baptizing. 23 John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized 24 (for John had not yet been put in prison). 25 Now a discussion arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew over purification. 26 And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, he who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you bore witness—look, he is baptizing, and all are going to him." 27 John answered, "**A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven**. 28 You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, **'I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him**.' 29 The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. **Therefore this joy of mine is now complete**. 30 **He must increase, but I must decrease**."

A. Everything a person receives is given from heaven.

B. Our calling is given to us from heaven.

C. We complete the circuit and complete our joy when we are faithful to his calling.

D. Humility is necessary for faithful service—Christ must increase, we must decrease.

5) JESUS IS FROM ABOVE AND ABOVE ALL AND THOSE WHO RECEIVE HIS TESTIMONY KNOW THAT GOD IS TRUE.

Jesus from above utters the words of God and tells us the truth about God that we might know God.

I. Most do not receive the witness of heaven from Jesus but some do receive his testimony, 3:31-36.

- (John 3:31–36 ESV) He who comes from above is above all. He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven is above all. 32 He bears witness to what he has seen and heard, yet no one receives his testimony. 33 Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true. 34 For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. 35 The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. 36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

A. Jesus is he who comes from above and is above all.

B. Jesus comes from above bringing the witness from heaven but virtually no one receives his testimony.

The meaning of “no one receives” seems to be that virtually (nearly, almost) all people do not receive his testimony which fits with the previous testimony that light came into the world and most people loved the darkness rather than the light.

II. But whoever does receive Jesus’ testimony knows that God is true.

■ HERE IS THE SPIRITUAL DYNAMIC AT WORK IN GENERAL ...

- A. We come to know that God is true by receiving what God says in Scripture.
- B. Receiving and believing go hand-in-hand and this has to be the work of the Holy Spirit.

■ NEGATIVELY ...

- C. Conversely when we doubt what he says—such as doubting the authority and inspiration of the Bible—then our doubt (our unfaith) undermines our ability to believe he is true.
- D. Consequently we undermine our ability to live in the reality of the light of the kingdom of God.

■ POSITIVELY ...

E. However when we fully receive what he says, not doubting but believing and trusting, we are filled with a depth of conviction that is other worldly.

- (John 3:33 ESV) Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true.

3:33 ... “sets his seal” ... σφραγίζω [sphragizo] ... to set a seal upon, mark with a seal, to seal; to set a mark upon by the impress of a seal or a stamp; to confirm authenticate, place beyond doubt; to be sealed securely; to be or become designated and made secure as a sign of authentication or ownership.

- i. Doubt is obliterated.
- ii. Any hint or desire for another witness is obliterated.
- iii. We are empowered in the innermost depths of our being because we know that God is true and truthful.
- cf. (1 John 5:10–12 NLT) All who believe in the Son of God know in their hearts that this testimony is true. Those who don’t believe this are actually calling God a liar because they don’t believe what God has testified about his Son. 11 And this is what God has testified: He has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have God’s Son does not have life.

BAM!



III. Whoever believes in the Son has life but the wrath of God remains on whoever does not obey the Son.

- (John 8:45 ESV) But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.
- A. Believe in the Son have eternal life.
- B. Do not obey the Son and remain in your sins and under the wrath of God.
- (John 8:23–24 ESV) He said to them, “You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins.”

REVIVAL AT SYCHAR



*A LIVING WATER ENCOUNTER
AT JACOB'S WELL*

1. Jesus plans his route to Galilee so that he can meet a woman at Jacob's well about noon, 4:1-6.

- (John 4:1–6 ESV) Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John 2 (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples), 3 he left Judea and departed again for Galilee. 4 **And he had to pass through Samaria.** 5 So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 6 Jacob's well was there; so **Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.**

Understanding it was not the time for the increased recognition of his public ministry Jesus left Judea for Galilee. He went through Samaria and came to Jacob's well about noon where he waited to meet the woman from Sychar when she came to draw water.

2. The woman arrives to draw water and Jesus initiates a conversation with her by asking her to give him a drink of water, 4:7-15.

- (John 4:7–15 ESV) **A woman from Samaria came to draw water.** Jesus said to her, **"Give me a drink."** 8 (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) 9 The Samaritan woman said to him, **"How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?"** (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) 10 Jesus answered her, **"If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."** 11 The woman said to him, **"Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?"** 12 Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock." 13 Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. **The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.**" 15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."

THE DIALOGUE (PARAPHRASED) ...

Jesus: Give me a drink.

The Woman: Why would you ask me for a drink?

Jesus: If you knew the gift of God and who is speaking to you, then you would have asked me for a drink, and I would have given you a drink of living water.

The Woman: How? This well is deep and you don't have a rope or a bucket. So where would you get this water? Do you think that you are greater than our father Jacob?

Jesus: This water only satisfies your momentary thirst. The water I give would quench your eternal thirst.

The Woman: Okay, sir, so give me this water and maybe I will not have to keep hauling water everyday.

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE DIALOGUE...

A. Jesus planned his journey to meet this woman at this time and at this place.

B. We should also note that the specific timing of the disciples going into town for food and the woman arriving was no mere coincidence.

C. God does not step into people's lives, including yours and mine, by coincidence or by chance. He has planned to the last detail his involvement in our lives to draw us to our moment of faith. Since before he created our world he has involved himself in the lives of each of his chosen ones with wisdom, insight and the love of a Father.

- (Ephesians 1:3–8 ESV) **Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world,** that we should be holy and blameless before him. **In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,** 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 **which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight.**

D. Jesus, being God, would know what was truly on her heart, and so he provokes her thinking by asking her for a drink.

E. The woman immediately points out the social and

religious conflict between Jews and Samaritans. It seems very possible that she did this to test him. Is he sincere? What are his motives?

- F. The woman states the obvious that Jesus does not have anything to draw water from a well that is about 100 feet deep.
- G. But as he did with Nicodemus, Jesus continues on and pushes her to see who he is and believe.

(Hint: See the stated purpose for the Gospel of John.)

- (John 20:31 ESV) But **these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.**
- H. Jesus directs her attention away from the need for water for daily sustenance to the water that gives life.
- I. Jesus is now leading the woman past what she believes to what she needs to believe.
- J. It seems that the woman is sensing a change—that something good is occurring—but is confused and unsure as to what exactly that might be.
- K. So she wonders ... Maybe Jesus is talking about really good water that so effectively quenches her physical thirst that no more trips to the well would be necessary?
- L. But Jesus is not directing her to better water and a better life but toward living water and eternal life.
- M. He continues to direct her to her greatest need which is living water to quench her soul thirst.

3. Jesus intensifies the discussion as he pushes the woman closer to the truth by bringing attention to her personal life and her religion, 4:16-26.

- (John 4:16–26 ESV) Jesus said to her, “**Go, call your husband, and come here.**” 17 The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; 18 for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.” 19 **The woman said to him, “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet.**” 20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.” 21 Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. 22 You worship what you do not

know; **we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.** 23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, **when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.** 24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” 25 The woman said to him, “**I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ).**” When he comes, he will tell us all things.” 26 Jesus said to her, “**I who speak to you am he.**”

THE DIALOGUE (PARAPHRASED) ...

The dialogue continues as Jesus gives the woman hope by offering life and worship far superior to what she now has.

Jesus: Go get your husband and come back here.

The Woman: I have no husband.

Jesus: You are right. You have had five husbands and the man you are in a relationship with now is not your husband.

The Woman: I perceive you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain (*Mount Gerizim where God set his blessing*). But you say that in Jerusalem is the place people should worship.

- (Deuteronomy 11:29 ESV) And when the LORD your God brings you into the land that you are entering to take possession of it, **you shall set the blessing on Mount Gerizim** and the curse on Mount Ebal.

Jesus: The time is coming (which is now) when true worshipers worship the Father in spirit and truth.

The Woman: I know that Messiah is coming and when he comes he will tell us all things.

Jesus: I am he.

OBSERVATIONS FROM THEIR CONTINUING DIALOGUE ...

- A. Jesus turns up the heat as he directs her attention to the shortcomings of her personal life and worship.
- B. Jesus brought her attention to the obvious. Her thirst for life has not been satisfied in her personal relationships.
- C. The woman begins to see Jesus as something more than merely a Jewish man who needs a drink of water. So she tells Jesus what is on her mind. I perceive you are a prophet.
- D. Jesus pushes forward with this powerful insight. The time is coming when true worship will not be

connected with a physical place but true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth.

- E. With his announcement that the time is now for true worship Jesus gives the woman further hope.
- F. She knows—or at least agrees with the truth—that Messiah is coming ... but is it too good to be true that Messiah is standing there with her at Jacob's Well.
- G. Jesus relieves her suspense and proclaims himself to be Messiah, who is the Christ.

4. The woman left as the disciples returned and goes back and shares her encounter with the people in Sychar, 4:27-30.

- (John 4:27–30 ESV) Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you seek?” or, “Why are you talking with her?” 28 So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, 29 “Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?” 30 They went out of the town and were coming to him.

- A. The woman went back into town and urged the people to come and see Jesus.
- B. *Again she stated the purpose of John ...* They needed to come and see who Jesus was to believe and have life in his name.
- C. She must have been convincing because they went out of town and were coming to see Jesus.
- D. We obviously do not rule out the hand of God in regard to her testimony to the people.
- E. However ... it seems that we should acknowledge that she held some level of respect for them to listen to her. And she had some degree of humility to say to them he “told me all that I ever did.”

For instance, can you imagine Simon and the other Pharisees in Luke seven listening to anything the woman whose sins were many had to say.

5. The disciples are concerned that Jesus hasn't eaten anything, but he uses the occasion to speak of the priority of doing the Father's will and accomplishing the Father's work, 4:31-38.

- (John 4:31–38 ESV) Meanwhile the

disciples were urging him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” 32 But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” 33 So the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought him something to eat?” 34 Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.” 35 Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, then comes the harvest?’ Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. 36 Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. 37 For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ 38 I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

- A. When Jesus speaks of his food here, he is giving us a clear indication of what our spiritual food—what keeps us nourished and energized—should be.
- B. What will keep us going strong is doing the Father's will and accomplishing the Father's work.

Maybe a good opportunity to ask ourselves if that is our vision of service in the Church—that what keeps our church nourished and energized ... that our food ... is doing the Father's will and accomplishing his work.

- C. Jesus directs them to look up and see the harvest—most likely in respect to the townspeople coming out to see him.

6. Many Samaritans believed through the woman's testimony and because of the word Jesus spoke to them over a two day visit, 4:31-38.

- (John 4:39–42 ESV) Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, “He told me all that I ever did.” 40 So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. 41 And many more believed because of his word. 42 They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.”

THE ESSENTIALS TO FAITHFULNESS

THE NECESSARY WATER, WORSHIP AND FOOD TO REMAIN FAITHFUL AND STRONG IN THE LORD



JESUS: "MEET ME AT THE WELL."

1) OUR NECESSARY WATER - LIVING WATER

I. Followers of Jesus drink exclusively from the water he offers, 4:7-15.

A. A woman from Samaria came to draw water from the well outside her town.

- (John 4:7a ESV) A woman from Samaria came to draw water.

B. She arrived and Jesus began a conversation by asking for a drink of water.

- (John 4:7b ESV) Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."

C. He then directed the conversation to the water she actually needed.

- (John 4:10, 14 ESV) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and **he would have given you living water.**" ... but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. **The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.**"

D. The woman then asked for this water.

- (John 4:15 ESV) The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water ..."

II. Rivers of living water flow from the hearts of those who believe in Christ—i.e. those who drink exclusively from the fountain of living waters.

- (John 7:38–39 ESV) **Whoever believes in me**, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' " 39 **Now this he said about the Spirit**, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

A. The text reveals that the rivers of living water refer to the Spirit.

B. So when we believe in Jesus and drink living water (receive eternal life), then the Spirit flows out of our hearts like a river.

SO DOES IT? AND HOW WOULD WE KNOW?

C. One way we would know seems to be that the fruit of the Spirit will be abounding in that person's life.

- (Galatians 5:22–23a ESV) **But the fruit of the Spirit** is **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control.**

D. Scripture also represents drinking living water as drinking from the river of God's delights.

- (Psalm 36:5–9 ESV) **Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds.** 6 Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; your judgments are like the great deep; man and beast you save, O LORD. 7 **How precious is your steadfast love, O God! The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings.** 8 **They feast on the abundance of your house, and you give them drink from the river of your delights.** 9 **For with you is the fountain of life;** in your light do we see light.

i. The opportunity to drink from this river is extended to us because of God's steadfast, measureless love and faithfulness.

ii. Those who drink in God's steadfast love take refuge in him, feast on his abundance and see life in the light of God.

III. Those **who do not** drink exclusively from Jesus' fountain of living waters commit a double evil.

- (Jeremiah 2:12–13 ESV) **Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate,** declares the LORD, 13 **for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.**

A. This evil is so evil that we should be appalled, shocked and utterly desolate.

B. This evil is so evil because it is God's people doing it.

C. Those who profess to know God have always had the inclination to turn from God to self-made religion.

D. Any person or religion that collects religious truth—even biblical truth—but does not rely completely on the source of living waters is doubly evil.

E. Those who profess to know God have always had the propensity to collect truth from various sources, catalog the truth and then store the truth in their religious cistern for future use at their discretion.

F. This God-forsaking, religious person may even believe himself to be wise in combining the work of Christ and human effort—best of both worlds.

G. These man-made cisterns cannot hold living water—meaning they may hold to some semblance of biblical teaching but the power and reality of the word breaks free from and utterly destroys the human constraints.

H. The inherent human impurities of the cistern pollute everything that it stores.

Cistern ... a natural or artificial place where water is collected and stored for use, esp. water for supplying a community, irrigating land, furnishing power, etc.

2) OUR NECESSARY WORSHIP - TRUE WORSHIP

- (John 4:20–26 ESV) Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.” 21 Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. 22 **You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.** 23 **But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.** 24 **God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”** 25 The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things.” 26 Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am he.”

I. Christ pointed out very clearly that the Samaritans had worship wrong.

- A. The place of worship was no longer relevant but what was relevant was that the Samaritans had been worshiping in ignorance—meaning they had not been worshiping according to the Scriptures.
- B. As we shall see in the text, true worship is always dictated by the authoritative teaching of the word of God, never by human choice.

II. The Jews had worship right in regard to possessing the truth but wrong in practice.

- A. The Jews were blessed with the truth—the oracles of God—but drew near to God only in appearance.
- B. Salvation through Jesus Messiah was from the Jews.
- C. Jesus did not oppose Judaism as was demonstrated by the righteous life he lived in fulfillment of the law.

D. What he did oppose was the contamination brought about by the religious leaders in storing the truth of God’s holy word in their man-made religious cistern.

III. The time is now that true worshipers worship the Father in spirit and truth.

- A. True worshipers will worship the Father through the work of the Holy Spirit and truth—meaning our worship must reflect what is true about God and the worshiper as revealed in his holy word.
- B. Worshiping the Father in Spirit and truth is what true worshipers must do—it is not an option.
- C. The Father is seeking such people to worship him—that is, people who do what he created us to do.
- D. We were made to worship.
 - (Revelation 4:11 ESV) **Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.**
- E. We are to offer our bodies in worship.
 - (Romans 12:1 NIV) Therefore, **urge you**, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, **to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.**
- F. Everything that has breath is to worship the LORD.
 - (Psalm 150:6 ESV) **Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!**
- G. We are to worship continually.
 - (Hebrews 13:15 ESV) **Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God**, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.

IV. Some basics of true worship ...

- A. True worship is worshiping God as God declares he must be worshiped.
- B. God is the main point in our worship because God is the main point in everything.
- C. True worship is exclusive to those who know God.
- D. Practical relevance: So if a church plans its worship service for the unsaved, then this is not true worship.
- E. This practice indeed prevents true worship and dishonors God.

3) OUR NECESSARY FOOD - THE WILL OF GOD

- (John 4:27–38 ESV) Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you seek?” or, “Why are you talking with her?” 28 So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, 29 “Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?” 30 They went out of the town and were coming to him. 31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” 32 But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” 33 So the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought him something to eat?” 34 Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.” 35 Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, then comes the harvest’? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. 36 Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. 37 For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ 38 I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

I. The disciples returned and were somewhat oblivious to the revival that was taking place.

They were puzzled that Jesus was talking with a woman but were more concerned with urging Jesus to eat something. Jesus used the opportunity to teach a much more important truth regarding the priorities and purpose for our lives on this earth.

II. Jesus stated that his food was to do the the will of the one who sent him and to accomplish his work.

- A. This was his primary food source and was more important than his daily physical sustenance.
- B. When Jesus speaks of his food here, he is giving us extremely relevant and important information regarding what is necessary for us to remain faithful and strong in the Lord.

Maybe this would be a good opportunity to ask ourselves if that is **our vision of service in the Church—that the food that keeps us nourished and energized is doing the Father’s will and accomplishing his work.**

Maybe it is time that more of our church leaders realize that faithfulness to the will of God is what God calls us to.

And maybe we should realize how damaging it is to view the primary church leadership goals as keeping the church going and growing.

C. Jesus directs them to look up and see the harvest—most likely in respect to the townspeople coming out to see him.

D. Maybe Jesus—in pointing out that God is working in the harvest field now—is telling us that it is time for us to be about the Father’s business.

III. This priority structure—that Jesus’ food is doing the will of him who sent him—is seen throughout the Gospel of John.

A. He does not seek his own will.

- (John 5:30 ESV) I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because **I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.**

B. He does not do his own will.

- (John 6:38 ESV) For I have come down from heaven, **not to do my own will** but the will of him who sent me.

C. His teaching is not his teaching.

- (John 7:16 ESV) So Jesus answered them, “**My teaching is not mine**, but his who sent me.”

D. He does not speak on his own authority.

- (John 12:49 ESV) For I have **not spoken on my own authority**, but the Father who sent me has himself **given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak.**

Question: What might we learn from Jesus’ relationship with the Father about pushing our agenda, demanding our way and speaking from our own authority?

THE HONOR OF HONORING GOD



EATING WHAT JESUS ATE ...

EVERY DAY, ON EVERY PATH, IN EVERY SEASON ... NO MATTER WHAT ...

TO THE GLORY OF GOD!

1) THE HONOR OF TRUE HONOR

Powerful Principle #1: We are only able to follow and serve our God faithfully when we always seek his honor and never our own. Our food must be to do his will and to accomplish his work no matter what.

I. Jesus knew the honor of true honor, 4:43-45.

- (John 4:43–45 ESV) After the two days he departed for Galilee. 44 **(For Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own hometown.)** 45 So when he came to Galilee, **the Galileans welcomed him**, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast. For they too had gone to the feast.

II. He knew what was in the heart of those in Galilee.

- (John 2:24 ESV) But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people.

III. Jesus met the woman at the well fully aware of the tensions and rivalries between Samaritans and Jews and the opportunity to cause offense.

The account of Jesus and the people of Sychar provides us with a very powerful and relevant example of how we serve the Father with honor even though we may face personal dishonor in the process.

IV. The potential for dishonor in this situation was great but the end result in Sychar was that many people believed.

A. Review: Jesus' food was to do the Father's will so he left Sychar for Galilee because it was the Father's will to go there to accomplish the his work.

- (John 4:34 ESV) Jesus said to them, **"My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work."**

B. Jesus left for Galilee knowing that he would not be honored by most of the people there.

Honor ... τιμή [time / tee-may/] ... the state of being highly respected or revered; of the price itself; of the price paid or received for a person or thing bought or sold; honor which belongs or is shown to one; of the honor which one has by reason of rank and state of office which he holds; deference, reverence.

C. He did this to do the Father's will and to accomplish the Father's work in the lives of some.

Powerful Principle #2: Honoring the Father in our service to him even though it often means that we are personally dishonored is a blessed experience of pure joy and true love.

2) HONOR IS NOT A COMMODITY

A commodity is a substance or product that can be traded, bought, or sold.

Powerful Principle #3: Be wary of humans honoring humans who use the deception of flattery and superficial honor to buy and sell influence and authority in the church.

- (John 4:45 ESV) So when he came to Galilee, **the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast.** For they too had gone to the feast.

I. Their welcome was merely social bartering—We give you honor and you give us signs and miracles.

II. Same thing when people honor us only to gain our cooperation, friendship, support, etc.

You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours. You roll my log, I'll roll yours. You support my agenda at the next committee meeting, I will be your friend.

III. The person who believes that honor is a commodity is a deceiver and a manipulator who is seeking his or her own honor.

IV. The person who seeks honor by trading honor with other humans cannot believe God.

- (John 5:42–44 ESV) **But I know that you do not have the love of God within you.** 43 I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me. If another comes in his own name, you will receive him. 44 **How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?**

V. The person who seeks honor is not faithful to do God's will, does not recognize teaching from God and speaks on his own authority.

- (John 7:17–18 ESV) **If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God** or whether I am

speaking on my own authority. 18 The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood.

VI. The person who seeks his own honor has not tasted the goodness and righteousness of God by honoring God as God.

- (Isaiah 32:17 ESV) And the effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever.

- (Romans 1:21 ESV) For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

VII. Jesus stayed the course and even in the midst of great dishonor by those whose foolish hearts were darkened did not seek his own honor.

- (John 8:48–50 ESV) The Jews answered him, “Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?” 49 Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. 50 Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is One who seeks it, and he is the judge.

VIII. God will judge us as to whether we seek God and his glory and honor or are self-seeking.

- (Romans 2:6–8 ESV) He will render to each one according to his works: 7 to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; 8 but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.

3) THE DISTANCE FROM HONOR TO OFFENSE

Here are some accounts from the other gospels where Jesus did not receive honor in his home area.

- I. The distance between honor and offense can be measured in the time it takes for a person to realize that you are not going to profit them in the relationship.
- II. Jesus taught the people in the synagogue in his hometown and they were utterly amazed (astounded and astonished) until they realized that things were not working out as they intended.

- (Matthew 13:53–58 ESV) And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, 54 and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, “Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? 55 Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?” 57 And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household.” 58 And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

III. They were not just annoyed or peeved but scandalized.

Matthew 13:57 ... “they took offense at him” ... *σκανδαλίζω* [skandalidzo] ... to be appalled; to be or become filled with disgust or revulsion for someone (and therefore reject him); to be offended in one, i.e. to see in another what I disapprove of and what hinders me from acknowledging his authority.

IV. He taught in the synagogue in his hometown and astonished the people but they took offense at him to the extent that Jesus was filled with wonder and astonishment at their unbelief.

- (Mark 6:1–6 ESV) He went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. 2 And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying, “Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands? 3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. 4 And Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household.” 5 And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. 6 And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went about among the villages teaching.

V. An overview of the example in Luke.

A. He proclaimed himself as the Messiah of Scripture.

- Luke 4:16, 20–21 ESV) And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. ... And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. 21 And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

B. They were impressed with him and his words.

- (Luke 4:22, 24 ESV) And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, “Is not this Joseph’s son?” ... 24 And he said, “Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown.”

C. And then they actually heard what he was saying.

- (Luke 4:28–30 ESV) When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. 29 And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. 30 But passing through their midst, he went away.

4) So WHY FACE THE REJECTION

Because it is worth it ... What a blessed privilege we have in Christ to honor God and to minister to those to whom he sends us. What could compare to spending our lives honoring the One who most deserves our honor.

- (John 4:46–54 ESV) So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill. 47 When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. 48 So Jesus said to him, “Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.” 49 The official said to him, “Sir, come down before my child dies.” 50 Jesus said to him, “Go; your son will live.” **The**

man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way. 51 **As he was going down**, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering. 52 **So he asked them the hour** when he began to get better, and they said to him, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.” 53 The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live.” **And he himself believed, and all his household**. 54 This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.

- I. Jesus came again to Cana in Galilee because that was the Father’s will.
- II. Jesus was approached by a man who wanted something from him.
- III. It seems we could accurately deduce that the main work that the Father sent Jesus to Galilee to accomplish was to heal this man’s son and to bring salvation to the man and his entire family.
- IV. But first Jesus used this as an opportunity to address the reluctance of people in general to believe the words of truth.
- V. The Samaritans at Sychar never asked for a sign or a wonder because they believed the words and wanted to hear more of the words.

- (John 4:40–41 ESV) So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. 41 **And many more believed because of his word**.

VI. Philip knew and believed the words.

- (John 1:45 ESV) Philip found Nathanael and said to him, **“We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote,** Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

VII. Jesus used Scripture to open the eyes of the men on the road to Emmaus.

- (Luke 24:27 ESV) **And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.**

THE SABBATH CONTENTIONS

Jesus Draws a Line in the Sand

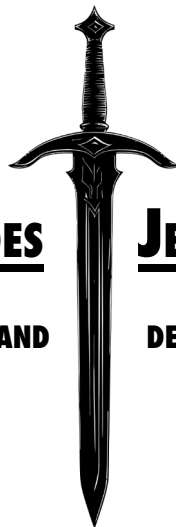


DOCTRINE DIVIDES

IT'S THE DIVIDING LINE BETWEEN LIFE AND

JESUS AGREES

DEATH ... HEAVEN AND HELL ...



I — JESUS DRAWS A LINE IN THE SAND ...

1. Jesus provokes the Jews by choosing to heal this man on the Sabbath, 5:1-9.

- (John 5:1–9 ESV) After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades. 3 In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. 5 One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be healed?” 7 The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me.” 8 Jesus said to him, “Get up, take up your bed, and walk.” 9 And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked. Now that day was the Sabbath.

2. Jesus knew the Jews would intensify their persecutions because he healed the man on the Sabbath, 5:10-16.

- (John 5:10–16 ESV) So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, “It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed.” 11 But he answered them, “The man who healed me, that man said to me, ‘Take up your bed, and walk.’” 12 They asked him, “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Take up your bed and walk?’” 13 Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. 14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, “See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you.” 15 The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him. 16 And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath.

A. Jesus had drawn a line in the sand by healing on the Sabbath.

B. The Jews responded as Jesus knew they would and challenged his faithfulness to the law.

C. Jesus found the man in the temple knowing that the man would report him to the Jews.

3. Jesus further provokes the Jews by making himself equal with God, 5:17-18.

- (John 5:17–18 ESV) But Jesus answered them, “My Father is working until now, and I am working.” 18 This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

A. In choosing to heal the man on the Sabbath Jesus picked a fight to provoke the Jews to reveal their murderous intentions.

B. Healing on the Sabbath escalated the tension per the Lord's plan in moving toward his death on the cross.

C. His plan worked as the Jews now desire more than ever to find a way to kill him.

II — JESUS STATES HIS PURPOSE IS TO DIVIDE ...

1. Jesus states his purpose in coming was to divide—exposing the difference between truth and lies, finding life and losing life, Matthew 10:34-39, Luke 12:51–53.

- (Matthew 10:34–39 ESV) Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. 36 And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. 37 Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

To set against ... to divide; to cut into two parts, cleave asunder, sever; to make a division or separation, whether physically or abstractly.

A. The person you love more will have your allegiance.

B. The person you love the most will determine where you will spend eternity.

C. Jesus knows that it is necessary to break any bond—family or otherwise—that would keep the person from following him.

- (Luke 12:51–53 ESV) **Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division.** 52 For from now on in one house there will be five **divided**, three against two and two against three. 53 They will be **divided**, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

D. We must learn from our Lord and Master that it is necessary to divide so that people can discern truth from the lie.

- (John 9:16 ESV) Some of the Pharisees said, **“This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.”** But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” And there was a division among them.
- (John 10:18–21 ESV) No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.” 19 **There was again a division among the Jews because of these words.** 20 Many of them said, “He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?” 21 Others said, “These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

E. Truth separates us from what is false and dedicates us to what is true.

- (John 17:17 ESV) **Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.**
- (John 8:31–32 ESV) So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you **abide in my word**, you are truly my disciples, 32 **and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.**”

F. The truth is what sets of free from the lies we believe.

G. So, yes, Jesus would wholeheartedly agree—doctrine divides — the truth from the lie.

2. A review of the stated purpose of the Gospel of John in view of Jesus’ stated purpose helps us interpret and understand Jesus’ actions.

A. It is important that we make the connection between the stated purpose of the Gospel of John and Jesus’ stated purpose of coming to divide.

B. It is important to follow Jesus’ example if we truly believe God and are concerned about the eternal wellbeing of the people with whom we are trying to reach with the truth of God’s word.

3. The tone of the Gospel of John is necessarily becoming more combative as Jesus begins to aggressively challenge the Jews and reveal his identity as the Son of God.

- (John 20:30–31 ESV) Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 **but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.**

III — JESUS UNSHEATHES HIS SWORD TO DIVIDE AND TO CLARIFY ...

1. Jesus unsheathes his sword of division to reveal very specific truth regarding his identity so that people may believe that he is the Christ, the Son of God, and have life in his name, 5:19-29.

- (John 5:19–29 ESV) So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. 20 For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. 21 For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. 22 For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, 23 that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. 24 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. 25 “Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. 26 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has

granted the Son also to have life in himself. 27 And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. 28 Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice 29 and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

2. Jesus gives a very clear and detailed list affirming that he is indeed the Son of God.

- A. He affirms that he has such unity with the Father that he does nothing on his own, 5:19.
- B. He affirms that he does whatever the Father does, 5:19.
- C. He affirms that the Father shows him all that he is doing, 5:20.
- D. He affirms that the Son gives life just like the Father does, 5:21.
- E. He affirms that the Father gives judgment to the Son so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father, 5:22-23.
- F. He asserts that whoever hears his word and believes the one who sent him has eternal life, 5:24.
- G. He asserts that a time is coming when the Son speaks and those who hear will live, 5:25.
- H. He asserts that he has life in himself as the Father has life in himself, 5:26.
- I. He affirms that the Father has given him authority to execute judgment, 5:27.

3. He finishes his statements by telling them to not marvel (be amazed) at this because a time is coming when all the dead will hear his voice and rise to judgment, 5:28-29.

CONCLUSION: JUDGMENT IS COMING ...

People need to be separated from any and every family, social, religious and personal connection that would keep them from the truth of salvation and a life lived to the glory of God.

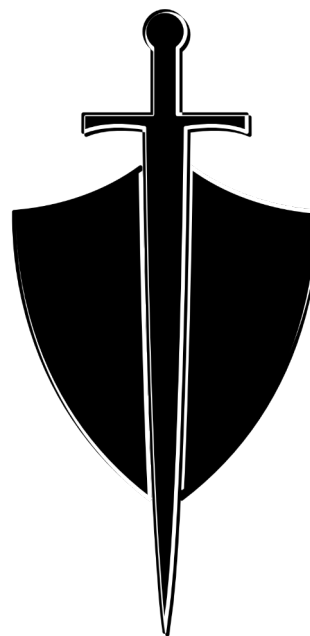
We love these people by holding fast to the word of God and being unyielding in the truth of the gospel.

True love communicates truth no matter the personal loss to ourselves.

Truth will be corrupted every time by the people who receive and/or seek glory from one another.

- (John 5:44 ESV) **How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another** and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?
- (1 Thessalonians 2:3-6a ESV) For our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive, 4 **but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts.** 5 For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness. 6 **Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others.**

The arrogant and the cowardly do not share the saving truth of God's word because receiving glory and love from the people around them is more important to them than loving Christ and bringing glory to God.



BELIEVING GOD FOR LIFE



BELIEVING HIS WITNESSES

"The Jews" are referred to 63 times in 60 verses in the ESV in the Gospel of John, usually in a contentious, adversarial role opposed to Jesus.

I - THE JEWS DID NOT BELIEVE JESUS

1. The Jews did not believe the witness of Jesus about himself, 5:19-29.

Review: Jesus gives his testimony that he is indeed the Son of God; that he has such unity with the Father thathe does nothing on his own; thathe does whatever the Father does and thatthe Father shows him all that he is doing; thatthe Son gives life just like the Father does; thatthe Father gives judgment to the Son so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father; thathe has life in himself as the Father has life in himself; thatthe Father has given him authority to execute judgment; and thatone day all will hear his voice and be resurrected to life or judgment.

II - THE JEWS DID NOT BELIEVE THE FATHER

1. The Jews did not believe the greater witness of the Father about Jesus, 5:30-38.

- (John 5:30-38 ESV) I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me. 31 If I alone bear witness about myself, my testimony is not true. 32 There is another who bears witness about me, and I know that the testimony that he bears about me is true. 33 You sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. 34 Not that the testimony that I receive is from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. 35 He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. 36 But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me. 37 And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen, 38 and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent.

2. Jesus prepares the basis for his presentation of the next witness — the witness of the Father.

- A. Jesus does nothing apart from the Father.
- B. His decisions (judgments) are just because he is doing the will of the one who sent him.

3. Jesus presents his testimony under the law.

- (Deuteronomy 19:15 ESV) A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established.
- (1 Timothy 5:19 ESV) Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.

- A. Under the Law Jesus' witness about himself is not legally binding.
- B. Jesus submits to the requirements of the law as a gesture of his love to help them overcome the matter of their conscience—so that they may be saved.
- C. The reality is that Jesus' testimony stands true on its own as he is the Messiah, the Son of God.
 - (John 8:13-14 ESV) So the Pharisees said to him, "You are bearing witness about yourself; your testimony is not true." 14 Jesus answered, "Even if I do bear witness about myself, my testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I am going.
- D. Jesus speaks of the witness of John the Baptist which for a time was a shining lamp.

4. Jesus now presents the superior testimony of the Father.

- A. The works that Jesus accomplished gave witness that the Father had sent him.
- B. The Father gave witness to the identity of Jesus by his words.
- C. The Jews he was speaking to had never heard the Father nor did they have his word living in them.

The reason he gave for this statement is that they did not believe him whom the Father had sent.

5. God the Father endorses the witness of his Son as the preeminent voice in our times, Hebrews 1:1-2.

- (Hebrews 1:1–2 ESV) Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 **but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son**, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.
- (Ephesians 1:8–9 ESV) *[Grace ...]* which he lavished upon us, **in all wisdom and insight** 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, **which he set forth in Christ**.
- (Colossians 2:2–3 ESV) That their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, **to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ**, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
- (John 1:14 ESV) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, **and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth**.
- (John 1:17 ESV) For the law was given through Moses; **grace and truth came through Jesus Christ**.

III - THE JEWS DID NOT BELIEVE THE SCRIPTURES

1. The Jews did not believe the witness of the Scriptures about Jesus, 5:39-43.

- (John 5:39–43 ESV) **You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me**, 40 **yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life**. 41 **I do not** receive glory from people. 42 **But I know** that you do not have the love of God within you. 43 I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me. **If another comes in his own name, you will receive him**.

2. They searched the Scriptures thinking that in the Scriptures they might have life.

- A. The Scriptures witness to Jesus and they refuse to come to Jesus.
- B. They missed the main point of the Scriptures.

3. **Christ does not receive** glory from people.

4. **They do receive** glory from people because they do not have the love of God within them.

5. If a person has the love of God within him, then receiving glory from other humans will repulse him as it is a contradiction to his "all his heart, all his soul, all his mind and all his strength" love for God.
6. Those who do not love God do not receive the Messiah who represents the essence and righteousness of the Father.
7. But they will receive a messiah who represents the essence and righteousness of humans.

IV - THE JEWS WERE INCAPABLE OF BELIEVING

1. The Jews could not believe these powerful witnesses because they honored each other more than they honored God, 5:44-47.

- (John 5:44–47 ESV) **How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?** 45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. **There is one who accuses you: Moses**, on whom you have set your hope. 46 **For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me**. 47 **But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?**"

- A. The Jews' rejection of the testimony of God's witnesses was more than merely a refusal to believe—they were unable, utterly incapable, of believing because they had placed honor for humans above honor for God.
- B. They could not believe because they received glory (doxa, high honor) from each other and did not seek the high honor that comes from the only God.
- C. Because of their misplaced honor they were utterly incapable of believing the witness from God.

2. The witness they claimed to believe—Moses—will be the one who accuses them in judgment because they did not believe him either.

3. They did not believe Moses' writings and so they could not believe Jesus' words.

V - WE MUST UNDERSTAND THE VITAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HONORING GOD AND BELIEVING GOD

1. To believe the witnesses of God a person must honor God as God—the Jews did not.

- (Romans 1:20b–23 ESV) So they are without excuse. 21 For although they

knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.
 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools,
 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.



We must be able to understand and hold firmly to the distinction the Bible sets forth between honoring and pleasing God and honoring and pleasing humans—a distinction which reaches its stark and stunning climax in the final resurrection where some are raised to life with God and some are raised to judgment.

2. The person who honors God as God will seek to honor him in the works he does to the glory of God.

- (Romans 2:6–8 ESV) He will render to each one according to his works: 7 to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; 8 but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.
- (1 Corinthians 10:31 ESV) So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.
- A. We are able to live to the glory of God when we live in view of the glory of God in everything we do.
- B. Those who love God and seek his glory through patient endurance in doing good demonstrate the attitude of a person who pursues glory, honor and immortality and will be rewarded with eternal life.
- C. Those who are self-seeking do not obey truth but obey unrighteousness and will face the wrath and fury of God.

3. The person who commends or honors himself is not the one the Lord commends.

- (2 Corinthians 10:18 ESV) For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

4. The person who honors God and can be entrusted with the gospel is the one who speaks to please God and not humans.

- (1 Thessalonians 2:3–6a ESV) For our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive, 4 but

just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts. 5 For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness. 6 Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others.

5. The person who seeks the approval of humans is not a servant of Christ.

- (Galatians 1:10 ESV) For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.

6. The person who proclaims (promotes) himself will not proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord as a servant for Jesus' sake.

- (2 Corinthians 4:5 ESV) For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

CONCLUSION - THOSE WHO TRULY BELIEVE WHAT THE WITNESSES SAY ABOUT JESUS FOLLOW HIM

1. True witnesses believe all that the witnesses say about Jesus and stand firm in the truth that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing have life in his name.

2. The great cloud of witnesses believed the witnesses, Hebrews 12:1-2.

- (Hebrews 12:1–2 ESV) Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

3. True witnesses endure because like the great cloud of witnesses they run the race in the context of eternity and see Jesus as Lord and King seated at the right hand of God.

THE BELIEF TEST



BELIEVING JESUS IS FOLLOWING JESUS

• *ALWAYS ...* • *TOTALLY ...* • *FOREVER ...*

1) THE PURPOSE OF THE MIRACLES — BELIEF ...

1. Miracle #1 — Jesus feeds the large crowd.

- (John 6:1–15 ESV) **After this** Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. 2 **And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick.** 3 Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. 4 Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. 5 Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that **a large crowd was coming toward him,** Jesus said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?” 6 He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. 7 Philip answered him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little.” 8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him, 9 “There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?” 10 Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, **about five thousand in number.** 11 Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. 12 And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, “Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost.” 13 So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten. 14 **When the people saw the sign that he had done,** they said, “**This is indeed the Prophet** who is to come into the world!” 15 **Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king,** Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

- A. The purpose of this miracle was to reveal Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, so that they might believe and have life in his name (see John 20:30-31).
- B. Most of those present missed the purpose—they saw a prophet and potentially an earthly king, but they did not see their Messiah.
- C. Oblivious to their greatest need they failed to grasp his eternal purpose but instead imagined Jesus using his miracle power to satisfy their felt need for a king.

A felt need is a perceived need or desire that is based on an individual's subjective experience and limited by their knowledge and perceptions. Felt needs are influenced by a person's emotions, culture, social norms, life experiences and personal beliefs.

- D. The desire to fulfill felt needs often leads to a misperception of life that is rooted in the here and now and blinds a person to his true need for the forgiveness of sins and peace with God.

2. Miracle #2 — Jesus walks on the sea, gets into the boat and they immediately arrive on the shore.

- (John 6:16–21 ESV) When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, 17 got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. 18 **The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing.** 19 When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, **and they were frightened.** 20 But he said to them, “It is I; do not be afraid.” 21 Then **they were glad** to take him into the boat, and **immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.**
- A. God did that — “The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing.”
- B. This fearful scene of Jesus walking on the rough sea was a sovereignly planned event to grow their faith in Jesus as God no matter the circumstances.
- C. This miracle is in keeping with John’s stated purpose.
- D. This needed lesson would serve them well for what lie ahead of them in fulfilling the spread of the gospel.
- E. God did that — the boat was immediately on shore.

2) A COMMON, TRAGIC MISTAKE FOR SEEKERS ...

1. The fascination of the crowd is sometimes the main motivation for a person seeking Jesus.

- (John 6:22–24 ESV) On the next day **the crowd** that remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. 23 Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. 24 So when **the**

crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum, **seeking Jesus**.

2. The crowd finds “a Jesus” but not “Jesus” Jesus because their focus was on the here and now.

- (John 6:25–34 ESV) **When they found him** on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?” 26 Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, **you are seeking me**, not because you saw signs, but **because you ate your fill of the loaves**. 27 **Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life**, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.” 28 Then they said to him, “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?” 29 Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.” 30 So they said to him, “**Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you?** What work do you perform?” 31 Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” 32 Jesus then said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you **the true bread from heaven**. 33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” 34 They said to him, “Sir, **give us this bread always**.”

- A. They were seeking Jesus because he had fed them.
- B. Their energy was directed by and devoted to food that perishes and not food that endures to eternal life.
- C. Their problem was not a lack of signs but unbelief.

3) WHO EATS THE BREAD OF LIFE ...

1. Only those whom the Father gives to Christ come to Christ and eat.

- (John 6:35–40 ESV) **Jesus said to them**, “**I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger**, and **whoever believes in me shall never thirst**. 36 But I said to you that you have seen me and yet **do not believe**. 37 **All that the Father gives me will come to me**, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. 38 **For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will**

but the will of him who sent me. 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but **raise it up on the last day**. 40 **For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life**, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

A. Jesus is the bread of life that satisfies a person’s hunger and thirst for eternal life.

B. Those who eat the bread of life—believe in Jesus—satisfy their hunger and thirst.

2. Grumblers do not feed on the bread of life.

- (John 6:41–51 ESV) **So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said**, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” 42 They said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven?’” 43 Jesus answered them, “**Do not grumble among yourselves**. 44 **No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him**. And I will raise him up on the last day. 45 **It is written in the Prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me**— 46 not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father. 47 **Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life**. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 **This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die**. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. **If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever**. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

A. The Jews grumbled and contended with Jesus over his claim to be the bread of life.

6:41 grumbled ... γογγύζω [gogguzo] ... to murmur, mutter, grumble, say anything against in a low tone; of the cooing of doves; of those who confer secretly together; of those who discontentedly complain; to make complaining remarks or noises under one’s breath.

B. Here we find several characteristics of grumblers.

- i. They value their thoughts more than they value the words of Jesus.
- ii. They honor themselves over the Lord Jesus by preferring their opinions over Jesus’ words.

- iii. They are not drawn by the Father .
- iv. They have not heard and learned from the Father.
- v. They do not believe, will not eat the bread of life, will die ... and will **not** live forever.

3. The Jews fell into the quicksand of disputing about **how** Jesus might do this.

- (John 6:52–59 ESV) The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “**How can this man give us his flesh to eat?**” 53 So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.** 54 **Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life,** and **I will raise him up on the last day.** 55 For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. 56 Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, **so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me.** 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. **Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.**” 59 Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum.

A. The arrogance of “the Jews” reached deadly levels as they challenged **how** the Son of God might accomplish his works as opposed to receiving and obeying his words.

B. The Jews argued among themselves distorting Jesus’ words regarding eating his flesh to have life.

C. Jesus did not explain himself but pushed them even further away with more hard words.

4. The fatal flaw of pretend disciples is that they only give the appearance of believing and loving Jesus.

- (John 6:60–65 ESV) When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “**This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?**” 61 **But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this,** said to them, “**Do you take offense at this?**” 62 Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? 63 **It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.** 64 **But there are some of you who do not**

believe.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) 65 And he said, “**This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.**”

A. His disciples grumbled, took offense and refused to believe or accept what he was saying.

B. They rationalized their unbelief by arguing that no one could listen to something this difficult.

4) SEPARATING FROM “THE CROWD” ...

1. True believers know Jesus, believe everything he says and follow him.

- (John 6:66–71 ESV) **After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him.** 67 So Jesus said to the twelve, “**Do you want to go away as well?**” 68 Simon Peter answered him, “**Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life,** 69 **and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.**” 70 Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the twelve? And yet one of you is a devil.” 71 He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray him.

2. Believing and following Jesus will separate us from the crowd because false believers will turn back and go away from Jesus and from us.

- (1 John 2:19 ESV) **They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.** But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

A. Many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with Jesus because his words were too hard.

B. Not turning back but continuing to follow Jesus means being separated from those who do not fully believe Jesus.

3. Those who believe Jesus and follow him come to know and are filled with a wonderful revelation regarding his identity — He is the Holy One of God.

THE HARD SAYINGS OF IMMANUEL



... **what** was the nature of these sayings ... and **why** did so many of his followers take offense and turn away from him ...

1) THE HARD SAYINGS OF JESUS ARE GRACE AND TRUTH.

A. Jesus is Immanuel — God with us.

- (Isaiah 7:14 ESV) Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, **and shall call his name Immanuel.**
- (Matthew 1:22–23 ESV) All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 23 “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, **and they shall call his name Immanuel**” (which means, **God with us**).

B. Jesus is the Word, is with God and is God.

- (John 1:1–5 ESV) In the beginning **was the Word**, and the Word **was with God**, and the Word **was God**. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 **In him was life, and the life was the light of men.** 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Jesus is the Word and speaks the word. In him was life and his life was the light of humans. Jesus is the light that shines in the darkness and the darkness is neither able to comprehend nor overcome the light.

C. The things that he said are the things that God would say to us in person.

If God were to literally come to earth and speak to us directly this is exactly what he would say. (Oh wait ... that's exactly what he did.)

D. His hard sayings are grace and truth.

- (John 1:14 ESV) **And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us**, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, **full of grace and truth.**
- (John 1:16–17 ESV) **For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.** 17 For the law was given through Moses; **grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.**

2) MANY OF HIS DISCIPLES TOOK OFFENSE AT HIS WORDS OF GRACE AND TRUTH AND TURNED AWAY FROM HIM.

- A. We must hold firmly in faith that his words are grace and truth as we examine and analyze reaction to his words.
- B. Many of those following in the large crowd contended with what Jesus was saying by their grumbling.

Grumbling is an attempt to undermine the person with whom you are grumbling against.

- (John 6:60–61 ESV) When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “**This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?**” 61 But Jesus, **knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling** about this, said to them, “**Do you take offense at this?**”

Heard ... ἀκουστός, ἀκούω [akouostos] ... literally to be endowed with the faculty of hearing, not deaf; to give ear to a teaching or a teacher.

Hard ... σκληρός [sklay-ros/] ... metaphorically (of humans) – harsh, stern, hard; offensive, intolerable; difficult; requiring great physical or mental effort to accomplish or comprehend or endure.

Saying ... λόγος [logos] ... of speech; a word, a conception or idea; what someone has said; a message; the contents of a communication.

Listen ... same word as **heard** above.

Acoustics ... the qualities or characteristics of a room (or figuratively of a person) that have to do with how clearly sounds can be heard or transmitted.

C. Spiritually speaking they had bad acoustics.

D. Their grumbling was a result of not seeking Jesus in a way which would have enabled them to find him.

- (Deuteronomy 4:29 ESV) But from there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, **if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul.**
- (Psalm 105:3–4 ESV) Glory in his holy name; **let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!** 4 Seek the LORD and his strength; **seek his presence continually!**

Note the relationship the psalmist has with God and his word in these next two Psalm 119 texts.

- (Psalm 119:1–3 ESV) Blessed are those whose **way is blameless**, who **walk in the law of the LORD!** 2 Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, **who seek him with their whole heart**, 3 who also do no wrong, but **walk in his ways!**
- (Psalm 119:10–12 ESV) **With my whole heart I seek you**; let me **not wander from your commandments!** 11 I have **stored up your word in my heart**, that I might not sin against you. 12 Blessed are you, O LORD; **teach me your statutes!**
- (Jeremiah 29:13 ESV) **You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.**

3) WE MUST BE ABLE TO LISTEN TO THE SAYINGS OF JESUS SO THAT WE DO NOT TURN AWAY BUT MAY COME TO HIM AND COME TO KNOW HIM.

- A. Many who had been following Jesus had reached their limit and could no longer endure his teaching and so turned back.
- (John 6:66–69 ESV) After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. 67 So Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?” 68 Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, 69 and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”
- B. To endure in listening to Jesus’ sound doctrine we must realize he is our only option.
- (2 Timothy 4:2–4 ESV) Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. 3 For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

4) THE ABILITY TO LISTEN TO JESUS AND COME TO HIM MUST BE GRANTED TO US BY THE FATHER – GRACE, GRACE, GRACE.

- A. THIS IS GRACE ... It is the Spirit who gives life with no help from the individual.
- (John 6:63–65 ESV) It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. 64 But there are some of you who do not believe.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) 65 And he said, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.”
- B. This is grace ... Being able to hear these words of spirit and life and to come to Jesus is granted to a person from the Father.
- C. This is grace ... All to whom the Father grants this ability will come to Christ.
- (John 6:37 ESV) All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.

- D. This is grace ... This is the Father’s will that Christ will lose nothing of what the Father has given.
- (John 6:39 ESV) And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.
- E. This is grace ... No one comes to Jesus unless the Father draws him.
- (John 6:44 ESV) No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.
- F. This is grace ... The prophets have written that all whom the Father draws will be taught by him—they will have heard and learned from the Father.
- (John 6:45 ESV) It is written in the Prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me.

5) THE FATHER ACCOMPLISHES THIS BY CHANGING HEARTS AND MINDS FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT.

- A. Our default mode from birth is loving the darkness and hating the light.
- (John 3:19–20 ESV) And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. 20 For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.
 - (Isaiah 9:2 ESV) The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.
 - (Matthew 4:16 ESV) The people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.
- B. Those who love darkness cannot receive Jesus’ words of grace and truth.
- Grace is the unmerited, immeasurable, unlimited, favorable action of God whereby he exerts his holy influence on our behalf.
- Grace is based on God’s Person, power, authority and his riches in glory and is always in accord with the character and attributes of God and in accord with the outworking of his good eternal purpose.

i. The biblical doctrine of the grace of God is an offense to the natural, unsaved person who believes that he or she has some inherent goodness that God will recognize.

ii. The biblical doctrine of grace reveals the total inability of the fallen human to believe or to do anything toward his or her salvation.

- (Ephesians 2:4–5 ESV) But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 **even when we were dead in our trespasses**, made us alive together with Christ—**by grace you have been saved**.
- (Ephesians 2:8–9 ESV) **For by grace you have been saved through faith**. And this is **not your own doing**; it is the gift of God, 9 **not a result of works**, so that no one may boast.

C. Those who love the darkness are only delivered from the darkness by the grace of God.

- (Colossians 1:12–14 ESV) Giving thanks to **the Father**, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. 13 **He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son**, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
- (1 Peter 2:9 ESV) But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may **proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light**.

D. Those who love darkness must be delivered from the bonds of darkness that blind their unhealthy eyes and make them unable to see the grace and truth of God.

- (Matthew 6:22–23 ESV) The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, 23 **but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness**. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

Those who love darkness have bad eyes that cannot see light but only darkness. Even when they read and study the Bible they only seek the darkness which they love. A lens of darkness covers their unhealthy eyes and filters the light from God's holy word.

Christ's words of grace and truth are intolerable to them and the devastating result is that the light in them is great darkness.

CONCLUSION: We need light ...

Those who have been delivered from the darkness should know that we cannot find our way in life without total dependence on God and the light of his word ... and that we must not walk by our own light.

- (Isaiah 50:10–11 ESV) Who among you fears the LORD and obeys the voice of his servant? **Let him who walks in darkness and has no light trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God.** 11 Behold, all you who kindle a fire, who equip yourselves with burning torches! **Walk by the light of your fire, and by the torches that you have kindled!** This you have from my hand: **you shall lie down in torment.**

Those who have been delivered from the darkness should be passionate in their perspective of the word of God as a lamp shining in a dark place.

- (2 Peter 1:19 ESV) And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, **to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place**, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.
- (Psalm 119:105 ESV) **Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.**
- (Proverbs 6:23 ESV) **For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light**, and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life.

THE BREAD OF GOD

AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO — "BELIEVE, AND YOU HAVE EATEN."



JESUS ...

- I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE.
- I AM THE LIVING BREAD THAT CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN.
- THE BREAD THAT I WILL GIVE FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD IS MY FLESH.
- IF ANYONE EATS OF THIS BREAD, HE WILL LIVE FOREVER.

1) JESUS IS THE BREAD OF LIFE.

A. The Son of Man gives us this bread and states that this bread is the only food that should have our attention and that endures to eternal life.

- (John 6:26, 27a, c ESV) Jesus answered them, "...you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. 27 Do not work for the food that perishes, **but for the food that endures to eternal life.**

B. In contrast to manna that gave temporal sustenance, Jesus is the true bread from heaven that gives eternal sustenance.

- (John 6:32–33 ESV) Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, **but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.**"

C. Jesus is the only bread approved by the Father.

i. Jesus is the only Son of the Father.

- (John 3:16 ESV) For God so loved the world, **that he gave his only Son**, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

ii. Jesus is the only one with whom the Father is well pleased and upon whom the Father has set his seal of approval.

- (2 Peter 1:17 LSB) For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, **such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased."**
- (John 6:27b ESV) **For on him God the Father has set his seal.**

D. Jesus is the bread from heaven of which a person eats and does not die but lives forever.

- (John 6:48–51 ESV) I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread that comes down from heaven, **so that one may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever.** And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.
- (John 6:58 ESV) This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the

bread the fathers ate, and died. **Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.**

E. This is the bread of which a person must live by—consume and have total dependence upon for life.

- (Deuteronomy 8:3 LSB) And He humbled you and let you be hungry and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know **that man does not live by bread alone, but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of Yahweh.**
- i. We are to consume (eat) everything—find our nourishment from all of his words and all of the sovereign decrees that proceed out of the mouth of Yahweh by which he rules the events and circumstances of our lives.
- ii. Example: The devil tempted Jesus to circumvent the sovereign will of God by removing his hunger.
- iii. Jesus pointed out from Scripture that the will of God had priority over his hunger.
 - (Matthew 4:3–4 LSB) And the tempter came and said to Him, **"If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."** 4 But He answered and said, "It is written, **'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'**"

2) TWO GROUPS: BREAD EATERS AND BREAD NON-EATERS.

- (John 6:41–45 ESV) **So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said**, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." 42 They said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven?'" 43 Jesus answered them, **"Do not grumble among yourselves. 44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him.** And I will raise him up on the last day. 45 It is written in the Prophets, 'And **they will all be taught by God.**' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me.
- (John 6:65 ESV) And he said, **"This is why I told you** that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."

A. There are those who eat the bread and live and those who grumble and die.

B. Jesus is the bread that can only be eaten by those whom the Father draws to him.

C. The supernatural and exclusive nature of this truth is a source of complaining for those who have not been taught by the Father.

- i. These Jews are unable to eat the bread of life and will not be raised up on the last day.
- ii. They instead reveal hearts of unbelief as they challenge and grumble against Jesus

D. They believe this teaching is unfair (unjust).

- (Romans 9:14–18 ESV) **What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means!** 15 For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." 16 **So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.** 17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." 18 **So then he has mercy on whomever he wills**, and he hardens whomever he wills.
- i. God is who he says he is in the Bible ... not who humans make him out to be.
- ii. God is not constrained in his actions by the rules of human reasoning and logic but acts according to his infinite, eternal wisdom and knowledge.
 - (Isaiah 55:8–9 ESV) For **my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways**, declares the Lord. 9 For **as the heavens are higher than the earth**, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.
- iii. Humans choose to believe what fits their categories of fair and right—what fits their concept of God.
- iv. Human reasoning is finite and fallible and is captive to the lower ways and thinking of earth.
- v. The unbelieving, unsaved natural person does not accept the depths of the thoughts of God.
- vi. To him God's ways are foolishness and he is unable to understand them.
- vii. He is even incapable of examining them in a way that would yield the mind of God.
 - (1 Corinthians 2:14–15 LSB) But **a natural man does not accept the depths of the Spirit of God**, for they are **foolishness to him**, and he **cannot understand them**, because they are spiritually examined. 15 **But he who is spiritual examines all things**, yet he himself is

examined by no one.

viii. The spiritual (saved) person by the Holy Spirit of God examines all things – human and divine.

E. Murmurers do not believe God and so they reject the sovereignty of God over his creation.

- (Romans 9:19–21 ESV) You will say to me then, "Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?" 20 **But who are you, O man, to answer back to God?** Will what is molded say to its molder, "Why have you made me like this?" 21 **Has the potter no right over the clay**, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use?
- i. Here is the real problem for the person who believes he (or she) can talk back to God.
- ii. In finding fault and rebelling against God's sovereign rule **over** him, he completely undermines any assurance of God's sovereign care **for** him.
- iii. This is why so many who profess to know and walk with Jesus are so spiritually unhealthy.

F. Those who grumble have absolutely no concept of the Sovereign love and care of the Father.

- (Ephesians 1:3–8 ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed us in Christ** with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 **even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, **according to the purpose of his will**, 6 **to the praise of his glorious grace**, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, **according to the riches of his grace**, 8 which he lavished upon us, **in all wisdom and insight**.

Let's look at the comprehensive and deliberate plan of the Father in drawing us to come to Jesus the Son.

- i. The Father began his plan to bless us in Christ before he created our world.
- ii. So of course he would carry out the plan he began in eternity past to draw us to Jesus.
 - (John 6:37 ESV) **All that the Father gives me will come to me**, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.

We need to note the specific language of God's breathed out words as he lays out his plan.

- iii. He **blessed us in Christ** even as he **chose us in Christ** before the foundation of the world.
- iv. The teaching of the Father in drawing us to Christ is the outworking of his eternal plan.
- v. The Father drawing us to Christ is according to the purpose of his will which is to the praise of and according to the riches of his grace.
- vi. We have redemption through his *[Christ's]* blood because he lavished his grace upon us in all wisdom and insight.

3) EATERS OF THE BREAD LIVE FOREVER.

- (John 6:51–54, 58 ESV) **I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever.** And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.” 52 The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” 53 So Jesus said to them, “**Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.** ... 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. **Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.**”
 - (John 6:63 ESV) It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. **The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.**
- A. Eating the bread—eating his flesh, drinking his blood—is total belief in Jesus and turning away from everything else.
- (Matthew 10:37–39 ESV) **Whoever loves father or mother more than me** is not worthy of me, and **whoever loves son or daughter more than me** is not worthy of me. 38 **And whoever does not take his cross and follow me** is not worthy of me. 39 **Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.**
- B. Consuming the truth about Jesus is how we live.
- C. We live by feeding on every word about Jesus—believing and obeying with our whole heart.

D. This speaks of a continual diet of getting our spiritual nourishment from the truth of Jesus.

- (John 8:31 ESV) So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “**If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples.**”

E. We must consume the truth and be consumed by the truth of Jesus.

CONCLUSION: THE NECESSARY, SCARY WARNING ... ONE OF YOU IS A DEVIL.

A. Intimate in fellowship and active in church does not mean you are saved.

- (John 6:70–71 ESV) Jesus answered them, “**Did I not choose you, the twelve? And yet one of you is a devil.**” 71 He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, **for he, one of the twelve,** was going to betray him.
- See also John 13:16-19, Matthew 26:20-22.

B. Jesus knew in eternity past that Judas would betray him according to the plan of God.

- (Acts 2:23 ESV) This Jesus, **delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God,** you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

C. Jesus was teaching them that a person could outwardly be in the inner circle and yet be far from God.

D. This should prompt us to self-examination.

- (2 Corinthians 13:5 ESV) **Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.** Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—**unless indeed you fail to meet the test!**

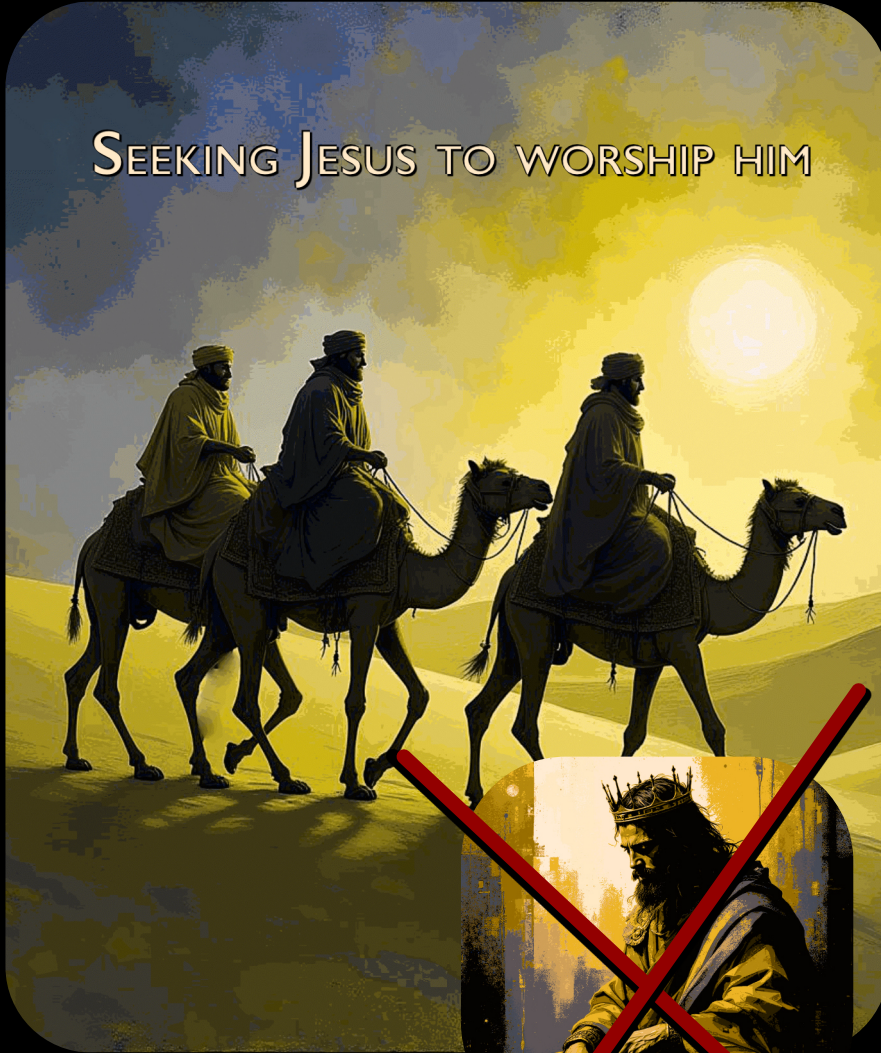
E. The blessing of authentic self-examination for the believer is the wonderful affirmation by God himself of our standing in grace before him.

- (Romans 5:1–2 ESV) 1 Therefore, **since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.** 2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into **this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.**

THE CHRISTMAS DILEMMA

TELLING OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS ...

SEEKING JESUS TO WORSHIP HIM



NOT SEEKING JESUS TO MURDER HIM

The Stated Purpose of the Gospel of John

That people would believe that Jesus is who he is and that believing they might have life in his name.

- (John 20:31 ESV) ... that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

The Problem of Christmas

People who have no clue as to the true identity of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, are under the illusion of a relationship with him by being swept away by the spirit of Christmas (*whatever they understand that to be*).

The Big Problem in General

People then and people now do not know who he is but they cling to who they want him to be.

Sweet Little Jesus Boy by Robert MacGimsey

Verse 1: Sweet little Jesus Boy, They made you be born in a manger, Sweet little Holy Child, Didn't know who you was, Didn't know you'd come to save us, Lord, To take our sins away, Our eyes was blind we couldn't see, We didn't know who you was.

Verse 2: Long time ago you was born, Born in a manger low. Sweet little Jesus Boy, The world treat you mean, Lord, Treat me mean too, But that's how things is down here, We don't know who you is.

Verse 3: You done told us how we is a tryin', Master you done show'd us how, Even when you was dyin', Just seem like we can't do right, Look how we treated you, But please sir forgive us, Lord, We didn't know 'twas you.

Chorus: Sweet little Jesus Boy, born long time ago, Sweet little Holy Child, **And we didn't know who you was.**

[Written in 1934 by white American composer Robert MacGimsey (1898-1979). CCLI Song #7161301 - CCLI License #3210183]

PART ONE

THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHO HE WAS WHEN HE WAS BORN.

—MATTHEW 2:1-21—

The disruption that the birth of Jesus caused in Jerusalem and the surrounding area revealed the great divide between those who were seeking to worship Jesus and those who were seeking to murder Jesus ...

The wise men from the east were moved to find Jesus so that they could worship him.

1. **HEROD ANGUISHED:** Herod the king and all Jerusalem were troubled with the news of the birth of the king of the Jews, 2:1-6.

- (Matthew 2:1-6 ESV) Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, 2 saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose **and have come to worship him.**" 3 When **Herod** the king heard this, **he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him;** 4 and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 5 They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: 6 " 'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.' "

2. **HEROD SCHEMED:** Herod was moved to find Jesus and murder him, 2:7-13.

- (Matthew 2:7-13 ESV) Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, **that I too may come and worship him.**" 9 After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them **until it came to rest over the place where the child was.** 10 **When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.** 11 **And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him.** Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. 12 And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way. 13 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, **for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.**"

3. HEROD RAGED: God thwarted Herod's plan and he lashed out in a murderous rage, 2:14-18.

- (Matthew 2:14–18 ESV) And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt 15 and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son." 16 Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: 18 "A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more."

4. HEROD DIED: Those who oppose God's plan lose everything, 2:19-21.

- (Matthew 2:19–21 ESV) But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, 20 saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." 21 And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel.

PART TWO

THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHO HE WAS THIRTY YEARS LATER.

—JOHN 7:1-13—

1. Jesus had been avoiding "the big stage" because it was not yet time to reveal his identity to the world at large, 7:1-2.

- (John 7:1–2 ESV) After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him. 2 Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand.

2. Jesus intentionally kept "who he was" from some people.

- (John 14:22 NLT) Judas (not Judas Iscariot, but the other disciple with that

name) said to him, "Lord, why are you going to reveal yourself only to us and not to the world at large?"

The scene set before us: Jesus had been going about in Galilee and avoiding Judea.

3. Jesus was intentionally staying away from Judea (and thus Jerusalem) because the Jews were seeking to kill him.

One of the most popular of the Jewish feasts was about to begin in Jerusalem – the Feast of Booths (or Tabernacles).

4. Jesus' brothers pushed him toward "the big stage," 7:3-5.

- (John 7:3–5 ESV) So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. 4 For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world." 5 For not even his brothers believed in him."

Jesus' brothers didn't know who he was.

In view of what they perceived to be his potential opportunity Jesus' brothers urged Jesus to go to the festival and make himself known.

The brothers reveal their unbelief as they urge Jesus toward a plan which is based on the principles of this world which are guided by unbelief.

5. The perspective of "the big stage" was hatred toward Jesus and no sense of God's timing, 7:6-9.

- (John 7:6–9 ESV) Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. 7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil." 8 You go up to the feast. I am not going up to this feast, for my time has not yet fully come." 9 After saying this, he remained in Galilee.
- (John 15:18–19 ESV) If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.
- (John 15:24 ESV) If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father.

- (1 John 3:13 ESV) Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.
- (John 17:14 ESV) I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

The world didn't know who he was.

- A. Jesus addressed the problem of timing between him and the world.
- B. Jesus connects the timing of the events of his life and the hatred the world has for him.
- C. The contrasts and contradictions of the world are to be expected from those with faithless, unbelieving hearts.
- D. The world didn't know who he was and they judged him because he testified of its evil works.
 - (John 3:20 ESV) For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.
- E. Jesus speaks to the timing of his plan (which is ultimately the Father's will) in view of the hate the world has for him.
- F. Jesus turns the table on his brothers and urges them to go up to the feast where they belonged.
- G. He refuses to succumb to their ways to go up to the feast at this time and stays in Galilee where he belongs.

6. Jesus went up to the feast but at first avoided "the big stage", 7:10-13.

- (John 7:10-13 ESV) But after his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up, not publicly but in private. 11 The Jews were looking for him at the feast, and saying, "Where is he?" 12 And there was much muttering about him among the people. While some said, "He is a good man," others said, "No, he is leading the people astray." 13 Yet for fear of the Jews no one spoke openly of him.

The Jews and the people didn't know who he was.

- A. The high priest clearly did not know who he was.
 - (John 18:19-23 NLT) Inside, the high priest

began asking Jesus about his followers and what he had been teaching them. 20 Jesus replied, "Everyone knows what I teach. I have preached regularly in the synagogues and the Temple, where the people gather. I have not spoken in secret. 21 Why are you asking me this question? Ask those who heard me. They know what I said." 22 Then one of the Temple guards standing nearby slapped Jesus across the face. "Is that the way to answer the high priest?" he demanded. 23 Jesus replied, "If I said anything wrong, you must prove it. But if I'm speaking the truth, why are you beating me?"

- B. Jesus went up according to his timing and in private.
- C. The Jews were looking for him and inquiring as to his whereabouts.
- D. There was much muttering and controversy about Jesus among the people.
- E. But even those who thought positively toward him did not know who he was.
- F. Everyone was afraid of the Jews and fear of the Jews suppressed open discussion about Jesus.
 - (Romans 1:18 ESV) For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

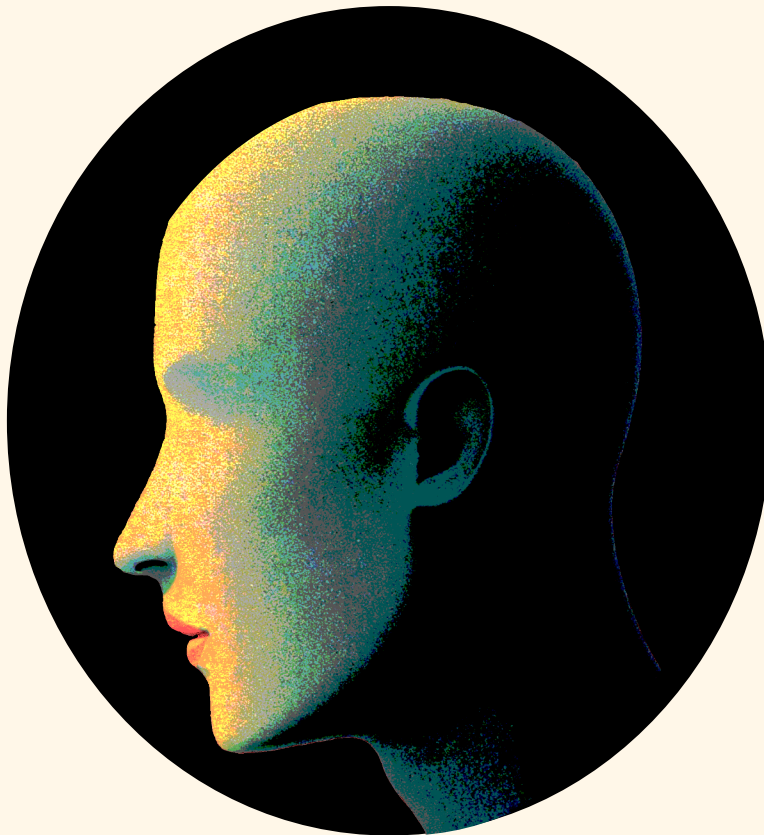
The interesting thing is that Jesus and the Jews both worked toward not revealing his identity but of course with very different motives.

CONCLUSION: Is it possible that we might do that ...

Is it possible that one of us would unwittingly suppress the reality of who Jesus is and thus not tell the people we love most the truth about Jesus and the gospel?

- (James 4:17 ESV) So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

WHEN MY WILL IS TO DO GOD'S WILL ...



... I KNOW HIS TEACHING

- The person whose will is to do the will of God has entered into a submissive relationship with God by which he is transformed and cleansed in heart, mind, soul and spirit and is able to know and receive the truth of God free from the contamination of self-will and self-determination.

I. When my will is to do God's will, I will know whether the teaching is from God, 7:14-18.

- (John 7:14–18 ESV) About the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and began teaching. 15 The Jews therefore marveled, saying, “How is it that this man has learning, when he has never studied?” 16 So Jesus answered them, “My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. 17 If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority. 18 The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood.

A. The person whose will is to do God's will knows teaching that is from God.

- i. He knows the teaching is from God.
- ii. He knows this because he has fully surrendered his will to the authority of God and his word with the intent to receive and obey the teaching by which he can do the will of God.
- iii. He knows the teaching is from God because he is no longer impaired by his sinful, self-seeking, glory-seeking nature.
- iv. This allows him to receive truth from God and removes the confusion and contention that corrupts the ability of the rebel to know and receive truth.
- v. From his position of full surrender the Holy Spirit develops his discernment in identifying those who speak from their own authority (opinion) and who seek their own glory.
- vi. He also learns to recognize the dysfunction, confusion and deceit of those who halfheartedly pursue God's will for their lives.

B. The person whose will is to do God's will is able to evaluate spiritual reality because he has the mind of Christ and is no longer restrained by or conformed to the judgments and conclusions of this world regarding the reality of life.

- (1 Corinthians 2:15–16 NLT) Those who are spiritual can evaluate all things, but they themselves cannot be evaluated by others. 16 For, “Who can know the LORD's thoughts? Who knows enough to teach him?” But we understand these things, for we have the mind of Christ.
- (Philippians 2:3–5 ESV) Do nothing from

selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus.

C. In this transforming process of possession (having the mind of Christ) and renewal this person is able to discern the actual will of God.

- (Romans 12:2 ESV) Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

D. This person reaches the status of friend of God and Christ makes the Father's will known to him.

- (John 15:15 ESV) No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.

E. This person submits every anxiety and issue in life to God because he trusts that God is working his sovereign will in his life.

- (Philippians 4:6 ESV) Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.
- (Romans 8:27–28 ESV) And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. 28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.
- (Philippians 2:13 ESV) For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

II. When my will is to do God's will, I do not judge by appearances, 7:19-24.

- (John 7:19–24 ESV) Has not Moses given you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why do you seek to kill me?” 20 The crowd answered, “You have a demon! Who is seeking to kill you?” 21 Jesus answered them, “I did one work, and you all marvel at it. 22 Moses gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the

fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. 23 If on the Sabbath a man receives circumcision, so that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because on the Sabbath I made a man's whole body well? 24 Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment."

- A. Every form of legalism attempts to justify the self-effort of the rule keeper.
- B. The person whose will is to do God's will will not fall into the self-justifying trap of legalism.
- C. Legalism is a system of spirituality or morality in any form that is determined and measured by outward appearances and results in confusion and hypocrisy.
 - i. For instance they were given the law by Moses but they did not keep the law.
 - ii. Legalists adapt God's teaching of the law to human rules and traditions to justify themselves.
 - (Romans 3:20 ESV) For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.
 - (Mark 7:8-9 ESV) You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men." 9 And he said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition!
 - iii. The deadly flaw of legalists is self-righteousness.
 - (Romans 10:3 ESV) For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.
 - iv. Legalists have their own righteousness. added later
 - (Philippians 3:9 ESV) and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.
 - v. Legalists attempt to demonstrate righteousness by the law which runs contrary to the law's actual purpose which is to reveal their sinfulness.
- D. The example of hypocrisy: These people had determined that it was okay to circumcise an eight day old boy on the Sabbath but not okay to restore the health of a man who had suffered for 38 years.
 - (John 5:9-10 ESV) And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked. Now that day was the Sabbath. 10 So

the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed."

- E. The person whose will is not to do God's will depends on and is deceived by outward appearances.
- F. He is blind to the reality of and incapable of the ability to make right judgments about his life and the world in which he lives.

- (John 7:24 ESV) Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.

- G. The person whose will is to do God's will does not judge by appearances but judges with right judgment.

III. When my will is to do God's will, I understand the difference between marveling at the words of Jesus and doing the will of God.

- A. The many instances recorded in Scripture of people marveling and being astonished at the words of Jesus are often misunderstood and misinterpreted.
 - (John 7:15 ESV) The Jews therefore marveled, saying, "How is it that this man has learning, when he has never studied?"
 - (John 7:46 ESV) The officers answered, "No one ever spoke like this man!"
 - (Matthew 7:28-29 ESV) And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, 29 for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.
 - (Luke 4:22 ESV) And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?"
 - (Acts 4:13 ESV) Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.
- B. To only marvel at the words of God is inadequate and deceitful as there is an infinite gap between marveling at the words and doing the will of God.
 - (Matthew 12:50 ESV) For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother. (Cf. Mark 3:32-35)
 - (Matthew 7:21 ESV) Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the

will of my Father who is in heaven.

- (1 John 2:17 ESV) And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

C. God gives the person whose will is to do God's will a pure heart—a clean heart—free of the contaminants of self-will and self-determination.

- (Matthew 5:8 ESV) Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
- (Psalm 51:10 ESV) Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
- (Jeremiah 24:7a ESV) I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people and I will be their God.
- (Ezekiel 36:26 ESV) And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

i. This person lives with a heightened awareness of what is unseen and eternal.

- (2 Corinthians 4:18 ESV) As we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

ii. The aim of the pure in heart is to please God in everything he or she does.

- (2 Corinthians 5:7–9 ESV) For we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9 So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.

iii. The aim of the pure in heart is to live in a manner worthy of the Lord and fully pleasing to him.

- (Colossians 1:9–10 ESV) And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10 so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

D. To do the will of God is the spiritual food by which the person whose will is to do God's will thrives.

- (John 4:34 ESV) Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.”

E. Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness—doing the will of God—shall be satisfied.

- (Matthew 5:6 ESV) Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

IV. The half-hearted, insincere curiosity seekers continue in their confusion, 7:25-31.

- (John 7:25–31 ESV) Some of the people of Jerusalem therefore said, “Is not this the man whom they seek to kill? 26 And here he is, speaking openly, and they say nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Christ? 27 But we know where this man comes from, and when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from.” 28 So Jesus proclaimed, as he taught in the temple, “You know me, and you know where I come from. But I have not come of my own accord. He who sent me is true, and him you do not know. 29 I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me.” 30 So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come. 31 Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, “When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?”

A. They thought they had the facts about Jesus but they certainly did not.

B. They were probably not true believers but only those who marveled at the words and works of Jesus.

- (John 2:23–25 ESV) 23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing. 24 But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people 25 and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.

CONCLUSION: Do you know what you know? Do you have confidence in your standing before the Lord God Almighty?

COME TO JESUS AND DRINK ...



IF ANYONE THIRSTS, LET HIM COME TO ME AND DRINK. WHOEVER BELIEVES IN ME ...
OUT OF HIS HEART WILL FLOW RIVERS OF LIVING WATER.

(John 7:37–38 ESV)

■ EVERYONE THIRSTS FOR SOMETHING MORE.

1. The longing for more than the temporary things of earth is in the heart of every human on earth.

- (Ecclesiastes 3:11 ESV) He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

■ MOST PEOPLE DO NOT THIRST FOR JESUS.

2. When people seek to know Jesus by the exchange of opinions about Jesus, they reveal a thirst for something other than Jesus.

- (John 7:25–31 ESV) Some of the people of Jerusalem therefore said, “Is not this the man whom they seek to kill? 26 And here he is, speaking openly, and they say nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Christ? 27 But we know where this man comes from, and when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from.” 28 So Jesus proclaimed, as he taught in the temple, “You know me, and you know where I come from. But I have not come of my own accord. He who sent me is true, and him you do not know. 29 I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me.” 30 So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come. 31 Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, “When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?”

A. This method of inquiry does not lead to salvation.

B. They were studying the Scriptures looking for eternal life but not seeking to come to Jesus.

- (John 5:39–40 ESV) You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.

C. Their seeking was insincere, irreverent and revealed their false intent in studying the Bible.

D. Scripture reveals the condition of people who freely voice their opinions about Jesus with no regard to righteousness.

- (Romans 6:20 ESV) For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

WARNING: Maybe food for thought the next time we are tempted to freely voice our opinion.

E. In spite of what they “knew” they were blind as to his true identity.

F. Jesus identified the root cause of their blindness—they did not know God.

3. Seeking God and his truth via public discussion and opinion leads to murmuring, increased confusion, frustration ... and always fails.

- (John 7:32–36 ESV) The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him. 33 Jesus then said, “I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to him who sent me. 34 You will seek me and you will not find me. Where I am you cannot come.” 35 The Jews said to one another, “Where does this man intend to go that we will not find him? Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? 36 What does he mean by saying, ‘You will seek me and you will not find me,’ and, ‘Where I am you cannot come?’”

A. Exchanging opinions continues to be a very common way for people to reach wrong conclusions about God and Jesus and salvation.

- We come to saving truth about God and Jesus only when we are fully submitted to God's word.
- Exchanging human thoughts and opinions undermines the attempt to know God's word.
- Exchanging human thoughts and opinions yields information that is incomplete and untrue.
- Exchanging human thoughts and opinions cultivates and instigates confusion in everyone involved.

B. This confusion leads to anger which leads to the desire to suppress the truth.

- Things have escalated from public speculation to public muttering to the attempt to arrest Jesus.
- Jesus' words did not quench their thirst but instead left them confused and frustrated so they muttered.

C. Jesus makes no attempt to relieve the tension of false

seekers but instead makes statements that further demonstrate the gap between belief and unbelief.

In the midst of the confusion surrounding Jesus some came to a belief in him but the question is – did they come to Jesus and drink (truly believe).

■ **THE TRULY THIRSTY COME TO JESUS AND DRINK.**

- (John 7:37 ESV) On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.”

4. **Context:** It is important to know the circumstances surrounding Jesus’ invitation to the thirsty.

- A. Jesus waited until the last day of the Feast of Booths to call out to the thirsty.
- B. It seems reasonable to believe that most of those attending the feast had some religious interest.
- C. The religious leaders who were overseeing the feast were the caretakers of the one true religion.
- D. **Astonishing:** These overseers of the one true religion were so far from a right relationship with the one true God that they openly opposed the Son of God in their midst and wanted to arrest him and quiet his voice.
- E. **Not astonishing:** Whatever these unfaithful overseers offered as worship would not have quenched the thirst of the true seekers of God.
- F. **Thrilling:** So how thrilled would the true seekers of God be when they heard Jesus call out for them to come to him and drink.

5. **Always:** The truly thirsty will come to Jesus.

- (John 6:37 ESV) All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.
- (John 6:44a ESV) No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him.
- (John 6:65 ESV) And he said, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.”

6. **The truly thirsty come to Jesus and drink.**

- A. To thirst is to feel the need to drink something; to eagerly long or, have a strong desire, for something.
- B. To drink means to take a liquid into the mouth and swallow.

C. Jesus called the thirsty to come to him and drink living water.

- (John 4:10 ESV) Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.”

D. Jesus invites those who had been at the religious celebration all week but who had not had their thirst quenched to come to him and drink.

E. Coming to Jesus and drinking was the only way out of their confusion.

■ **WHEN A PERSON COMES TO JESUS AND DRINKS, GOD ENTERS HIS OR HER LIFE.**

7. **Coming to Jesus and drinking is believing.**

- (John 7:37–39 ESV) On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.” 38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’ 39 Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.
- (John 4:13–14 ESV) Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

A. The thirsty person drinks everything the Scriptures reveal about Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God and swallows it all completely and without reservation.

B. As the Scripture says shows that this teaching is grounded in the Old Testament.

- (Psalm 1:3 ESV) He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.
- (Isaiah 12:3 ESV) With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.
- (Isaiah 49:10 ESV) They shall not hunger or thirst, neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them, for he who has pity on them will lead them, and by springs of water will guide them.

- (Jeremiah 2:12–13 ESV) Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the LORD, 13 for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.
- (Jeremiah 17:7–8 ESV) Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. 8 He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.

8. When we believe in Jesus, God enters our lives in a very definitive, extreme way.

Definitive ... authoritative, conclusive, final; of a conclusion or agreement done or reached decisively and with authority.

- This is a prophecy regarding the Spirit that was fulfilled after Jesus was glorified on the cross and through the resurrection.
- The one who believes goes from thirsting to rivers of living water flowing from his heart.
- This spiritual event happens without exception.
- It is not a second blessing or a unique charismatic experience of the Spirit.
- Those who drink begin a relationship with the Spirit of God that is pictured as rivers of water flowing from your heart.

■ CONCLUSION: THIS IS WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE WHEN A PERSON COMES TO JESUS AND DRINKS ...

You have believed in Jesus and have experienced a dramatic, supernatural change in your life. You have gone from being apart from God to having the Spirit of God overflowing in and through your life.

So what now? What should we expect to happen in our new, different lives? For the sake of accuracy we need to discover and observe the expected changes to our lives through the lens of Scripture.

■ Here is a partial list of sound, basic conclusions and expectations drawn from Scripture regarding our new life in Christ ...

01. You have been transformed by a very powerful and dramatic work of the Spirit of God.
02. You are a new and very different person—different in a way that is neither humanly achievable nor conceivable.
03. You will learn who you are through reading, studying and living by the words of God.
04. Walking by the Spirit is your new way of life.
05. You will need to walk by the Spirit to live your new life and to turn away from your old life.
 - (Galatians 5:16 ESV) But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.
06. The Spirit will produce his fruit in your life.
 - (Galatians 5:22–23a ESV) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control.
07. You will submit to the word of God to complete and equip you in the ways and thoughts of your new life.
 - (2 Timothy 3:16–17 ESV) All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
08. You will come to delight in, love and be blessed by the counsel you receive in God's word as you progress through your training.
 - (Psalm 119:47–48 ESV) For I find my delight in your commandments, which I love. 48 I will lift up my hands toward your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes.
 - (Psalm 1:1–2 ESV) Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.

THE DIVIDING WORDS OF JESUS

WHOEVER IS NOT WITH ME IS AGAINST ME,
AND WHOEVER DOES NOT GATHER WITH ME SCATTERS.

(MATTHEW 12:30 ESV)



RIDING THE FENCE PROHIBITED

Jesus' words emphasize the great divide between light and darkness, heaven and hell, life and death ... and with his words he calls people to himself and away from their confusion and indifference ...

1. Review: Jesus spoke to the spiritually thirsty inviting them to believe in him, 7:37-39.

- (John 7:37–38 ESV) On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’ ”

In review ... Jesus stood up and called out to those who were thirsty to come to him and drink. Coming to him and drinking was the equivalent of believing in him.

2. After Jesus spoke “these words” there was a division among the people over him, 7:40-44.

- (John 7:40–44 ESV) When they heard these words, some of the people said, “This really is the Prophet.” 41 Others said, “This is the Christ.” But some said, “Is the Christ to come from Galilee? 42 Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the offspring of David, and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David was?” 43 So there was a division among the people over him. 44 Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

A. Jesus spoke with the intent of creating tension (mental and emotional strain) to help the thirsty to strive to enter God’s rest through the narrow door.

- (Luke 13:24 ESV) Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.
- (Hebrews 4:11 ESV) Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

B. Jesus’ dividing words give clarity as to why his words draw some to life in him but seal the fate of others.

EXCURSUS: THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING THE PURPOSE AND PERIL OF DIVISIONS IN SCRIPTURE ...

I. Jesus intentionally caused the division over him among the people in 7:43.

- A. People need to see the difference between darkness and light ... between true belief and mere profession.**
- B. The response of people to the dividing words of Jesus reveals their heart condition before God.**

II. We need to have a proper understanding of divisions in Scripture.

A. The division in our text is called a schism.

- (John 7:43 ESV) So there was a division among the people over him.

σχίσμα [schisma] ... schism; division of a group into opposing factions.

Understanding the nature of a schism helps us to distinguish the difference of beliefs and actions of the opposing factions. To distinguish means to perceive a difference in - mentally separate; to separate or mark off by differences.

III. Here are examples of the potential of a positive effect of the schism Jesus created by his words.

A better understanding of the difference between ... belief in versus mere interest in Jesus ... hearing God with faith versus only hearing words ... sincere seeking versus lukewarm interest of the things of God ... Scripture leading us in our pursuit of truth versus using the Bible to give merit to our argument.

IV. Negatively ... schisms on the human level are usually the result of sinful behaviors that serve the devil’s purposes.

- (Romans 16:17 ESV) I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them.
- (1 Corinthians 1:10 ESV) I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.

A. Here is an excellent example of a division that is sinful but God uses to serve his purpose.

- (1 Corinthians 11:18–19 ESV) For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, 19 for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized.

B. Causing divisions is a work of the flesh that marks a person who will not inherit the kingdom of God.

- (Galatians 5:19–21 ESV) Now the works of the flesh are evident ... dissensions, divisions ... I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

C. The person who stirs up divisions should be warned and then disassociated.

- (Titus 3:10–11 ESV) As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and

then twice, have nothing more to do with him, 11 knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.

To disassociate means to distance ourselves from individuals or groups because we do not desire to be associated or involved in their behaviors and beliefs.

V. Various accounts in Scripture reveal where Jesus caused division by his actions and his words.

A. Jesus caused division among the Pharisees.

- (John 9:16 ESV) Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?” And there was a division among them.

B. Jesus caused division among the Jews.

- (John 10:19 ESV) There was again a division among the Jews because of these words.

VI. A stated purpose of Jesus in coming to earth was to cause division within families.

- (Luke 12:51–53 ESV) Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. 52 For from now on in one house there will be five divided, three against two and two against three. 53 They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

—END EXCURSUS—

3. The words of God (whether spoken or written) are always given with God’s purpose in mind.

- A. God from his infinite wisdom and for his glorious purpose chose the words.
- B. The Protestant Bible has around 750,000–800,000 words, depending on the version. The King James Authorized Bible, for example, has 783,137 words.
- C. The necessary conclusion is that all the words in the Bible will serve to accomplish God’s purpose.
- (Isaiah 55:10–11 ESV) For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, 11 so shall my word be that goes out

from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

D. The purpose of Jesus’ words was to prompt decisions regarding him and his gospel.

E. This division Jesus caused was intentional.

- (John 7:43 ESV) So there was a division among the people over him.

F. The response of the people to “these words” revealed their heart condition.

Some heard his words and said he was the Prophet. Some heard his words and said he was the Christ. Some heard his words and rejected that he was the Christ based on Scripture.

4. The response of the Pharisees to these words was bewilderment, disrespect, opposition and ridicule, 7:45-52.

- (John 7:45–52 ESV) The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, “Why did you not bring him?” 46 The officers answered, “No one ever spoke like this man!” 47 The Pharisees answered them, “Have you also been deceived? 48 Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him? 49 But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed.” 50 Nicodemus, who had gone to him before, and who was one of them, said to them, 51 “Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?” 52 They replied, “Are you from Galilee too? Search and see that no prophet arises from Galilee.”

A. These men were very contentious toward Jesus even after hearing his amazing offer of rivers of living water flowing from their hearts.

B. So first we observe that they do not have the Spirit flowing out of their lives.

C. Next we need to remember that in general people love darkness and hate the light.

- (John 3:19–20 ESV) And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. 20 For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.

D. As a group these Pharisees proved their love for the darkness by their hatred of the one who is the light of the world.

- (John 1:4 ESV) In him was life, and the life was the light of men.
- (John 8:12 ESV) Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

E. They didn't hate the light because it was not true but because it was true and revealed their sinful works.

F. They were inconsistent and deceived in their understanding of the law (God's word).

G. Their words of opposition, ridicule, accusation, pride and self-deceit exposed the condition of their hearts.

Richard Caldwell ... If you want to understand what is going on inside a person, then listen to what they say. You will hear what is in their heart.

- (Matthew 15:18–20 ESV) But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. 19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. 20 These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone.

H. The officers (Levite temple guards) had been sent to arrest Jesus (v. 44) but could not do it.

I. The officers were awed and stunned when they heard the Son of God speaking the words of God.

J. Jesus spoke what God the Father told him to speak and in the authority the Father had given.

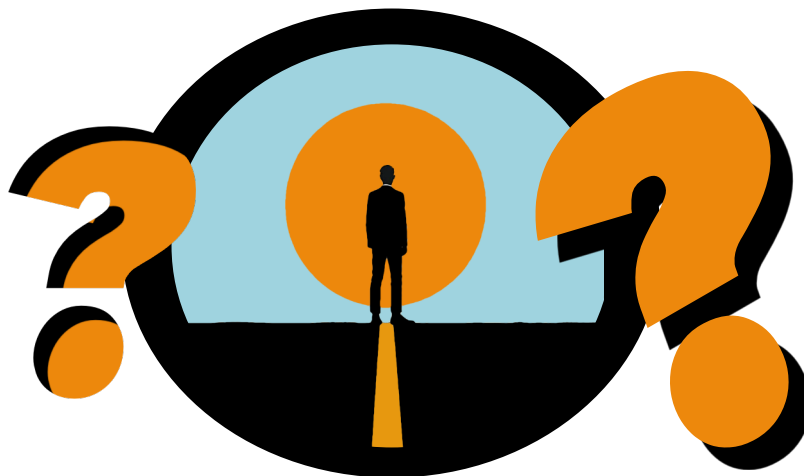
- (John 7:16 ESV) So Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me."
- (John 3:34 ESV) For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure.
- (John 14:10b ESV) The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.
- (John 14:24b ESV) And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.
- (John 8:28b ESV) ... I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.

CONCLUSION: WHERE DO I FIND MYSELF?

GROUP ONE: I love Jesus with all my heart, all my soul, all my mind and all my strength. I am willing to totally give up my old life and embrace the new life Jesus offers. My heart's desire is to always be led by the Spirit so that I please him in everything I do and bear much fruit to his glory. I delight in his word and in bowing low before him in worship.

GROUP TWO: I like Jesus a lot and kind of love him even. I like spending time with Jesus and worship him as my schedule allows. I am willing to meet Jesus in the middle so that he can be an important part of my life.

GROUP THREE: I oppose Jesus and think it is ridiculous that he expects me to live by his words without even respecting my opinion.



THE NEW WORLD OF TRUE DISCIPLES

THE TRANSFORMATIVE REALITY OF LIVING IN THE WORDS OF GOD ...



- **TRANSFORMATIVE:** CAUSING A MARKED CHANGE IN SOMEONE OR SOMETHING; CAUSING OR ABLE TO CAUSE AN IMPORTANT AND LASTING CHANGE IN SOMEONE; CAUSING A RADICAL AND TYPICALLY POSITIVE CHANGE IN OUTLOOK, CHARACTER, FORM, OR CONDITION.

JESUS SPOKE AND THE PHARISEES REPLIED ...

1. A true disciple follows Jesus and does not walk in darkness but has the light of life, 8:12-20.

- (John 8:12–20 ESV) Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” 13 So the Pharisees said to him, “You are bearing witness about yourself; your testimony is not true.” 14 Jesus answered, “Even if I do bear witness about myself, my testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. 15 You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. 16 Yet even if I do judge, my judgment is true, for it is not I alone who judge, but I and the Father who sent me. 17 In your Law it is written that the testimony of two people is true. 18 I am the one who bears witness about myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness about me.” 19 They said to him therefore, “Where is your Father?” Jesus answered, “You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also.” 20 These words he spoke in the treasury, as he taught in the temple; but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.

A. Previously Jesus had said the one who comes to him and drinks (who believes in him) would have rivers of living water flowing from his heart.

B. Now Jesus says that he is the light of the world and whoever follows him will not walk in darkness.

C. The one who follows Jesus and comes into the light encounters a seismic shift in perspective beyond human calculation.

- (John 3:21a ESV) But whoever does what is true comes to the light.

D. He now has the light of life in contrast to the darkness of death.

E. He has come to live in a supernatural environment in which the eternal light of God transforms his life and yields the fruit of eternal life.

J.C. Ryle ... The spiritual light that Christ gives is independent of time or place,—is not affected by sickness or death,—burns on forever, and cannot be quenched. He that has it shall feel light within his mind, heart, and conscience,—shall see light before him on the grave, death, and the world to come,—

shall have light shining round him, guiding him in his journey through life, and shall reflect light by his conduct, ways and conversation. [Ryle, J. C. (1878). *Expository Thoughts on John* (Vol. 2, pp. 79–80). Robert Carter & Brothers.]

F. Walking in the darkness of death results in fruit that ends in death and damnation.

- (Romans 6:20–21 ESV) For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

G. The person who has been set free from sin and is a slave of God is set apart (sanctified) from the way of death resulting in the fruit of eternal life.

- (Romans 6:22 ESV) But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.

H. Jesus and the Father who sent him bear witness that his testimony is true.

I. A true disciple believes Jesus' testimony and knows him and his Father.

JESUS SPOKE AGAIN AND THE JEWS REPLIED ...

2. Those who are not following Jesus will not be able to come to where he is when he goes away, 8:21-30.

- (John 8:21–29 ESV) So he said to them again, “I am going away, and you will seek me, and you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come.” 22 So the Jews said, “Will he kill himself, since he says, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come?’” 23 He said to them, “You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins.” 25 So they said to him, “Who are you?” Jesus said to them, “Just what I have been telling you from the beginning. 26 I have much to say about you and much to judge, but he who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him.” 27 They did not understand that he had been speaking to them about the Father. 28 So Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me. 29 And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me

alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him.”

- A. Jesus told the Pharisees and the Jews that he was going away to a place to which they cannot come.
- B. They would seek him but would die in their sins and be unable to come to where he was going.
- C. Jesus was going back to where he was from—above—and they could not come to where he was—above—because they were from below.
- D. Note the difference in Jesus’ relationship with those who truly believe that Jesus is “I Am”.

We will not die in our sins. We are not of this world. Our home is heaven above with Jesus. We not only will be able to go to where Jesus is but he is going to come get us and take us there.

- (John 14:2–4 ESV) In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

- E. The Jews would die in their sins and remain as those “below” unless they believed that Jesus is the eternally self-existent God - “I am he.”
- F. Sadly the Jews would not know that Jesus is — “I am he” — until they crucified him.

3. Many people believed in him during his dialogue with the Pharisees and the Jews, 8:30.

- (John 8:30 ESV) As he was saying these things, many believed in him.
- A. Jesus was speaking to the Jews, the Pharisees and anyone else in attendance at the feast.
- B. Some were moved in such a way that as he was saying these things they professed belief in him.

JESUS DIRECTED HIS WORDS TO THE JEWS WHO HAD IN SOME WAY ACKNOWLEDGED BELIEF IN HIM ...

4. Jesus stated his standard by which a person may know if he or she is truly his disciple—that person abides in his word, 8:31–32.

- (John 8:31–32 ESV) So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”
- A. To understand the standard that Jesus set forth we have to know what it means to abide in his word.
- B. So first we need to know what it means to abide.

Abide ... μένω (menō) ... to hold, abide, stay, endure in, remain; wait for, remain in a place or state expectantly and hopefully; continue to exist, remain in existence; keep on, continue in an activity or state, as an aspect of an action.

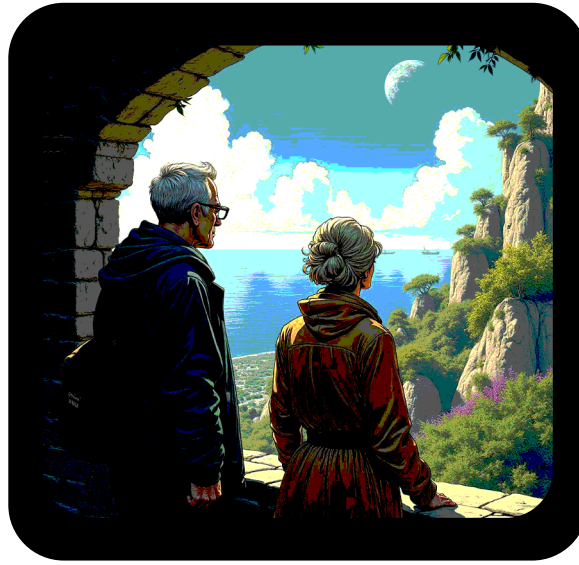
- C. To abide in his word means we live in his word and never leave his word—we bow in obedience to him in every area and circumstance of our lives.
- D. His word defines who we are and the realm of God and his kingdom in which we are to live.
- E. Abiding in his word is living in the light—the reality of God and his kingdom—and not walking in darkness.

It is **essential** that we understand the timing in what happens next and how very relevant that is to each of us. Jesus had just said – *“If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples”* ...

Here is what followed ...

5. The Jews at once opposed Jesus’ words, 8:33–34.

- (John 8:33–34 ESV) They answered him, “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free’?” 34 Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.”
- A. Jesus had just told them ... If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.
- B. The Jews immediately rejected the idea that they needed to be freed from anyone and asserted that he was wrong about them.
- C. Their rebellion clearly demonstrated that they were not true disciples who abide in Jesus’ word.
- D. They exposed themselves when they spoke from their unbelieving hearts as slaves of sin who would die in their sins.
- (Matthew 12:34, 36–37 ESV) You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. ... 36 I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, 37 for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.
- (Matthew 15:18 ESV) But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person.



MEET THE PERSON WHO THRIVES IN THE TRANSFORMATIVE REALITY OF LIVING IN THE WORDS OF GOD ...

I. This person has been born into the kingdom of God by the transforming reality of the new birth.

- (John 3:3 ESV) Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.**”

II. He is passionate in his desire to learn and walk in the ways of God.

- (Psalm 86:11 ESV) **Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name.**
- (Psalm 25:4–5 ESV) **Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths. 5 Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long.**
- (Psalm 27:11 ESV) **Teach me your way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.**

III. She hears the love of God in the morning because she trusts God and is learning to do his will.

- (Psalm 143:8–10 ESV) **Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love, for in you I trust. Make me know the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul. 9 Deliver me from my**

enemies, O LORD! I have fled to you for refuge. 10 **Teach me to do your will, for you are my God! Let your good Spirit lead me on level ground!**

IV. He desires for God to direct every aspect of his life.

- (Psalm 119:35–37 ESV) **Lead me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in it. 36 Incline my heart to your testimonies, and not to selfish gain! 37 Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things; and give me life in your ways.**
- (Psalm 119:40 ESV) Behold, **I long for your precepts; in your righteousness give me life!**

V. She knows that she needs God to search her heart to speak to her the ways of pain in her life to remove those hindrances as God leads her in the way everlasting.

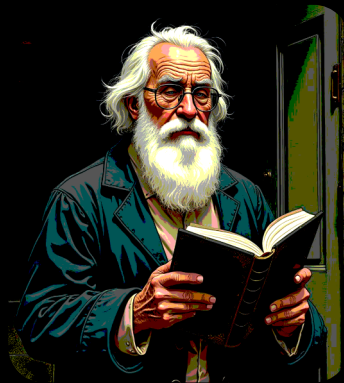
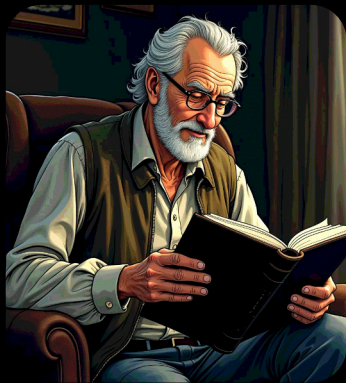
- (Psalm 139:23–24 ESV) **Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! 24 And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!**

VI. This list is very incomplete ... the ocean of our new life in Jesus Christ is unfathomable ... the goodness of God to us through Jesus Christ is incalculable.

FREE IN JESUS OR SLAVES TO SIN?



HERE'S HOW WE KNOW ...



If you abide in Jesus' word,
You shall learn the truth about yourself,
And the truth will set you free, and you will know who you are,
... **Unless** you don't abide in his word and don't accept the truth about who you are,
Then you will remain a slave to sin,
And die in your sins.

KNOWING WHO WE ARE ...

1. The only people in all the universe who know who they are, what they are and where they are going are the followers of Jesus, 8:31-32.

- (John 8:31–32 ESV) So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”
- A. True followers of Jesus are identified by Jesus himself as those who abide in his word—those who persevere under the authority of God’s word.
- B. This is the only way to know who we are and to be assured of our relationship with Jesus.
- C. This is the first step for a slave of sin to be set free of his sin by Jesus the Son.

2. Those who do not abide in Jesus’ word never on this earth come to know their true identity, 8:33-35.

- (John 8:33–34 ESV) They answered him, “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free’?” 34 Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.”
- A. They do not know who they are.
- B. They do not know where they are going.
 - (John 8:12a ESV) Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness.”
 - (John 12:35b ESV) The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.
 - (1 John 2:11 ESV) But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.
- C. They doubt Jesus’ freedom plan.
- D. They do not believe Jesus because he is telling them the truth.
 - (John 8:45 ESV) But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.
- E. They are only capable of believing lies and so are blind and deceived in regard to their sin.

3. Only if Jesus the Son sets you free are you free, 8:36-37.

- (John 8:35–37 ESV) The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. 36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. 37 I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you.

- A. Their claim to be the offspring of Abraham was true only in regard to their earthly, national descent.
- B. Their relationship with God was temporary and superficial—the slave will be evicted.
- C. Only a son remains in the house forever.
- D. They had an antagonistic relationship to Jesus because his word found no place in them.
- E. Freedom from sin comes only when the Son sets a person free indeed ... truly, certainly, in reality.

- (Romans 6:17–18 ESV) But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, 18 and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.
- (Romans 6:22 ESV) But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.
- (Romans 8:1–2 ESV) There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

4. Slaves of sin do what they do based on what they hear from their father the devil, 8:38.

- (John 8:38 ESV) I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father.
- A. Jesus speaks truth received from his eye witness encounter with his Father.
- B. The Jews actions were based on what they heard from their father the devil.
 - (John 8:41–47 ESV) “You are doing the works your father did.” They said to him, “We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father—even God.” 42 Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. 43 Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. 44 You are of your father the devil, and your will is

to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. 45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. 46 Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? 47 Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God."

5. Here are some examples of the actions and characteristics of slaves of sin.

A. They do not know who Jesus is—because they reject the truth that he heard from God.

- (John 8:40 ESV) But now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did.
- (John 8:25 ESV) So they said to him, "Who are you?" Jesus said to them, "Just what I have been telling you from the beginning."

B. Because they only believe lies they do not know who their father is and so do not know who they are.

- (John 8:39 ESV) They answered him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did."

C. As outrageous as it may sound their relationship with God (their religion) is in reality based on what they have heard from the devil.

D. How? They have shifted the foundation of the one true religion away from the word of God to the teaching and traditions of humans.

- (Mark 7:6–9 ESV) And he said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; 7 in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' 8 You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men." 9 And he said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition!"

E. Contemporary relevance? The same thing happens with the gospel when the foundation is shifted away from the clear instruction of Scripture.

F. Many fall prey to Cain's sin—That God should be willing to accept whatever is offered.

6. Accusers accuse just like their father the devil.

- (Zechariah 3:1 ESV) Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.
- (Revelation 12:9, 10b ESV) And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth ... for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.

A. They accused Jesus of lying regarding his identity and of being mentally unstable and possibly considering suicide

- This is review. See John 8:13, John 8:22.

B. They twice accused Jesus of having a demon.

- (John 8:48–52 ESV) The Jews answered him, "Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?" 49 Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. 50 Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is One who seeks it, and he is the judge. 51 Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death." 52 The Jews said to him, "Now we know that you have a demon! Abraham died, as did the prophets, yet you say, 'If anyone keeps my word, he will never taste death.'

C. We may be able to help accusers come to their senses with kindness, gentle correction and patient instruction while patiently enduring their evil.

- (2 Timothy 2:24–26 ESV) And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, 25 correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.

KNOWING WHAT WE ARE ...

1. To abide in God's word we must first do what is necessary to be able to receive his word, 1:19-21.

- (James 1:19–21 ESV) Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; 20 for the anger of

man does not produce the righteousness of God. 21 **Therefore put away** all filthiness and rampant wickedness and **receive** with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

A. Being led by the Spirit we obey the command to be quick to hear and by the fruit of the Spirit which is self-control we are then able to avoid the foolishness that presents itself in anger and unrighteousness.

- (Ecclesiastes 5:1-2 ESV) Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. **To draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they are doing evil.** 2 **Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God,** for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore let your words be few.

B. Being led by the Spirit we obey the complementary action of being slow to speak and by the fruit of the Spirit which is self-control we bring our thoughts captive to Christ and turn our minds away from sinful thoughts that produce sinful communications.

C. Now in humility we set aside our pride that has its roots in the filthiness and wickedness inside us and are ready to receive the word God.

2. To abide in God's word we need to not only hear and receive his word but we also need to **do** his word or our time in the word is useless regarding our knowledge of what we look like, 1:22-24.

- (James 1:22-24 ESV) But **be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.** 23 **For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror.** 24 **For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.**

A. Doing the word is coming into the light in contrast to hearing only and remaining in the darkness.

- (John 3:21a ESV) But **whoever does what is true comes to the light.**

B. The person who **hears only** has a momentary clear perception of what he looks like but quickly forgets what he saw and so continues in deceit.

3. The person who looks into the law of freedom and perseveres will be blessed in his doing, 1:25.

- (James 1:25 LSB) But **one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of freedom, and abides by it,** not having become a forgetful hearer but **a doer** of the work, this man **will be blessed in what he does.**

A. The Bible is the "freedom book" of God.

B. The person who abides in God's perfect law of freedom will always remember who he is and will be blessed in his doing.

4. The person who thinks he is religious but pays no attention to the previous instruction regarding hearing, speaking and anger is deceived regarding the value of his religious beliefs.

5. And as "the Jews" that Jesus dealt with he does not know that his religion is worthless, 1:26.

- (James 1:26 ESV) **If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.**

KNOWING THE GREAT PEACE OF GOD ...

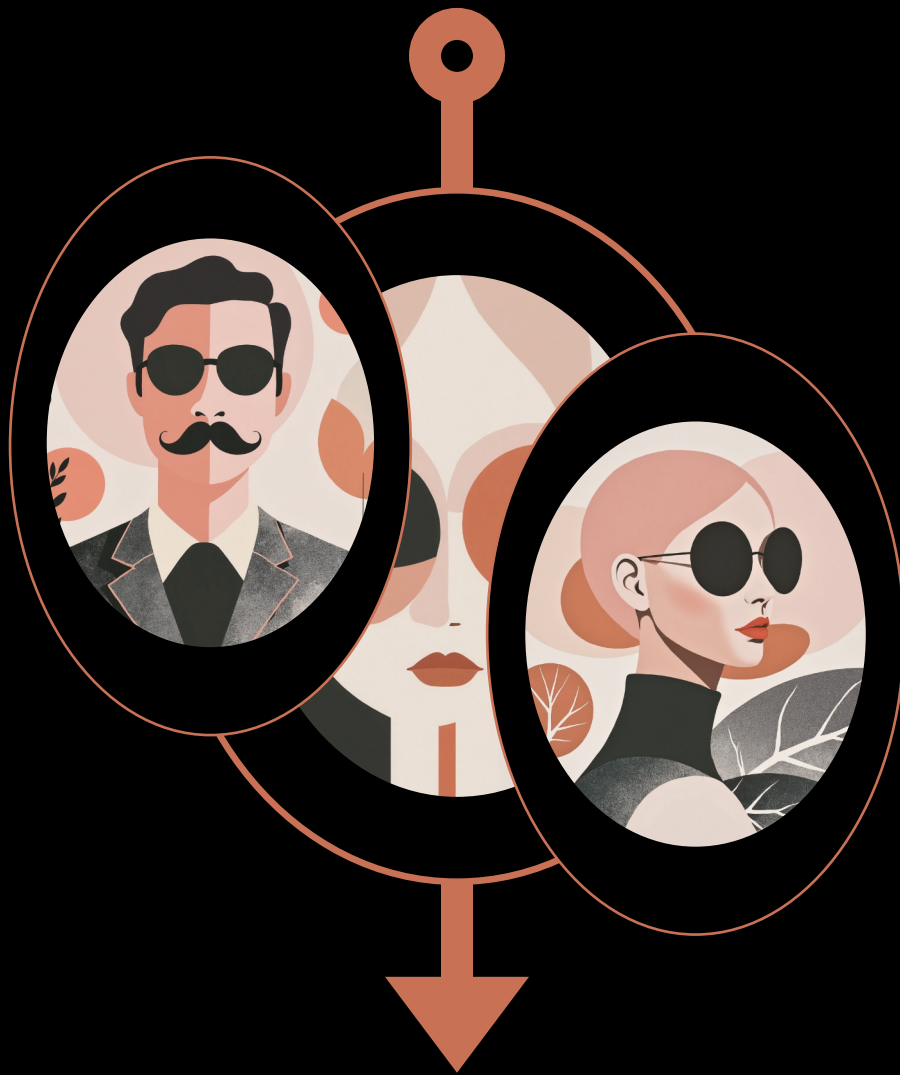
■ Those who abide in the word of God will exult in love for and joyful obedience to God and his word.

- (Psalm 119:44-48 NLT) **I will keep on obeying your instructions forever and ever.** 45 **I will walk in freedom, for I have devoted myself to your commandments.** 46 I will **speak** to kings about your laws, and I will not be ashamed. 47 **How I delight in your commands! How I love them!** 48 I **honor** and **love** your commands. I **meditate** on your decrees.

■ Those who love the word of God will have great peace and nothing can make them stumble.

- (Psalm 119:165-168 ESV) **Great peace have those who love your law; nothing can make them stumble.** 166 I **hope** for your salvation, O LORD, and I **do** your commandments. 167 My soul **keeps** your testimonies; I **love** them exceedingly. 168 I **keep** your precepts and testimonies, **for all my ways are before you.**

REVEALING JESUS



UNMASKING PRETENDERS

OVERVIEW & INTRODUCTION ...

In John eight Jesus had ten verbal confrontations with various Jewish religious leaders. In the course of these discussions Jesus revealed who he was – the eternal, self-existent, self-sufficient I am ... and who they were – the children of the devil. The conversations ended with the Jews picking up rocks to throw at him.

JESUS IDENTIFIES THESE PEOPLE ...

1. They are identified as the Pharisees and the Jews.
2. Jesus describes the Pharisees as attractive and righteous in their appearance to people.
 - (Matthew 23:27–28 LSB) Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. 28 In this way, you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.
3. Jesus identifies them further in John eight.
 - A. They did not believe that Jesus gave true testimony about himself, 8:13.
 - B. They were ignorant of his origins and of his coming and going from heaven to earth, 8:14.
 - C. Their perspective on life was based on appearances, so understandably they were very careful to present themselves as attractive and righteous people, 8:15.
 - D. They did not know him, did not know the Father, were from below and of this world and would die in their sins, 8:19-24.
 - E. They were slaves of sin who mistakenly believed themselves to be the spiritual children of Abraham, 8:33-34
 - F. Their father was not God but the devil and their will was to fulfill the their father's desires, 8:44.
 - G. They were incapable of hearing and believing the truth of the words of God proving that they were not of God, 8:45-47.
 - H. They claimed that Jesus' religion was inferior to theirs and that he had a demon, 8:48-52.
 - I. They mocked Jesus by asking him — Who do you make yourself out to be?
 - J. CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE: When so-called “good Christian people” are not following Jesus ... they are walking in the darkness. No exceptions.

- (John 8:12 ESV) Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

K. We know we follow Jesus and walk in the light when we fully submit to his yoke and abide in his word.

- (John 8:31–32 ESV) So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”
- (Matthew 11:28–29 ESV) Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

OBSERVATIONS FROM JESUS' INTERACTION WITH THEM ...

1. The Jews had several areas of belief that could superficially be perceived as common ground with Jesus in regard to their professed faith.
 - A. They shared professed belief in the patriarchs of Israel—Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
 - B. They shared professed belief in the Father, the OT Scriptures and the worship of one true God.
 - C. They cited the Scriptures to support their beliefs.
2. However we must take note that in our text Jesus not once acknowledged any common ground with them in regard to true faith because the reality was that there was none.
3. He did nothing that even hinted at the foolishness of coming together on things in common.

THE JEWS — WHO DO YOU MAKE YOURSELF OUT TO BE?

- (John 8:53 ESV) Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you make yourself out to be?
1. The question is more pointed than — “Who do you think you are?”
 2. The question is an accusation that Jesus was making himself out to be something that he wasn't.
 - A. The language is precise in that the word for “make” [ποιέω / poieo] means to make; to produce, construct, form, fashion; to make a thing out of something.

B. To “make yourself” could be understood as giving yourself a makeover with the intent of giving the impression that you are someone or something that you are not.

3. The first great irony in the question is **that Jesus being the I am**, is the eternal, self-existent, self-sufficient, uncreated One, who is literally and fully God and man who could never make himself to be anything other than what he was, is and will be ... yesterday, today and forever.

- (Hebrews 13:8 ESV) Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

4. The second great irony in the question is that this is exactly what the Jews had done and were doing.

A. They were making themselves to be something that they were not.

B. They should have been asking themselves the question but people walking in darkness don't do things like that.

PAUL'S WARNING REGARDING THE SAME GROUP ...

- (2 Corinthians 11:12–15 ESV) And what I am doing I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do. 13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. 15 So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.

1. Paul vows to relentlessly work to undo their claim that they share a common mission with him.

2. Paul emphasizes the absurdity of the idea of having a partnership with such people.

- (2 Corinthians 6:14–15 ESV) Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? 15 What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?

3. Paul vows to aggressively cut their foundation from under them.

The word for undermine [ἐκκόπτω - ekkopto] ... means to cut out, cut off; of a tree; to make end, conceived of as removing something by cutting.

- (2 Corinthians 11:12 NIV) And I will keep on doing what I am doing in order to cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be considered equal with us in the things they boast about.

4. Paul describes them as the servants of Satan.

A. They are professing Christians who disguise themselves as messengers of God, eminent teachers and workers of righteousness.

B. But this is no wonder because Satan himself disguises himself as an angel of light.

C. We need to be aware of those who disguise themselves as servants of righteousness.

D. They should be warned that their end is judgment.

5. We should understand the simple practicality of how a person might disguise himself.

A. He puts on things that change his appearance.

Picture a spy show where the infiltrator learns the language, changes his appearance with growing a beard or a mustache, wearing glasses, changing hair color or length or style.

B. She learns to talk and dress and act like the group she wants to fit in with.

6. How do they succeed at this spiritually?

A. They transform themselves to put on the persona of a good Christian person.

Sometimes as simple as carrying a Bible, attending church, doing work in the church, wearing the right clothes, having the accepted hair style.

B. A true follower of Jesus is transformed inside out.

C. The servant of Satan has only an outward perspective of righteousness so he has to transform himself based on how he appears to his target group.

THIS IS WHERE WE FIND THE JEWS OF JESUS' DAY.

1. Their pretense had pervaded and corrupted the law and the prophets resulting in human traditions and rules that superseded the authority and instruction of the Scriptures.

Supersede ... to cause to be set aside; to force out of use as inferior; to take the place or position of; to displace in favor of another.

2. The Jews mistakenly thought the battle was their belief system versus Jesus' belief system with the one appearing as the most righteous the winner.
3. Consequently they remained in the darkness clinging to their version of the truth.
4. They did not know who Jesus was and they refused to follow someone of whom they believed merely held to a competing religion.
5. They once again did not realize they were standing in the presence of **I AM**.
6. Their darkness was great and they loved it.

They had reduced the one true religion to the traditions and teachings of humans and were blind to the divine presence of their Messiah ... and they loved it.

- (Matthew 6:23 ESV) But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. **If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!**
- (Luke 11:35 ESV) **Therefore be careful lest the light in you be darkness.**
- (John 3:19 ESV) **And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light** because their works were evil.

7. The solution: Abide in the word and know the truth.

JESUS IS I AM.

- (John 8:54–59 ESV) Jesus answered, “If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’ 55 **But you have not known him.** I know him. **If I were to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and I keep his word.** 56 Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad.” 57 So the Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?” 58 Jesus said to them, **“Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.”** 59 **So they picked up stones to throw at him,** but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

1. The Father glorified Jesus.

2. They claimed the same Father who glorified Jesus as their God but they had not known him.
3. Jesus did know the Father.
4. Jesus made sure to tell them that he kept the Father's word.

CONCLUSION: LOVE GOD FIVE WAYS ...

I. LOVE GOD AND SEEK THE LOST ...

- (Luke 19:10 ESV) For **the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.**

II. LOVE GOD AND PRACTICE MERCY TOWARD THOSE WHOSE SPIRITUAL HOUSES ARE ON FIRE ...

- (Jude 21–23 ESV) **Keep yourselves in the love of God,** waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. 22 **And have mercy on those who doubt;** 23 **save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear,** hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

III. LOVE GOD AND PRESERVE THE TRUTH OF HIS GOSPEL ...

- (Galatians 2:5 ESV) **To them we did not yield in submission even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you.**

IV. LOVE GOD AND PROTECT HIS FLOCK ...

- (Acts 20:29–31a ESV) **I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you,** not sparing the flock; 30 **and from among your own selves** will arise men **speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.** 31 **Therefore be alert.**

V. LOVE GOD AND HOLD FAST WITH HIS FAITHFUL ONES ...

- (Hebrews 10:23–25 ESV) **Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering,** for he who promised is faithful. 24 **And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,** 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.
- (Revelation 2:25 ESV) **Only hold fast what you have until I come.**

JESUS GIVES SIGHT TO A BLIND MAN ...

TWICE



... A SIMPLE, THOUGH MULTI-LAYERED, NARRATIVE OF A BLIND MAN'S
JOURNEY TO FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST ...

SCENE 1: THE FIRST MIRACLE, 9:1-7.

Participants—Jesus, the disciples, the blind man ... Jesus opens the eyes of a blind man to display the works of God and to illustrate several necessary truths regarding spiritual blindness and the urgency we should have in doing the work of God.

- (John 9:1–3 ESV) As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” 3 Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.”

1. Jesus directed his attention to a blind man which prompted the disciples to question him as to who was responsible for the man’s blindness.

This probably happened as he was leaving his latest skirmish with the Jews. And we should take note that the man was blind ... so he could hear but see none of what was happening.

2. Jesus answered that the issue was not that this man or his parents had sinned but that he might display the works of God in his healing.

(PARENTHESIS: A TIMELY WORD ON SICKNESS AND SIN.)

- I. All sickness and health issues are the result of sin entering our world through the rebellion of Adam. This man’s congenital blindness is an example.
- II. The disciples’ question reflects the common thought then and as in Job’s day that afflictions such as this had to be the result of someone’s personal sin.
- III. Sometimes it is true that sickness and even death are the result of a person not examining his life and not dealing with the sin in his life and then facing the consequences.
 - (1 Corinthians 11:30–31 ESV) That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. 31 But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged.
- IV. It seems from Jesus’ warning to “sin no more” that the man he healed in John five was lame because of his sin. (See John 5:14.)
- V. The lesson is that we cannot make a proper judgment on these things from outward appearance alone or popular reasoning as was the case here with the disciples.

(END PARENTHESIS)

3. Jesus shifted the discussion from who was

responsible for his blindness to the sovereign plan and the works of God in his healing.

4. Jesus used his healing as an example of the importance of being about the Lord’s work while we have opportunity.
5. Jesus intentionally draws our attention to three specific aspects of the sovereign works of God on display and the providential care of God in the man’s life in opening his blind eyes.

A. GREAT: Giving the blind man sight was a great work and a tremendous blessing to this man.

B. GREATER: Giving the man spiritual sight was an even greater work.

C. GREATEST: But maybe the greatest work of God was Jesus drawing our attention to the pervasive, faulty, deadly thinking of self-righteous people who think they can see when in reality they are blind.

- (John 9:40–41 ESV) Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, “Are we also blind?” 41 Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.

D. This is a dire warning that must be preached to every generation of those who profess to follow Jesus.

6. Jesus finished his discussion with his disciples and heals the man.

- (John 9:6–7 ESV) Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man’s eyes with the mud 7 and said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

He puts mud on the man’s eyes, tells him what to do, the man does what he said and is healed.

(PARENTHESIS: THE BLESSED PRIVILEGE OF BEING CALLED TO DO THE WORKS OF THE ONE WHO SENT JESUS.)

- I. Jesus clearly includes his followers in the call to do the works of the one who sent him.
 - (John 9:4–5 ESV) We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”
- II. We need to hear the urgency and embrace the privileged position we find in Jesus’ words as he tells them (and us) that “we” must work the works of the One who sent him.

- III. This text also provides insight into Jesus' sovereign purpose in provoking the Pharisees ... their way of death must be exposed while people still have opportunity to receive light and repent.
- IV. Jesus also indirectly calls his followers (them and us) to his example of being light in the world while there is still opportunity to be light.
- V. To shine the light of life in the world then we must understand the progression: follow Jesus-> walk in the light->not walk in darkness.
 - (John 8:12 ESV) Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."
- VI. To keep from stumbling in doing the work of the One who sent Jesus we must walk in the day and not the night.
 - (John 11:9-10 ESV) Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. 10 But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."
 - (Romans 13:12 ESV) The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

(END PARENTHESIS)

SCENE 2: THE FIRST INTERROGATION, 9:8-13.

Participants—The blind man, his neighbors and other acquaintances ... The blind man's neighbors and other acquaintances question the blind man regarding the miracle of Jesus opening his eyes.

- (John 9:8-12 ESV) The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar were saying, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" 9 Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." 10 So they said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" 11 He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and received my sight." 12 They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."
1. The neighbors gave mixed accounts of his identity.
 2. The blind man testified on his own behalf confirming the miracle—I am the man.
 3. He gave clear, simple answers to their questions.

SCENE 3: THE SECOND INTERROGATION, 9:13-17.

Participants—The formerly blind man, the Pharisees ... The blind man was brought before the Pharisees and questioned by them regarding the miracle.

- (John 9:13-17 ESV) They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. 14 Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. 15 So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." 16 Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. 17 So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him, since he has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

It is very interesting how clear-minded and composed this man was when he spoke in view of the mixed emotions he must have been experiencing.

1. We don't know their motivation but the neighbors brought the man to the Pharisees.
2. Tensions were high because Jesus had once again broken the Pharisees' rules by healing someone on the Sabbath.
3. The Pharisees asked him to recount his story which he does in very simple terms.
4. Following his account of the miracle there was division among the Pharisees.

CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE: SPIRITUAL LEADERS WHO ARE BLIND TO SPIRITUAL TRUTH IS A THEN AND A NOW PROBLEM ...

1. Since ancient times in Israel religious leaders who are bad shepherds of God's flock have been the norm and not the exception.
 - (Zechariah 11:17 ESV) Woe to my worthless shepherd, who deserts the flock! May the sword strike his arm and his right eye! Let his arm be wholly withered, his right eye utterly blinded!
 - (Jeremiah 23:1 ESV) "Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!" declares the LORD.
2. So it is no surprise at all that in the first century Jesus confronted shepherds that dishonored God and scattered his sheep.

3. Jesus broke the rules of these heavy-handed hypocrites as he went about his Father's business and they were filled with fury.

- (Luke 6:9–11 ESV) And Jesus said to them, “**I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?**” 10 And after looking around at them all he said to him, “Stretch out your hand.” And he did so, and his hand was restored. 11 **But they were filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.**

4. The Pharisees were determined to prove themselves right and Jesus wrong—to do this they accused Jesus and his disciples of violating the law of God.

- (Matthew 12:2 ESV) But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, “Look, **your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.**”
- (John 5:8–10 ESV) Jesus said to him, “Get up, take up your bed, and walk.” 9 And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked. **Now that day was the Sabbath.** 10 So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, “**It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed.**”

5. Their huge problem was that the examples they gave did not prove that Jesus had violated God's law but that he had violated their traditions by which they had violated God's law.

- (Mark 7:5–9 ESV) And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “**Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders,** but eat with defiled hands?” 6 And he said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, “ **This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me;** 7 in vain do they worship me, **teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.**’ 8 You **leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.**” 9 And he said to them, “You have **a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition!**

6. Jesus came to fulfill the law and the Prophets.

- (Matthew 5:17 ESV) Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; **I have not come to abolish them but to**

fulfill them.

7. Jesus was very purposeful in choosing to heal these people on the Sabbath to provoke these leaders and expose them for who and what they were—the children of the devil.

8. We will not truly understand his intent unless we accept that these specific miracles were planned and carried out according to God's sovereign purpose.

9. It must be noted that in all this Jesus was doing the work the Father had sent him to do.

- (John 5:16–17 ESV) And this was **why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath.** 17 But Jesus answered them, “**My Father is working until now, and I am working.**”

10. We will face the same obstacles in the church today that Jesus faced in the first century.

WE KNOW WHAT IS WHAT BY GOD'S TRUTH ... NOT OURS ...

■ **Humble ourselves to find and abide in God's truth so that we may not be caught up in prideful schemes to prove ourselves right.**

■ **Discipline ourselves to not go past what is written and to separate ourselves from those who do.**

- (2 John 9–11 ESV) **Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God.** Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 **If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him** into your house or give him any greeting, 11 **for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.**

■ **Discipline ourselves to not fight like humans fight but to take our thoughts captive to Christ and make our obedience complete.**

- (2 Corinthians 10:3 NLT) **We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do.**
- (2 Corinthians 10:5–6 ESV) We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, **and take every thought captive to obey Christ,** 6 being ready to punish every disobedience, **when your obedience is complete.**

VICTORY IN JESUS



THE BLIND MAN WINS

THE BLIND MAN'S VICTORY IN JESUS — WHAT THAT MEANS TO YOU AND ME ...

REVIEW: We are up to scene four in John chapter nine. Last week we studied the first three scenes which were: The healing of the blind man and the two interrogations that followed.

SCENE 4: THE THIRD INTERROGATION, 9:18-23.

Participants—The parents of the blind man, the Jews ... The parents were brought before the Jews and questioned.

- (John 9:18–23 ESV) The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight, until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight 19 and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” 20 His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. 21 But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” 22 (His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.) 23 Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

1. The Jews were still refusing to believe the obvious and interviewed the parents hoping to exploit any inconsistencies regarding the miracle.
2. The parents were very guarded in their response because they feared the Jews and directed the interrogators back to their son.
3. Think about the threat in view of the stated purpose of the Gospel of John—if anyone confessed the only truth by which they might have life, then that person would be put out of the synagogue.
 - (John 20:31 ESV) But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

SCENE 5: THE FOURTH INTERROGATION, 9:24-34.

Participants—The man who had been blind, the Jews ... The Jews/Pharisees called the man in for a second time hoping to pressure him into changing his testimony but the man held firm to the truth.

- (John 9:24–34 ESV) So for the second time they called the man who had been blind and said to

him, “Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner.” 25 He answered, “Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” 26 They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” 27 He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” 28 And they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.” 29 We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” 30 The man answered, “Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. 31 We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. 32 Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. 33 If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” 34 They answered him, “You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?” And they cast him out.

1. They called the man for the second time and tried to get him to change his testimony under the guise of giving glory to God.
2. The man remained firm and drew attention to their refusal to listen to his straightforward account.
3. In replying to the man their anger boiled over as seen in their crazed, damning response.

Truth – The man would soon become Jesus’ disciple.

Lie – They claimed they were disciples of Moses but Jesus had already proved this to be a lie.

Truth – They were right that God had spoken to Moses.

Truth – They did not know where Jesus came from.

4. “*This is an amazing thing*” ... In his answer the man humiliated them as he revealed their foolishness and willful ignorance.
5. Their frustration reached its climax and they threw him out.

They had had enough as not only could they not defeat the truth and logic of Jesus who was literally the Word of God ... but now this man who had begun the day as a blind beggar thoroughly obliterated their pretentious, foolish attempts to discredit Jesus.

SCENE 6: JESUS PASSED HIS OFFICIAL JUDGMENT ON THOSE WHO DO NOT SEE, 9:35-39.

Participants–Jesus, the man, some of the Pharisees ... Jesus found the man after he had been cast out after the fourth interrogation.

- (John 9:35–41 ESV) Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” 36 He answered, “And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” 37 Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you.” 38 He said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him. 39 Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.”

1. Jesus finds the man after hearing that the Jews had thrown him out.
2. Jesus made an official judgment of mercy in favor of the man.

Judgment ... κρίμα [krima /kree·mah/] ... legal decision; the official decision of a court on issues of fact or law; a decree; the sentence of a judge.

A. Jesus led the man to belief and spiritual sight.

B. His just decision was one of mercy.

- (Romans 9:14–16 ESV) What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! 15 For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” 16 So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.
- (Deuteronomy 32:4 ESV) The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.
- (Psalm 92:12–15 ESV) The righteous flourish like the palm tree and grow like a cedar in Lebanon. 13 They are planted in the house of the LORD; they flourish in the courts of our God. 14 They still bear fruit in old age; they are ever full of sap and green, 15 to declare that the LORD is upright; he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.
- (Revelation 15:3 ESV) And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, “Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King

of the nations!”

C. The truth is that Jesus had chosen this man to be one of his before he created our world.

- (Ephesians 1:3–6 ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.
- (Romans 8:28–29a ESV) And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.
- (1 Corinthians 1:9 ESV) God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- (2 Timothy 1:8–9 ESV) Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, 9 who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began.
- (Titus 1:1–2 ESV) Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, 2 in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began.
- (Hebrews 3:1 ESV) Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession.

SCENE 7: JESUS PASSED HIS OFFICIAL JUDGMENT ON THOSE WHO SEE, 9:39-41.

Participants–Jesus, some of the Pharisees ... Some of the Pharisees were nearby and heard Jesus' words and asked him if they were also blind.

- (John 9:39–41 ESV) 9 Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may

become blind.” 40 Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, “Are we also blind?” 41 Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.”

1. Jesus came into this world and made an official decree regarding spiritual blindness.
 - A. That those who do not see may see.
 - B. That those who see may become blind.
2. The Pharisees asked Jesus if they were blind also.

Short answer—Yes.

- A. Their eyes had been smeared over—note the similarities/contrasts with Jesus anointing the eyes of the blind man and the Isaiah text.
 - (Isaiah 44:18 NASB95) They do not know, nor do they understand, for He has smeared over their eyes so that they cannot see and their hearts so that they cannot comprehend.

Smeared – to stain by smearing or daubing with a dirty substance.

 - (John 9:6b ESV) ... he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud.
- B. They asked with stubborn, rebellious hearts.
 - (Jeremiah 5:21, 23 ESV) Hear this, O foolish and senseless people, who have eyes, but see not, who have ears, but hear not. ... 23 But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart; they have turned aside and gone away.
 - C. Although there may have been exceptions, such as with Nicodemus, they do not seem to be sincere in asking the question.
 - D. Their insincerity was probably due to refusing to acknowledge their true need.
 - (Matthew 9:12–13 ESV) But when he heard it, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. 13 Go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’ For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”
 - E. Their guilt remains.

CONCLUSION: We have amazing, wonderful, undeniable victory in Jesus ... Here are some of the things we can do to help us live in the reality of that victory ...

1. Abide in and tremble before God's word if we are to know the truth that we need to know.

Only in living in complete dependence on and submission to God in his word and by his Spirit can we be aware of and conscious of the reality of life.

- (Isaiah 66:1a, 2 ESV) Thus says the LORD: “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; ... All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.”

2. Stay in front of the mirror.

- (James 1:23–25 ESV) For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. 24 For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. 25 But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

3. Do not depend on any outward impressions to evaluate our lives—including our own.

- (Revelation 3:17 ESV) For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.

4. Be thankful and abound in the work of the Lord.

- (1 Corinthians 15:57–58 ESV) But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

WHAT IT MEANS TO FOLLOW JESUS

THERE ARE ONLY TWO PATHS IN LIFE –THE PATH OF LIFE UPON WHICH WE FOLLOW JESUS AND THE PATH OF DEATH UPON WHICH WE FOLLOW ANYONE ELSE AND THAT ENDS IN DESTRUCTION



1. Jesus is the legitimate shepherd of the sheep because he entered the sheepfold by the door, 10:1-3.

- (John 10:1-2 ESV) Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. 2 But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

A. The door is that which approves and facilitates entrance to the sheepfold based on and in accordance with OT law and prophecy.

B. The door is the portal through which the true Shepherd of the sheep passes through and is then authenticated as the Christ, the Son of God.

A.W. Pink ... The simple meaning of this is, that Christ presented Himself to Israel in a lawful manner, that is, in strict accord with the Holy Scriptures. "He submitted Himself to all the conditions established by Him who built the house. Christ answered to all that was written of the Messiah, and took the path of God's will in presenting Himself to the people" (Mr. Darby). He had been born of a virgin, of the covenant people, of the Judaic stock, in the royal city—Bethlehem. He had conformed to everything which God required of an Israelite. He had been "born under the law" (Gal. 4:4). He was circumcised the eighth day (Luke 2:21), and subsequently, at the purification of His mother, He was presented to God in the Temple (Luke 2:22). [Pink, A. W. *Exposition of the Gospel of John* (p. 511). Bible Truth Depot.]

C. So Jesus entered by the door as the one who came to fulfill (by living in conformity to) the OT law, the prophets and the Father.

If Jesus was that careful to pay close attention to and submit to the teaching of Scripture, then what about the person who refuses to do the same?

- (Hebrews 2:1 ESV) Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

D. Jesus took great care to demonstrate the legitimacy of his testimony as the Messiah, the Son of God.

Legitimate – conforming to the law or to rules.

E. Jesus provided very powerful testimony as to his legitimacy as the Shepherd of the sheep (see v.2).

i. He came to do the Father's will.

- (John 6:38 ESV) For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.

- (John 5:30 ESV) I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

- (John 4:34 ESV) Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.

ii. He came to speak the Father's words.

- (John 12:49 ESV) For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak.

- (John 8:28 ESV) So Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.

iii. He came to fulfill the law and the prophets.

- (Matthew 5:17 ESV) Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

- (Luke 24:44 ESV) Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

- (Luke 24:27 ESV) And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

- (John 1:45a ESV) Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth.

F. John the Baptist confirmed that Jesus was the one sent from God according to the Scriptures.

- (John 1:14-15 ESV) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. 15 (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.' ")

- (John 1:23 ESV) He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said."

- (John 1:29 ESV) The next day he saw

Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

- (John 1:34 ESV) And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.

G. Scripture very powerfully and precisely proves Jesus' legitimate testimony as the Messiah, the Son of God.

Jesus fulfilled at least 300 OT prophecies—Here is one example.

- (Isaiah 7:14 ESV) Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.
- (Matthew 1:21–23 ESV) "She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." 22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 23 "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

H. The gatekeeper opens the sheepfold only to the Shepherd of the sheep—Jesus Messiah, 10:3.

- (John 10:3 ESV) To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

I. The gatekeeper seems to be the prophetic witness of Scripture which directs the course of earth history toward God's sovereign purpose in salvation.

Some believe the gatekeeper to be God the Father or the Holy Spirit or possibly John the Baptist.

J. The sheep of God hear the voice of the one to whom the gatekeeper opens the door as he calls them by name and leads them out.

2. Jesus, the legitimate shepherd of the sheep, goes before his sheep, 10:4-5.

- (John 10:4–5 ESV) When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. 5 A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.

A. Jesus' sheep follow him because they know his voice.

B. Jesus' sheep will not follow a stranger—an illegitimate shepherd who is of another flock—but will flee from him.

C. Jesus' sheep run from the stranger because they do

not know the voice of a stranger.

Stranger ... ἀλλότριος [allotrios] ... belonging to another; a person who does not belong in the environment in which they are found.

D. A sheep who does not flee from the voice of a stranger belongs to the flock of the stranger.

E. Practical Relevance: A person identifies the flock to which he belongs by whom he listens to and follows.

F. Sheep who listen to a wolf-shepherd who preaches a false gospel identify themselves as those who are following the thief—aka the devil.

3. Jesus is the door—the Scripture fulfilling, prophesied Messiah of the OT—through which a person enters and is saved, 10:6-9.

- (John 10:6–9 ESV) This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. 7 So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture."

A. Jesus is the door through which sheep are called out of Judaism and are saved.

B. All who came before him—referring to the evil shepherds of Israel—are thieves and robbers and Jesus' sheep do not listen to them.

C. Sheep who enter through Jesus are saved.

4. Jesus points out the major distinction between himself and the thief, 10:10-13.

- (John 10:10–13 ESV) The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. 11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12 He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13 He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

A. The major distinction is this — follow the thief and your life ends in destruction; follow Jesus and have abundant life.

- B. Jesus is also distinct from the thief in that he does not kill his sheep but lays down his life for them.
- C. Jesus is not a hired hand who sees the wolf coming and runs away leaving the sheep to be taken and scattered by the wolf.
- D. The hired hand will not lay down his life for the sheep because he cares nothing for them.
- E. A pastor who will not risk his life/status/position in fighting off the wolves is no true shepherd of the flock of God.

- (Acts 20:28–30 ESV) **Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock**, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, **to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood**. 29 I know that after my departure **fierce wolves will come in among you**, not sparing the flock; 30 **and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things**, to draw away the disciples after them.

CONCLUSION: THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF ENTERING THROUGH THE NARROW DOOR AND THE NARROW GATE ...

1. We must strive to enter through the narrow door or be cast out where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, Luke 13:22-28.

- (Luke 13:23–28 ESV) And someone said to him, “Lord, will those who are saved be **few**?” And he said to them, 24 **“Strive to enter through the narrow door**. For **many**, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. 25 When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, open to us,’ then he will answer you, ‘**I do not know where you come from.**’ 26 **Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.’** 27 But he will say, ‘I tell you, **I do not know where you come from.** Depart from me, all you workers of evil!’ 28 **In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth**, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God **but you yourselves cast out.**”

- A. The many who try to enter the kingdom of God in a way other than the narrow door will be left outside when the master shuts the door.
- B. They are all deceived—believing that they knew Jesus and were in the kingdom of God.
- C. They had relied on the outward appearance of a relationship with him but Jesus completely distances himself from them.
- D. Their relationship with him was superficial—they had been in his presence and had heard him teaching but it meant nothing in regard to their eternal destiny.

2. We must obey Jesus’ command to enter through the narrow gate or our lives will end in destruction, Matthew 7:13-14.

- (Matthew 7:13–14 ESV) **Enter by the narrow gate**. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are **many**. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are **few**.

3. False prophets are wolves dressed as shepherds.

- (Matthew 7:15 ESV) Beware of false prophets, **who come to you in sheep’s clothing** but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

4. Jesus warns the deceived.

- (Matthew 7:21–23 ESV) **Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven**. 22 **On that day many** will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ 23 **And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’**
- A. They believed in an illegitimate Lord who was not the Shepherd of the sheep, the Christ, the Son of God.
- B. On the day of judgment they will recount the many religious things they had done in Jesus’ name but to no avail—they had not done the will of his Father.
- C. Jesus will declare that he never knew them and will order them from his presence.

HOW THE GOOD SHEPHERD KNOWS HIS SHEEP



THE INFINITE, INTIMATE LOVE BETWEEN THE
GOOD SHEPHERD AND HIS SHEEP ...

*I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD. I KNOW MY OWN AND MY OWN KNOW ME,
JUST AS THE FATHER KNOWS ME AND I KNOW THE FATHER.*

(JOHN 10:14-15A ESV)

1. Jesus is the good shepherd who knows his sheep and his sheep know him, 10:14-15.

- (John 10:14–15 ESV) **I am the good shepherd.** I know my own and my own know me, 15 **just as the Father knows me and I know the Father;** and I lay down my life for the sheep.

A. Jesus is the good shepherd who knows—has an intimate, experiential knowledge of and love for—his sheep and his sheep know him in this same way.

B. He knows his sheep “just as” he and the Father know each other.

10:15 “just as” ... according as; even as; in proportion as, in the degree that.

Brief Excursus: The Father and the Son know and love each other in this way ...

- The Father and the Son relate to one another from the depths of who they are.
- A brief overview of their divine attributes will yield very helpful insight as to how they “know” each other.
- God is holy and transcendent in all of his attributes.
 - **Holy** – God is holy in that he is “other” than anyone or anything else in the universe as the uncreated One who is infinitely beyond and superior to all else. He is holy in all of his attributes as in surpassing knowledge both intellectually and experientially.
 - **Attribute** – a quality or feature regarded as a characteristic or inherent part of someone.
 - **Transcendent** – exceeding usual limits; surpassing; extending beyond the limits of ordinary experience.
- Even though Jesus is holy and transcendent, as his sheep for whom he laid down his life, we know him “just as” he knows the Father.
- Here is partial list of the attributes of our God.

God is infinite, eternal, holy, love, light, glorious, gracious, good, merciful, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, wise, faithful, immanent (at hand), righteous, immutable (unchanging), self-existent/self-sufficient, just, sovereign, transcendent ...

END BRIEF EXCURSUS

C. Further insight and explanation ...

In his statement ... “I know my own and my own know me, **just as** the Father knows me and I know the Father” ... Jesus gives us tremendous insight into the

infinite, intimate experiential love and knowledge he has for us. And even though his loving and knowing us in this way is beyond our ability to fully comprehend, he is communicating to us that it is not beyond our ability to reciprocate and love and know him in this same way.

Yes, we take into account our limitations as finite humans, but we must not overlook the work of God in our lives which allows us to embrace and live in this amazing relationship we have with Jesus and the Father.

This was the plan from eternity past that Jesus would lay down his life for his elect sheep. Sheep he had in mind before he created our world. He expressed his love for us by laying down his life to save his sheep.

D. Knowing and loving Jesus in this way is only possible because he first loved us.

- (1 John 4:18–19 ESV) There is no fear in love, but **perfect love casts out fear.** For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. 19 **We love because he first loved us.**

2. Jesus has other sheep in which he has this same relationship that are of another fold, 10:16-18.

- (John 10:16–18 ESV) And I have other sheep **that are not of this fold.** I must bring them also, and **they will listen to my voice.** So there will be one flock, one shepherd. 17 **For this reason the Father loves me,** because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18 **No one takes it from me,** but I lay it down of my own accord. **I have authority to lay it down,** and **I have authority to take it up again.** This charge I have received from my Father.

A. Jesus calls out his sheep from two folds—Judaism (Jews) and Gentiles (everyone else).

B. Contemporary Christians are of the other fold.

- (1 Peter 1:8 ESV) **Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory.**

C. The sheep from both folds listen to his voice.

D. The Father loves Jesus as they share perfect harmony in carrying out their salvation plan.

E. Jesus emphasizes that the Jews did not take his life from him but that he laid it down by his choice.

F. He did this in perfect harmony with the Father.

3. There was **again** a division among the Jews because of what Jesus said, 10:19-21.

- (John 10:19–21 ESV) There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. 20 Many of them said, “He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?” 21 Others said, “These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

A. Jesus again caused division among the people to draw attention to his true identity, cf. John 7:43, 9:16.

B. Jesus came to bring this division because sheep left to themselves do not see the lines of distinction between darkness and light.

- (Luke 12:51 ESV) Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division.

4. The devil vehemently opposes those who follow Jesus' example to speak God's word to direct people from their lies to the truth of God.

A. The devil hates this because he wants to obscure the identity of the Shepherd of the sheep.

B. This is contrary to John's purpose in the gospel.

- (John 20:31 ESV) But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

C. That is why we must clearly teach that Jesus is the one who entered the sheepfold by the door—the true Shepherd of the sheep.

D. False teachers blur the lines of distinction and “the many” who do not pay much closer attention are deceived into thinking that they know Jesus when in reality they have no relationship with him whatsoever.

- (Matthew 7:23 ESV) And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

5. God will not waver in judging these false teachers and all violations and acts of disobedience regarding the message he delivered.

- (Hebrews 2:2–3 NLT) For the message God delivered through angels has always stood firm, and every violation of the law and every act of disobedience was punished. 3 So what makes us think we can escape if we ignore this great salvation that was first announced by the Lord Jesus himself and then delivered to us by those who heard him speak?

A. Do not be so foolish to believe that you can ignore the great salvation that was announced by Jesus and delivered by the apostles.

- (1 Corinthians 15:3–4 ESV) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

B. These acts of disobedience flow from a proud, rebellious heart and show contempt for the finished, sufficient work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

6. Those who stand firm in dividing truth from the lies for the sake of Christ and the gospel will be hated by the devil and by the people who have fallen for this schemes.

A. The one who divides for Jesus' sake is blessed.

- (Matthew 5:11–12a ESV) Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.

B. He must be strong in the Lord to stand firm.

- (Ephesians 6:10–11 ESV) Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.

C. He must be sober-minded and watchful.

- (1 Peter 5:8 ESV) Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

7. Those who do not follow Jesus' example of dividing people from their lies regarding his identity will themselves fall prey to the lies and schemes of the devil.

A. Their sinful anger invites more evil into their lives.

- (Psalm 37:8 ESV) Refrain from anger ... it tends only to evil.
- (Ephesians 4:26–27 ESV) Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and give no opportunity to the devil.

B. They will be outwitted by Satan.

- (2 Corinthians 2:11 ESV) ... so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.

C. They will be deceived and led astray as Eve.

- (2 Corinthians 11:3–4 ESV) But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led

astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. 4 For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough.

8. Those who disobey the command to speak the truth in love become more and more vulnerable to lies that sound like truth.

- (Ephesians 4:14–15 NLT) Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. 15 Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.

- A. If they are believers, they are infantile believers who are unstable and easily deceived.
- B. Infantile believers have rejected—and so they neither obey nor understand—the principles and dynamics of speaking the truth in love.
 - i. They remain captive to their childish behavior.
 - ii. They are unable to discern truth from lies and so are easily tricked by other humans and the devil.
 - iii. Their pride keeps them in a downward spiral of further disobedience and deceit.
 - iv. They increase their vulnerability to deception because they accept their sinful behavior patterns as normal or even good Christian practice.
- C. The one who lies to others has not turned away from the old life and as a result is not being renewed in the knowledge and abundance of the new life.
 - (Colossians 3:9–10 ESV) Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

9. The Jews demanded that Jesus tell them who he was, 10:22-26.

- (John 10:22–26 ESV) At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, 23 and Jesus

was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. 24 So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” 25 Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, 26 but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep.”

- A. The Jews gathered around him and demanded he identify himself.
- B. He had already told them but because of their unbelief they were not able to receive his answer.
- C. They did not believe because they were not among his sheep.

10. Jesus contrasted their inability to believe with his sheep who hear his voice, 10:27-30.

- (John 10:27–30 ESV) My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one.”
- A. Jesus' sheep hear his voice and he knows them and they follow him.

Deduction: The person who does not follow Jesus does not hear his voice and is not known by him.
- B. Jesus gives his sheep eternal life and they will never perish and no one can grab or take them away out of his hand.
- C. This is even more certain because the Father has given Jesus' sheep to him and the Father is greater than all.
- D. No one is able to grab Jesus' sheep and take them away from the Father's hand.
- E. Jesus and the Father are one.

11. The Jews picked up stones again to kill Jesus, 10:31.

- (John 10:31 ESV) The Jews picked up stones again to stone him.

JESUS IS GOD

HIS SHEEP KNOW THAT



I KNOW MY OWN AND MY OWN KNOW ME

(JOHN 10:14B ESV)

1. The battle lines were drawn once again as the Jews had stones in their hands ready to kill Jesus, 10:31.

- (John 10:31 ESV) The Jews picked up stones again to stone him.

A. People are willing to kill to get their own way.

- (James 4:1–2 MSG) Where do you think all these appalling wars and quarrels come from? Do you think they just happen? Think again. They come about because you want your own way, and fight for it deep inside yourselves. 2 You lust for what you don't have and are willing to kill to get it. You want what isn't yours and will risk violence to get your hands on it. You wouldn't think of just asking God for it, would you?

B. The Jews hated Jesus because they saw him as an obstacle to getting/keeping their own way.

- They hated him because of his words.
 - (John 10:19 ESV) There was again a division among the Jews because of these words.
- They hated him because darkness hates the light.
 - (John 3:19-20 ESV) And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. 20 For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.
- They hated him because Jesus spoke the truth and exposed the reality of their relationship with God.
 - (John 5:37–38 ESV) And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen, 38 and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent.
- They hated him because the righteousness he offered was in competition their righteousness.
 - (Romans 10:2–3 ESV) For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

C. The Jews believed it was necessary for Jesus to die to advance their cause.

- (John 18:14 ESV) It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that it would be expedient that one man should die for the people.

2. So there they stood ... stones in hand ... when Jesus asked ... for which of the many good works from the Father that I have done do you wish to stone me, 10:32-33.

- (John 10:32–33 ESV) Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?" 33 The Jews answered him, "It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God."

A. Jesus directed their minds to the reality of their evil.

good ... καλός [kalos] ... beautiful, excellent, choice, surpassing, precious, useful, suitable, commendable, admirable; genuine, approved.

B. Jesus had done so many good—beautiful, excellent, surpassing—things that the world could not contain the books if every one were written down.

- (John 21:25 ESV) Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

C. Jesus had traveled across their land preaching the gospel and healing thousands upon thousands.

D. The Jews were doing the will of their father when they lied and accused Jesus of blasphemy.

blasphemy ... expressing disrespect for God or for something sacred; slander, speech that is injurious, to another's good name, injurious to divine majesty.

But this was to be expected since their desire was to do the will of their father the devil.

- (John 8:44–45 ESV) You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. 45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.

E. Jesus came to do the Father's will and speak the Father's words.

- (John 5:30b ESV) ... I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

- (John 4:34 ESV) Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.
- (John 6:38 ESV) For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.
- (John 12:49a ESV) For I have not spoken on my own authority ...
- (John 8:28 ESV) So Jesus said to them ... I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me.

F. Jesus was not a man making himself out to be God but God who humbled himself to be a man.

- (Philippians 2:5b–7 ESV) ... Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

WHO WERE THESE PEOPLE WITH STONES IN THEIR HANDS?



OUTWARD APPEARANCE — THE PEOPLE OF GOD

REALITY — THE CHILDREN OF THE DEVIL



3. The Jews were the most spiritually advantaged and blessed people in all the earth.

A. They were chosen to be God's treasured possession.

- (Deuteronomy 7:6 ESV) For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

B. They were the keepers of the holy word of God.

- (Romans 3:1–2 ESV) Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? 2 Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God.

C. They were blessed with a righteous form of government given to them by God himself.

- (Deuteronomy 4:6–8 ESV) Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' 7 For what great

nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? 8 And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?

D. Salvation came from the Jews through the Christ.

- (John 4:22 ESV) You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

E. They were uniquely blessed as the people of God.

- (Romans 9:4–5 ESV) They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. 5 To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

REALITY CHECK ...

4. However ... The reality was that during the time Jesus was on this earth—and for the majority of their existence—the Jews were anything but God's holy people.

A. Jesus had already identified their father as the devil and that they had no relationship to God and his word whatsoever.

B. Jesus tells us that these outwardly beautiful, righteous “people of God” were inwardly dirty, hypocritical rebels and calls them blind guides, blind fools, blind men, serpents, brood of vipers, Matthew 23:16, 17, 24, 33.

- (Matthew 23:25 ESV) Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence.
- (Matthew 23:27–28 ESV) Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. 28 So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

C. When they made a convert, they made that person twice the child of hell that they were.

- (Matthew 23:15 NLT) What sorrow awaits you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees.

Hypocrites! For you cross land and sea to make one convert, and then you turn that person into twice the child of hell you yourselves are!

5. Jesus answered their charge of blasphemy and condemned their failure as leaders in Israel with the very Law they claimed to follow, 10:34-39.

- (John 10:34–39 ESV) Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’? 35 If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken— 36 do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’? 37 If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me; 38 but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.” 39 Again they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands.

A. Jesus directed them to the oracles of God to which they had been entrusted to guard and teach.

B. Very interestingly he took them to Psalm 82 which condemns the unjust rulers in Israel.

- (Psalm 82:1–2 ESV) God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgment; 2 “How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked?”

C. He condemns their lack of knowledge and understanding which resulted from walking about in darkness and caused instability in their rule.

- (Psalm 82:5 ESV) They have neither knowledge nor understanding, they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

D. He speaks of their high position as gods they have squandered and the forthcoming judgment.

- (Psalm 82:6–7 ESV) I said, “You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you; 7 nevertheless, like men you shall die, and fall like any prince.”
- (Genesis 1:26a ESV) Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion ...

E. Jesus makes the point that if God addresses them as gods—those created in his image and blessed with rule over the earth—then why is it so inconceivable for Jesus the Son of God to claim to be God.

F. It seems that when Jesus condemns them he infers that their problem was the same as in Psalm 82—that they were unjust judges and that the divine council would pronounce judgment.

CONCLUSION: A powerful juxtaposition — the command to love God — **SIDE BY SIDE** — with the practice of worshiping God but keeping ones heart far from him.

Juxtaposition: Placing dissimilar objects close together or side by side for comparison or contrast.

THE GREAT COMMAND: Love God with all your heart.

- (Deuteronomy 6:4–5 ESV) Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 5 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

THE GREAT DISOBEDIENCE: Keep your heart distant from God.

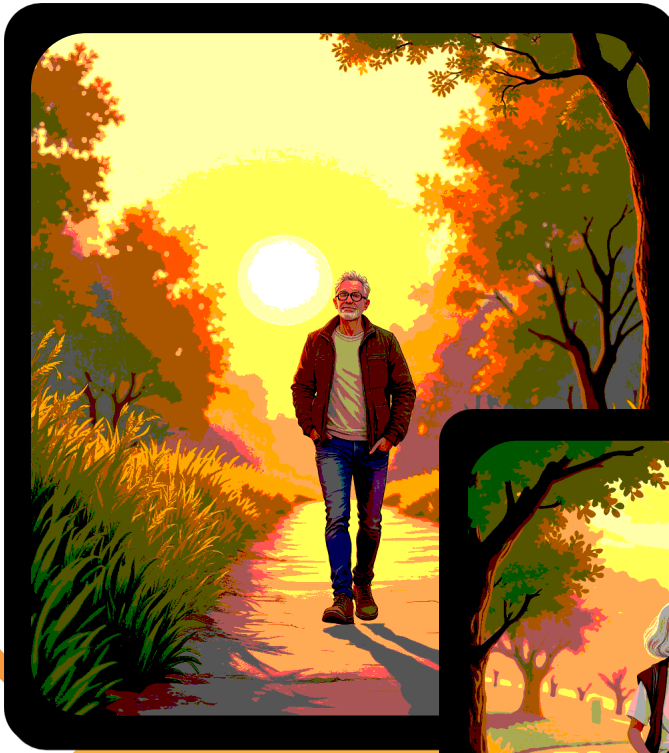
- (Isaiah 29:13–14 ESV) And the Lord said: “Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men, 14 therefore, behold, I will again do wonderful things with this people, with wonder upon wonder; and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the discernment of their discerning men shall be hidden.”

Why is there so much foolishness in the professing Church today? Too many pretenders and the wisdom and discernment of pretenders perishes and disappears.

- (Isaiah 40:8 ESV) The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

Love God and abound in life and wisdom and discernment ... pretend to love God and descend further and further into the darkness ...

THE DAYLIGHT PRINCIPLE



- **The Daylight Principle:**

If we walk in the daylight, we will not stumble through life but will make the most of our time on earth and bring glory to our God.

- **Principle:** A fundamental truth or proposition that serves as the foundation for a system of belief; a basic idea or rule that explains or controls how something happens or works.



IN BETHANY ACROSS THE JORDAN ...

1. Jesus leaves the scene of his latest battle with the Jews, 10:39.

- (John 10:39 ESV) Again they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands.

2. He returned to where his public ministry had begun, 10:40.

- (John 10:40 ESV) He went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing at first, and there he remained.
- (John 1:28 ESV) These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

In spite of all the hatred directed toward him, Jesus still had lost sheep to find and save. The many here who came to him seem to have genuinely believed.

3. Many came to him and many believed, 10:41-42.

- (John 10:41-42 ESV) And many came to him. And they said, "John did no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true." 42 And many believed in him there.
- (John 6:37 ESV) All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.
- (John 6:44 ESV) No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

Jesus will search for his sheep and rescue them from where they have been scattered. He will be the shepherd of his sheep and set everything right.

- (Luke 19:10 ESV) For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.
- (Ezekiel 34:11-12 ESV) For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. 12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness.
- (Ezekiel 34:15-16 ESV) I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God. 16 I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice.

IN BETHANY NEAR JERUSALEM ...

4. Jesus was notified by Mary and Martha that Lazarus was ill, 11:1-3.

- (John 11:1-3 ESV) Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2 It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. 3 So the sisters sent to him, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill."

Jesus had a close relationship with Mary, Martha and Lazarus, so when Lazarus became sick the sisters sent for Jesus. Lazarus was likely dead by the time Jesus was given the news since by the time he arrived Lazarus had been dead for four days. (See John 11:39.)

5. Jesus announced that the greater purpose in Lazarus' illness was the glory of God, 11:4-7.

- (John 11:4-7 ESV) But when Jesus heard it he said, "This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." 5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. 6 So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. 7 Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."

A. This is a lesson on faith and the glory of God.

B. The illness/death of Lazarus was not the main storyline in this account.

C. Jesus stayed two more days after being told that Lazarus was sick during which he would continue to redeem the time and do the works of his Father.

D. After the two days Jesus announced they were going to Judea.

6. Jesus introduces his disciples to the important concept of walking in the daylight, 11:8-10.

- (John 11:8-10 ESV) The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?" 9 Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. 10 But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

The disciples were concerned (*fearful*) about the potential danger for Jesus in going back to Judea.

THE DAYLIGHT PRINCIPLE ...

- A. We need to make our decisions in the time we have on earth based on the daylight principle.
- B. The daylight principle—walk in the light and will not stumble because we see the world for what it is.
 - i. If we walk in the day, we make decisions based on our trust in God and his word.
 - ii. We do not make decisions based on the fear of what might happen.
 - iii. We make good decisions because we make them in the context of God and eternity.
 - iv. We do not stumble because we see the reality of our lives and this world as revealed to us by God.
 - v. If we walk in the night, we will stumble and make bad decisions because we have no light/truth/reality on which to base those decisions.

7. What does it mean to walk in the daylight?

- A. To walk in the daylight is to walk in the light.

The word “day” in 1:9 means daylight and is used literally and metaphorically. Here it means that the person who walks in the day walks in the truth of God.

- B. We come to the light and walk in the light when we do the truth.

- (John 3:21a ESV) But whoever does what is true comes to the light.

So the person who walks in the daylight lives the truth and in living the truth he does not stumble because he lives in view of the reality of God and his kingdom of righteousness.

- C. Walking in the daylight has to do with the **duration** and **direction** of our time on earth—we have a predetermined number of days; we need to be doing what we should be doing during this time.

- (James 4:14–16 NLT) How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow? Your life is like the morning fog—it’s here a little while, then it’s gone. 15 What you ought to say is, “If the Lord wants us to, we will live and do this or that.” 16 Otherwise you are boasting about your own pretentious plans, and all such boasting is evil.

- D. The person who walks in the day “works the works” of God over the entirety of his or her life.

- (John 9:4 ESV) We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work.

- E. Following Jesus is walking in the light which means not walking in darkness.

- (John 8:12 ESV) Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

8. The person who walks in the light views the number of his days on earth as a stewardship determined by God.

- A. To have a heart of wisdom we must be mindful that our days are numbered.

- (Psalm 90:12 ESV) So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.

- B. God determined our days before we were born and wrote them in his book.

- (Psalm 139:16b NIV) ... all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

- C. This person is caught up in reverence and wonder at the magnitude of God’s thoughts and plans for him.

- (Psalm 139:17–18 ESV) How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! 18 If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I am still with you.
- (Psalm 40:5 NIV) Many, LORD my God, are the wonders you have done, the things you planned for us. None can compare with you; were I to speak and tell of your deeds, they would be too many to declare.

- D. The person who walks in the light is awed as she discovers the depths of her relationship with God.

9. The person who walks in the light consciously lives in view of the glory of God.

- A. When the person who walks in the light presents his body and his mind to God, he sets the course of his life away from the norms of this world.

- (Galatians 5:16b ESV) ... walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.
- (Romans 12:1–2 ESV) I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

- i. Presenting ourselves to God in this way is a holy and acceptable act of worship to God.
 - ii. In doing this we successfully turn from the world's ways and are transformed in our thinking to the ways of God.
 - iii. With our renewed minds we are now able to value and test how genuine and worthy are the ways of God and know by experience how good and acceptable and perfect is his will.
- B. The person who walks in the daylight is intent on making the best use of his time on earth and is intent on understanding the will of the Lord.**
- i. He is vigilant and careful to live wisely and not as a fool who has no interest in the will of God.
 - (Ephesians 5:15–17 ESV) Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.
 - ii. He walks in the daylight as a child of light and refuses to be deceived by or become partners with those who belong to the darkness.
 - (Ephesians 5:6–11 ESV) Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not become partners with them; 8 for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), 10 and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. 11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.
 - iii. He practices and lives by the simple instructions for doing the will of God.
 - (1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 ESV) Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
- C. The person who walks in the daylight joyfully anticipates the Spirit of God using the word of God to equip him to do the work of God.**
- (2 Timothy 3:16–17 ESV) All Scripture is

breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

- (2 Timothy 4:2 ESV) Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

D. The person who walks in the daylight treasures doing the work that God has planned for him.

- i. Jesus is our example in doing the will of God and the work of God.
 - (John 4:34 ESV) Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.”
 - (John 17:4 ESV) I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.
- ii. We were created in Christ Jesus to do good works specifically crafted for us to do.
 - (Ephesians 2:10 ESV) For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

10. Jesus announces his plan and purpose for going to Bethany, 11:11-16.

- (John 11:11–16 ESV) After saying these things, he said to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him.” 12 The disciples said to him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.” 13 Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. 14 Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus has died, 15 and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” 16 So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”
- A. Jesus reveals that God's purpose in Lazarus' death was for their sake—to grow their faith.**
- B. It is time to put the daylight principle into action.**
- C. Though Thomas needs to grow in faith and perspective he shows great love and faith.**
- D. But according to daylight time it was not time to die.**

JESUS IS LIFE

IN HIM WAS LIFE,
AND THE LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF MEN.
(JOHN 1:4 ESV)



JESUS SAID TO HER, "I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE. WHOEVER
BELIEVES IN ME, THOUGH HE DIE, YET SHALL HE LIVE, AND EVERYONE WHO LIVES
AND BELIEVES IN ME SHALL NEVER DIE. DO YOU BELIEVE THIS?"

(JOHN 11:25-26 ESV)

1. Jesus is the resurrection: It will one day be the voice of Jesus that brings the dead out of their graves to a resurrection of life or judgment.

- (John 5:25–29 ESV) Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. 26 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. 27 And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. 28 Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice 29 and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

A. Jesus promises a wonderful resurrection for all who believe in him.

- (John 6:40 ESV) For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

B. In a moment our mortal bodies will become immortal.

- (1 Corinthians 15:51–53 NLT) But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! 52 It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever. And we who are living will also be transformed. 53 For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies.

2. Jesus is the life: The person who believes in Jesus has eternal life in Jesus and will not face judgment.

- (John 3:16 ESV) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

3. Martha and Mary lived life in Jesus, 11:17-24.

- (John 11:17–24 ESV) Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. 18 Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, 19 and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. 20 So when Martha heard that

Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house.

21 Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.” 23 Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” 24 Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.”

As we observe Martha’s dialogue with Jesus as she met him, it is important that we note how carefully Jesus chooses his words in speaking to her. He speaks to Martha in a way that calls her to think beyond the temporal reality in which she lives that she might see the glory of God.

A. Martha expresses her faith in Jesus and possibly her hope that he will yet raise Lazarus from the dead.

- i. She believed that if Jesus had been there, he would have healed Lazarus.
- ii. It seems that she also held out a hint of hope that “even now” Jesus would raise him up.

B. This seems to be supported by the words Jesus spoke when the messenger reported Lazarus’ illness to him.

- (John 11:3–4 ESV) So the sisters sent to him, saying, “Lord, he whom you love is ill.” 4 But when Jesus heard it he said, “This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”

 - i. The messenger would undoubtedly have reported these words to Martha and Mary.
 - ii. At the very least these words signify something very special is happening.

C. Mary affirms her faith in the resurrection of the dead on the last day.

4. The person who has life in Jesus lives the new life that Jesus gave him, 11:25-27.

- (John 11:25–27 ESV) Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” 27 She said to him, “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.”
- (John 17:3 ESV) And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

A. Jesus states that the person who truly believes in him will live even if he dies, and shall never die—referring to the second death which involves judgment.

- (Revelation 2:11 ESV) He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.
- (Revelation 20:6 ESV) Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.
- (Revelation 20:14–15 ESV) Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.
- (Revelation 21:8 ESV) But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.

B. The person who believes in Jesus and lives in the light of this promise lives with an abounding, undaunted assurance that he will live and never die and even when he dies he shall still live.

C. So each of us should ask ourselves this question — Do we believe this?

5. This new, different life is based on the person and work of Jesus Christ.

A. **The Person:** We speak of the person of Christ because we are saved by believing in Jesus who is the resurrection and the life—the way, the truth and the life.

- (John 14:6 ESV) Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

B. **The Work:** We speak of the work of Christ because he saves us based on the gospel—his finished work on the cross.

- (1 Corinthians 15:3–4 ESV) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the

third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

C. When we believe in Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, we have life in his name because we trust the work he has done on our behalf on the cross.

- (Acts 16:29–32 ESV) And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. 30 Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” 31 And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” 32 And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.

They believed in the Lord (the Person) and the work (the word of the Lord the gospel) when Paul and Silas spoke it to them.

- (Colossians 1:5b ESV) ... Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel.

D. This is a different life as our mode of existence has shifted from death/darkness to life/light.

- (Colossians 1:13–14 ESV) He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
- (1 Peter 2:9b ESV) ... that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

E. Jesus is our life for those who truly believe.

- (John 1:4 ESV) In him was life, and the life was the light of men.
- (Colossians 3:4 ESV) When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

F. Jesus is the resurrection and the life and whoever believes in him has complete victory over all fears and power of death.

G. Martha demonstrated her saving faith in her confession — “I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world.”

- (John 20:31 ESV) ... but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

CONCLUSION: It is absolutely essential that we, the Church, understand the close connection between our obedience to the most important command and our ability to stay true to Jesus Christ and the gospel.

Doesn't it make sense biblically ... that the command that God tells us is the greatest, most important command to obey would be a primary focus of the devil to have us not obey?

And wouldn't our obedience to this most important command be a powerful counter-offensive against the attacks on the gospel?

- I. We, the Church, need to fully commit to obey God and love Jesus Christ with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind and with all our strength.
 - (Mark 12:28–30 ESV) And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, “Which commandment is the most important of all?” 29 Jesus answered, “The most important is, Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.”
- II. We, the Church, need to repent for abandoning our “all our heart” love for our Lord.
 - (Revelation 2:4–5 ESV) But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. 5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.
- III. We, the Church, need to understand the personal nature of our salvation and keep watch over our love relationship with Jesus Christ.
 - A. Our salvation is Person-oriented, so as with Eve, the devil's primary scheme is to undermine our love for this Person.
 - (2 Corinthians 11:2–3 ESV) For I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. 3 But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your

thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

- B. The person who is not fully committed in his love for Jesus Christ **will be** deceived and **will** accept the devil's variances regarding Jesus, the Spirit and the gospel.
 - (2 Corinthians 11:4 ESV) For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough.
- C. What would be one of the devil's variances you ask? Any gospel that calls for even a hint of works shows great contempt for Jesus and his finished work.
 - (Galatians 1:6–9 ESV) I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— 7 not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.
- IV. We, the Church, can gauge our love for Jesus by our obedience to him.
 - (John 14:15 ESV) If you love me, you will keep my commandments.
 - (John 8:31–32 ESV) So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”
- V. We, the Church, must believe that to honor God and his word and his gospel that it is crucial that our devotion to Christ not be diminished in even the slightest way.

JESUS WINS OVER DEATH

AND IT'S NOT EVEN CLOSE ...



AND LIKEWISE ALL WHO BELIEVE IN HIM WIN OVER DEATH ...

AND IT'S NOT EVEN CLOSE ...

-
- This study is a powerful, hope-giving overview of the absolute dominance of Jesus in his battle with and victory over death which he accomplished for his glory and for our eternal good ...

1. **Jesus wins** — He is the resurrection and the life, 11:25-27.

- (John 11:25–27 ESV) Jesus said to her, “**I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?**” 27 She said to him, “Yes, Lord; **I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God**, who is coming into the world.” (Cf. John 20:30-31).

A. Jesus raises dead people up and makes them alive.

B. The dead people who believe in Jesus are raised up to eternal life.

C. The dead people who do not believe in Jesus are raised up to judgment.

- (Daniel 12:1-2 ESV) At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. 2 **And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.**

“Many” (12:2 - Hebrew *rabbîm*) typically means all.

- (John 5:28–29 ESV) **Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice** 29 and come out, those who have done good to **the resurrection of life**, and those who have done evil to **the resurrection of judgment**.

2. **Jesus wins** — He is the archenemy of death, 11:28-37.

An archenemy is a person who is extremely hostile or opposed to someone or something; a principal enemy; a chief enemy.

- (John 11:28–37 ESV) When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, “**The Teacher is here and is calling for you.**” 29 And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him. 30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. 31 When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the

tomb to weep there. 32 Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, “**Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.**” 33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, **he was deeply moved in his spirit** and greatly troubled. 34 And he said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” 35 Jesus wept. 36 So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” 37 **But some of them said**, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?”

A. Jesus hates death and its consequences and gives a foreshadowing of his contempt for death.

Contempt is the feeling that something is beneath consideration, worthless, or deserving scorn; the act of despising; utter disrespect accompanied by a feeling of intense dislike.

B. Jesus is outraged (“deeply moved”) by death.

“**Deeply moved**” speaks of emerging emotions, in this case anger, which overflow one’s spirit. In classical Greek this word describes the snort of a war horse. Jesus is outraged (“deeply moved”) at the effects of death on his human creation.

- (Romans 5:12 ESV) Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, **and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.**

C. Jesus has had enough and is ready to show his dominance over death — “where’s the tomb?”

D. The Jews once again showed division in their thoughts about Jesus.

Some commented on his love while the others criticized his lack of action possibly insinuating his lack of love.

3. **Jesus wins** — He is Lord over the tomb, 11:38-44.

- (John 11:38–44 ESV) Then Jesus, **deeply moved again**, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. 39 Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days.” 40 Jesus said to her, “**Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?**” 41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, “**Father, I thank you that you have heard me.**” 42 **I knew that you always hear me, but I**

said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me."

43 When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." 44 The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

- A. Jesus' anger emerges again as they came to the tomb and he commands the stone to be taken away.
- B. Jesus rebukes Martha's lack of faith that she would see the glory of God.
- C. Jesus states the purpose of his prayer.
- D. Jesus resurrects dead Lazarus as he commands him to come out.

4. Jesus wins — He exposes the division between true believers and doubters, 11:45-53.

- (John 11:45–53 ESV) Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him, 46 but some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. 47 So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council and said, "What are we to do?" For this man performs many signs. 48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation." 49 But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all. 50 Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish." 51 He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, 52 and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. 53 So from that day on they made plans to put him to death.

- A. Many believed in Jesus while others determined that he was a threat to their place in religion and society and must be stopped,

Division again: Some believed and some tattled.

- B. The chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council to decide what to do.

They determined that Jesus must die or they would lose their standing in the world—their place and their

nation. Caiaphas prophesied that Jesus needed to die.

A modern day application would be the power struggle within a church fellowship to remove a leader because he is a threat/obstacle to someone's perceived position and desired identity for the church.

- C. From that day on they made plans to put him to death—an organized determination to kill Jesus which is different than the isolated threats before.

- (John 5:18 ESV) This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.
- (John 7:1 ESV) After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him.
- (John 8:37 ESV) I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you.
- (John 8:40 ESV) But now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did.

- D. The chief priests and the Pharisees were mere pawns in the providence of Almighty God.

- (Acts 2:22–24 ESV) Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— 23 this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. 24 God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

- E. The chief priests and the Pharisees were the latest in a long line of foolish rulers raging against Yahweh.

- (Psalm 2:1–6 ESV) Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us." 4 He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision. 5 Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in

his fury, saying, 6 “As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.”

F. The chief priests and the Pharisees would do well to heed the warning to the kings and rulers of the earth.

- (Psalm 2:10–12 ESV) Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. 11 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

CONCLUSION: Jesus winning means we win ...

I. We win – Jesus laid down his life for us.

- (John 10:11 ESV) I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.
- (John 10:15 ESV) Just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.
- (John 10:17–18 ESV) For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.

II. We win – Jesus submitted himself in his humanity and in his humility to accomplish his gospel mission—his death, burial and resurrection.

- (Philippians 2:8 ESV) And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
- (1 Corinthians 15:3–4 ESV) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

III. We win – Jesus utterly humiliated the forces of darkness when he nailed our record of debt on the cross and then rose from the grave.

- (Colossians 2:13–15 ESV) And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our

trespasses, 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. 15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

IV. We win – Jesus died to destroy the power of death held by the devil.

- (Hebrews 2:14–15 ESV) Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

V. We win – Jesus has complete dominance over death—he has the keys of Death and Hades.

- (Revelation 1:18 ESV) And the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.

VI. We win – Jesus exercised his overwhelming power and influence in achieving our victory over death as he swallowed up death in victory.

- (1 Corinthians 15:54–57 ESV) When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” 55 “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

VII. We win – Therefore be this ...

- (1 Corinthians 15:58 ESV) Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

We are more than conquerors in Christ ...

- (Romans 8:31 ESV) What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?
- (Romans 8:37 ESV) No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

TRUE **THE WITNESS PEOPLE OF GOD**



True ... real, genuine, authentic, not false; not make-believe; in accordance with fact or reality; being what exists, rather than what was thought, intended, or stated.



1. Jesus keeps his distance from lookers and pretenders, 11:54-57.

- (John 11:54-57 ESV) Jesus therefore no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there to the region near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim, and there he stayed with the disciples. 55 Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves. 56 They were looking for Jesus and saying to one another as they stood in the temple, “What do you think? That he will not come to the feast at all?” 57 Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where he was, he should let them know, so that they might arrest him.

Pretense – make-believe; an attempt to make something that is not the case appear true.

2. Jesus stands up for his worshipers, 12:1-8.

- (John 12:1-8 ESV) Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. 2 So they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table. 3 Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. 4 But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said, 5 “Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?” 6 He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it. 7 Jesus said, “Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial. 8 For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me.”

3. Lazarus alive was a threat to the make-believe religion of the chief priests, 12:9-11.

- (John 12:9-11 ESV) When the large crowd of the Jews learned that Jesus was there, they came, not only on account of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. 10 So the chief priests made plans to

put Lazarus to death as well, 11 because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus.

4. Jesus, seen as the Christ, the Son of God, presents the greatest threat to those clinging to the make-believe world of religion, 12:12-19.

- (John 12:12-19 ESV) The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. 13 So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!” 14 And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written, 15 “Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey’s colt!” 16 His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to him. 17 The crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. 18 The reason why the crowd went to meet him was that they heard he had done this sign. 19 So the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him.”

5. The request of these Greek worshipers prompted Jesus to signal the epochal change that was about to take place in his salvation plan, 12:20-22.

A group of worshipers (Greeks–Gentiles, non-Jews) approached Philip signifying a monumental shift from the Jews being the witness people of God to the Church (Gentiles/Jews) being the witness people of God.

- (John 12:20-22 ESV) Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. 21 So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” 22 Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

A. The group of worshipers (proselytes) came to Philip and requested an interview with Jesus.

These people were Gentile converts to the one true religion; non-Jews who had converted to Judaism, adopting Jewish customs and religious practices.

B. The LORD has always provided a way for non-Jews to join themselves to him.

- (Isaiah 56:6–7 ESV) And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it, and holds fast my covenant— 7 these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.
- (Isaiah 49:6 ESV) He says: “It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”
- (Isaiah 45:22 ESV) Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.

C. The Jews had continued their pattern of abandoning God and chasing after man-made religion.

- (Acts 13:46–48 ESV) And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, “It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.” 47 For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, “I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.” 48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed.
- (Jeremiah 2:5 ESV) Thus says the LORD: “What wrong did your fathers find in me that they went far from me, and went after worthlessness, and became worthless?”
- (Judges 2:11–13 ESV) And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals. 12 And they abandoned the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed down to them. And they provoked the LORD to anger. 13 They abandoned the LORD and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth.

D. This time in salvation history marks the change from the Jews being the witness people of God to the Gentiles being the witness people of God.

- (Ephesians 2:14–16 ESV) For he himself is our peace, who has made us both [*Jews and Gentiles*] one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility 15 ... that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.
- (Romans 9:23–26 ESV) In order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory— 24 even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles? 25 As indeed he says in Hosea, “Those who were not my people I will call ‘my people,’ and her who was not beloved I will call ‘beloved.’” 26 “And in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ there they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’”

6. The hour had come for Jesus to be glorified in his death, burial and resurrection, 12:23.

- (John 12:23 ESV) And Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.”

A. Up to this point Jesus had always spoken of “the hour” as yet to come.

- (John 2:4 ESV) And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.”
- (John 7:30b ESV) ... but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come.
- (John 8:20b ESV) ... but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.
- (Matthew 26:45b ESV) ... See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.”

B. We need to understand that salvation is the glory work of God—that absolutely everything God has done, is doing and will do is for his glory.

Everything that Christ accomplished on earth—his life, death, burial and resurrection—was planned in the Divine Council of the Holy Trinity in eternity past before God created this world.

C. The Son of Man is glorified in bringing us to glory as his glorious work.

- (2 Corinthians 3:18 NASB95) But we all, with unveiled face, **beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory**, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.
- (Romans 8:29–30 ESV) For **those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son**, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And **those whom he predestined he also called**, and **those whom he called he also justified**, **and those whom he justified he also glorified**.

7. Following Jesus and so dying to ourselves is the mark of the true witness people of God, 12:24-26.

- (John 12:24–26 ESV) Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies**, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25 **Whoever loves his life loses it**, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 **If anyone serves me, he must follow me**; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

A. The true witness people of God follow God.

B. The person who does not lose his life and follow Jesus is not a witness for God.

This person is deceived in his beliefs and has fallen prey to his misconceptions and opinions regarding God and the salvation he offers. He has become ensnared in the same religious trap as the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees who were seemingly oblivious to the fact that even though they professed to know and represent God they had abandoned God.

C. The true witness people of God firmly believe that it was necessary for Jesus to die, not to save the nation, but to bear the fruit of salvation.

D. The true witness people of God firmly believe that we need to die to ourselves to be fruitful.

- (2 Peter 1:8 ESV) For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, **they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ**.

E. The true witness people of God know we must not

love our lives in this world or we will lose them.

F. The true witness people of God know that hating our lives in this world is keeping our lives for eternity.

G. The true witness people of God serve Jesus, follow Jesus and live in his presence.

H. The true witness people of God are honored by the Father.

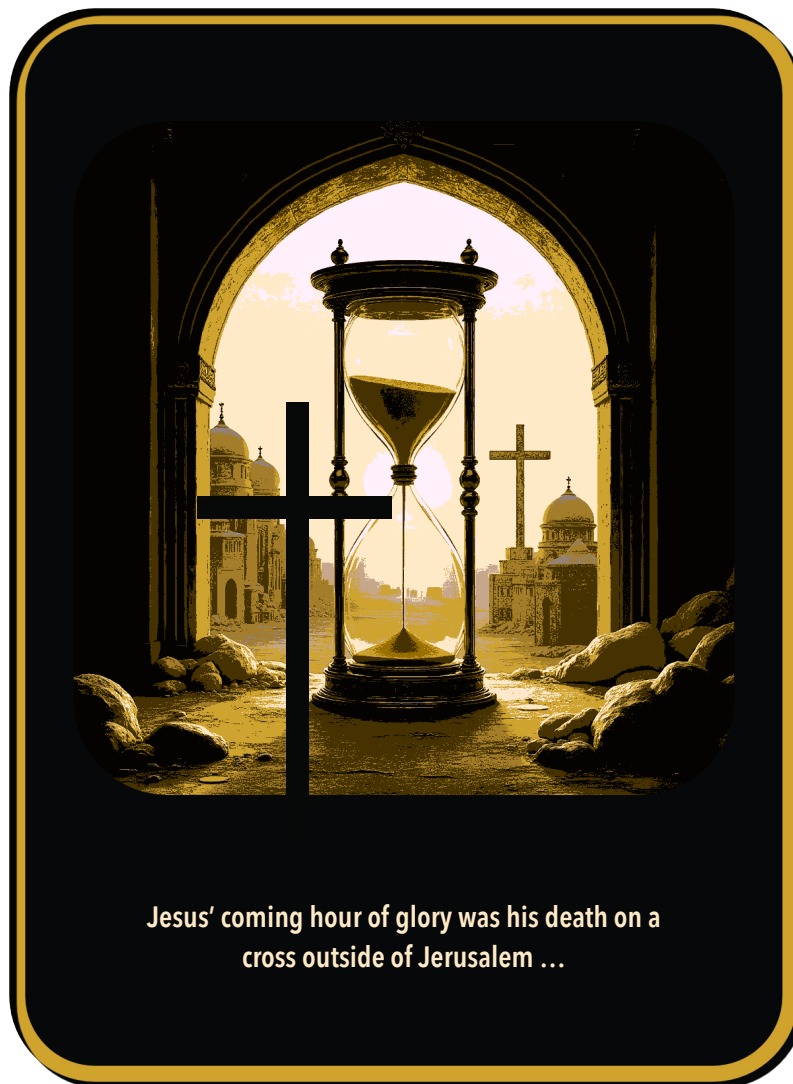
CONCLUSION: Do I serve Jesus ... follow Jesus?

Simple, clear teaching ... "If anyone serves me, he must follow me." It is the servant who loses his life and follows Jesus who lives in the presence of Jesus.

So that is the question each of us must answer ... Do I follow Jesus? Or do I merely say I follow Jesus and live in a world of pretend ... make-believe?

- I. To have any idea as to the magnitude of the opportunity before us we must follow Jesus and live in his presence.
- II. True believers follow Jesus and abide in his word and know the truth and live in freedom and in the light of the glory to come.
- III. Does that describe your life?
- IV. When we follow Jesus, we bring glory to God and live in the light of his glory.
- V. Following Jesus means daily living in submission to and obedience to him through his word.

JESUS' HOUR OF GLORY



Jesus' coming hour of glory was his death on a
cross outside of Jerusalem ...

—WAS DEATH ON A CROSS—

Jesus' coming hour of glory was his death on the cross. It was the signature event of his time on earth; his very purpose for coming into our world. This event was the prophesied, providential, long awaited hour in which the glory of God would be manifested in the completion of his sovereign purpose and plan regarding salvation and judgment.

1. Jesus was troubled—his hour had come, 12:27–33.

A. It was time to fulfill his purpose in coming to earth.

B. Jesus verbalized the troubled state of his soul as he faced the most difficult hour of his life—dying on a cross.

- (John 12:27–33 ESV) Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour?' **But for this purpose I have come to this hour.** 28 **Father, glorify your name.** Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." 29 The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." 30 Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not mine. 31 **Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out.** 32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." 33 He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

C. This hour was **the** hour that would bring glory to God—Father and Son, 12:23.

- (John 12:23 ESV) And Jesus answered them, "**The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.**"

D. This hour was affirmed by the Apostle Paul as "of first importance."

- (1 Corinthians 15:3–4 ESV) For I delivered to you as of **first importance** what I also received: **that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures**, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

E. The once-for-all act of Jesus dying on the cross would bring glory to God and judgment on the world.

- (Hebrews 9:26b ESV) But as it is, **he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.**

- (Hebrews 10:10 ESV) And by that will **we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**

2. As was their pattern from the beginning, the crowd responded with disbelief and denial, 12:34.

- (John 12:34 ESV) So the crowd answered him, "**We have heard** from the Law that the Christ remains forever. **How can you say** that the Son of Man must be lifted up? **Who is this Son of Man?**"

A. They knew **some truth** about the Messiah and probably had favorite Scriptures in mind that supported their limited understanding of Messiah.

- (Isaiah 9:7a ESV) Of the increase of his government and of peace **there will be no end**, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness **from this time forth and forevermore.**
- (Daniel 7:14 ESV) **And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom**, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; **his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away**, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

Lesson: A partial, curated approach to Scripture that yields only **some truth** about Christ leads to damnation.

B. To their great harm they carelessly paid no attention to the Scriptures that prophesied the suffering Servant who would come before the conquering King.

- (Isaiah 53:3–4 ESV) **He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief**; and as one from whom men hide their faces **he was despised, and we esteemed him not.** 4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; **yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God**, and afflicted.

C. They once again denied who he was—mocking Jesus, not inquiring of him ... "Who is this Son of Man?"

Lesson: The person who does not believe the words of Jesus remains blind to the identity of Jesus.

Transition: Jesus, as at other times, does not answer their question. They were not actually asking a question but were mocking. They didn't need more information; they needed to believe his words and his works.

3. Jesus responds to the crowd with an exhortation and a dire warning, 12:35-36a.

- (John 12:35–36a ESV) So Jesus said to them, “The light is among you for a little while longer. **Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.** 36 While you **have** the light, **believe in the light, that** you may become sons of light.”

A. Jesus exhorts them to live in obedience to the light while they have the light—follow him while they can.

Jesus, the light of the world, would soon be gone in physical presence as he faces his death on the cross.

B. Jesus gives them a dire warning regarding the treacherous nature of delayed obedience.

Lesson: Respond in obedience to the truth at the moment of recognition or possibly lose the opportunity forever as darkness overtakes your life.

- (Psalm 95:7–8 ESV) For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. **Today, if you hear his voice, 8 do not harden your hearts,** as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness.
- (Proverbs 28:14 ESV) **Blessed is the one who fears the LORD always, but whoever hardens his heart will fall into calamity.**
- (Isaiah 66:2 ESV) All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the Lord. **But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.**
- (Hebrews 3:7–11 ESV) Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, “**Today, if you hear his voice, 8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness, 9 where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years. 10 Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.’ 11 As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my rest.’**”
- (Also in Hebrews 3:15, 4:7.)

C. The person who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going since the only way we know where we are going is to follow Jesus and walk in the light.

D. Jesus lastly states a wonderful principle and a promise—believe the light while you have the light and become sons of light.

- (Ephesians 5:8 ESV) **For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.**

4. His people still did not receive him, 12:36b–43.

A. As stated from the very beginning of the Gospel of John, his people did not receive him.

- (John 1:11 ESV) **He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.**

B. Jesus removed his presence from them because of their continued unbelief.

- (John 12:36b ESV) When Jesus had said these things, **he departed and hid himself from them.**

C. They still did not believe in him.

- John 12:37 ESV) **Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him.**

D. Prophecy fulfilled: They had crossed the line of no return and now could no longer believe in him.

- (John 12:38–40 ESV) **So that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:** “Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” 39 **Therefore they could not believe.** For again Isaiah said, 40 “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them.”

5. Yes ... Isaiah was talking about Jesus.

- (John 12:41 ESV) Isaiah said these things **because he saw his glory and spoke of him.**

Wow! Lord [Adonai] and LORD of hosts [Yahweh] in Isaiah 53:1 and Isaiah 6:10 and quoted in John 12:38-40 are references to Jesus.

- (Isaiah 6:1–3 ESV) In the year that King Uzziah died **I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up;** and the train of his robe filled the temple. 2 Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one called to another and said: **“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!”**

CONCLUSION: Do I KNOW JESUS AND LOVE HIM AND KEEP HIS WORDS

... OR DO I REJECT HIM AND REMAIN IN THE DARKNESS?

I. Jesus loudly and passionately describes what happens when a person believes in him, 12:44-46.

- (John 12:44–46 ESV) And Jesus cried out and said, “Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. 45 And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. 46 I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.”

A. Whoever believes in Jesus believes in the Father who sent him and whoever sees him sees the Father who sent him.

B. Jesus came into the world as light so that whoever believes in him may not remain in darkness.

- (Colossians 1:13 ESV) He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.

C. Whoever does not believe in him remains in darkness because all are in darkness apart from the light.

II. Jesus passionately warns those who hear his words and do not keep his words, 12:47-48..

- (John 12:47–48 ESV) If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. 48 The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day.

A. Jesus says he does not judge that person because he came not to judge but to save.

B. The one who hears his words and does not keep [to conform one’s action or practice to] his words rejects him.

C. The person who hears his words, does not keep them, rejects Jesus and does not receive his words has a judge.

D. The words that this person heard but neither kept nor received will be judged by those words on the last day.

III. Jesus explains why—he spoke the Father’s words on the Father’s authority, 12:49-50.

- (John 12:49–50 ESV) For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—

what to say and what to speak. 50 And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.

A. Whoever hears the words of Jesus but does not keep them rejects Jesus and rejects the Father.

B. The words that Jesus spoke were the Father’s command for eternal life.

- (1 John 3:23 ESV) And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.

CONCLUSION TO THE CONCLUSION: The person who loves Jesus keeps his word and is being conformed to the image of Jesus the Son of God.

The person who loves Jesus hears his words and obeys his words. He conforms his actions and life practices to what Jesus says. By this she demonstrates that she is following Jesus and walking in the light as a child of the light, i.e. as one who no longer remains in the darkness.

- (Romans 8:29a ESV) For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.

- (1 Peter 1:14 ESV) As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance.

- (Colossians 3:10 ESV) And have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

- (John 14:23–24 ESV) Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. 24 Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me.

- (1 John 2:4–5a ESV) Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, 5 but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected.

- (Revelation 3:8 ESV) I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.

THE BLESSING OF HUMILITY

*IF YOU KNOW THESE THINGS,
BLESSED ARE YOU IF YOU DO THEM.*

(JOHN 13:17 ESV)



JESUS TEACHES A MASTER CLASS
IN SERVANTHOOD

1. The Setting: This was “the Lord’s Supper” and took place on the night in which he was betrayed.

- (Matthew 26:24–28 ESV) **The Son of Man goes as it is written of him**, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.” 25 Judas, who would betray him, answered, “Is it I, Rabbi?” He said to him, “You have said so.” 26 **Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread**, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “**Take, eat; this is my body.**” 27 **And he took a cup**, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, **28 for this is my blood of the covenant**, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.
- *This is the same event in Mark 14:21–24, Luke 22:19–22, 1 Corinthians 11:23–32.*

2. Knowing that it was time for him to leave this world Jesus loved his disciples to the end by teaching them the blessing of serving one another, 13:1-5.

- (John 13:1–5 ESV) Now before the Feast of the Passover, **when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.** 2 **During supper**, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him, 3 Jesus, **knowing** that the Father had given all things into his hands, **and that he had come from God and was going back to God**, 4 rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. 5 Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

It was at this supper the Lord instituted communion – “the Lord’s supper.”

- A. We are to serve one another as Christ served us.
- B. Jesus loved his own to the end by teaching them this necessary lesson in humility,
- C. The blessing of this lesson would be vital to their spiritual growth and service.
- D. The foot washing was a demonstration of the mind of Christ in regard to the humility (and sometimes humiliation) of obedience.

This act of foot washing in their culture was not

merely a demonstration of gentle humility but an act of humiliation for the lowest servant. We should note that someone in the group should have already done this, so we can imagine the embarrassment this caused when the Lord took it upon himself to wash their feet.

- (Philippians 2:5–8 ESV) Have **this mind** among yourselves, **which is yours in Christ Jesus**, 6 **who, though he was in the form of God**, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 **but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant**, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, **he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.**

E. Jesus knew that his time was limited—that he would soon be going back to God via the cross and consequent resurrection.

F. We also have a limited time on earth and the Apostle Paul exhorts us to make the best use of our time.

- (Ephesians 5:15–21 ESV) Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, 16 **making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.** 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, **but be filled with the Spirit**, 19 addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, 20 giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 **submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.**

The foremost motivation of the evil days should be the great opportunity to be wise stewards of our time and serve the Lord in such a time as this.

- i. We are to carefully examine how we live so that we live as wise people and not fools.
 - ii. We will then understand what the will of the Lord is.
 - iii. The “outside influence” in our lives will be the filling of the Spirit, not alcohol or other “medications.”
 - iv. We will be a worshipping, thankful people.
 - v. We will submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.
- G. Teaching his disciples to serve one another in this dark world was an expression of his love.

3. The lesson that Jesus teaches on servanthood continues to yield deeper, richer blessings as our understanding increases, 13:6-11.

- (John 13:6–11 ESV) He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, do you wash my feet?” 7 Jesus answered him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.” 8 Peter said to him, “You shall never wash my feet.” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no share with me.” 9 Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!” 10 Jesus said to him, “The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.” 11 For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

A. Obey the biblical instruction and our understanding follows and increases as a fruitful result.

B. Christ makes a distinction between the washing of feet (maintenance) and bathing (salvation which makes a person completely clean.)

C. Christ explains to Peter that this washing was necessary to maintain fellowship with God.

D. The Apostle John gives further insight.

- (1 John 1:7–10 ESV) But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

4. Jesus finished and then revealed his intent and purpose—they were to live in humility toward one another, 13:12-16.

- (John 13:12–16 ESV) When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, “Do you understand what I have done to you?” 13 You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. 16 Truly,

truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.

A. Jesus reviewed and expanded the lesson using himself as the outstanding example of true humility.

B. If Jesus is Lord and Teacher and practices humility toward his disciples, then how can we not practice humility toward one another.

C. We need to pay much closer attention to this—one of the last and most important lessons Jesus taught in his limited time left on earth.

D. In emphasizing a life of humility Jesus reveals our need for this emphasis—our sinful, human pride.

E. To defeat our pride in our relationships with one another we must practice the discipline of laying down our lives for one another.

- (John 15:12–13 ESV) This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

- (Philippians 2:3–4 ESV) Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

F. The person who doesn’t accept the Lord’s teaching on humility is completely unaware that he is on the wide path of destruction.

- i. He exalts himself as a servant who is greater than his master and as a messenger who is greater than the one who sent him.
- ii. He is thoroughly defeated by his pride and is blind to his self-exaltation.

5. The blessing is in the doing, 13:17-20.

- (John 13:17–20 ESV) If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. 18 I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But the Scripture will be fulfilled, ‘He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.’ 19 I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he. 20 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.”

A. The underlying, foundational truth in this text is that living a life of humility brings God’s blessing.

B. “These things” are the practical, concrete examples that form the discipline of living a life of humility—e.g. the act of washing the feet of your peers.

C. Knowing “these things” is a qualifier—the first step toward the blessing.

Know – οἶδα [oida] – to know or be aware of a fact or a specific piece of information; to get knowledge of, understand; to have knowledge or information about.

D. This lesson is about victory over our pride.

E. If you know “these things” regarding the teaching of a life of humility, you are blessed if you do them.

Blessed– μακάριος [makarios]– to be blessed, happy; characterized by happiness and being highly favored (as by divine grace).

F. Doing these things completes the circuit and the person receives the blessing of God.

G. The blessing is a life of humility characterized by happiness and a keen awareness of being highly favored by God.

CONCLUSION: WHAT CHARACTERIZES YOUR LIFE? DO PEOPLE SEE JOY AND GRACE IN YOU?

That a person's life is not characterized by joy and a sense of the favor of God in his life is a strong indicator that he remains captive to his pride.

Do people see the fruit of the Spirit in your life?

- (Galatians 5:22–23a ESV) **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control.**

Do they see a person clothed in humility and bathed in the grace of God?

- (1 Peter 5:5b ESV) **Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”**
- (James 4:6 ESV) But **he gives more grace.** Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud but **gives grace to the humble.**”

Do they see a doer of the word who is blessed in his doing?

- (James 1:22, 25 ESV) But **be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ... the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.**

Do they see someone who lives in and delights in God's word?

- (Psalm 1:1–2 ESV) **Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.**

Do they see someone whose sin is forgiven?

- (Psalm 32:1–2 ESV) **Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. 2 Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.**

Do they see someone who takes refuge in God?

- (Psalm 34:8 ESV) Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! **Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!**

Do they see a tree planted by the water?

- (Jeremiah 17:7–8 ESV) **Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. 8 He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.**



HE IS LIKE A TREE PLANTED BY STREAMS OF WATER THAT YIELDS ITS FRUIT IN ITS SEASON, AND ITS LEAF DOES NOT WITHER. IN ALL THAT HE DOES, HE PROSPERS.

(PSALM 1:3 ESV)

A New Commandment



Love
one
another
as I have
loved you

love one another
as I have loved you

FINDING OUR WAY THROUGH THE NIGHT, BRINGING GLORY TO GOD ...

THE BETRAYAL OF JUDAS ...

1. Jesus suffered in his spirit as he sent out Judas to begin the final stage of Judas' betrayal, 13:21-30.

- (John 13:21–30 ESV) After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, **“Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.”** 22 The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke. 23 One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was reclining at table at Jesus' side, 24 so Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. 25 So that disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to him, “Lord, who is it?” 26 Jesus answered, “It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it.” So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. 27 **Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him.** Jesus said to him, **“What you are going to do, do quickly.”** 28 Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. 29 Some thought that, because Judas had the moneybag, Jesus was telling him, “Buy what we need for the feast,” or that he should give something to the poor. 30 So, after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out. **And it was night.**

A. Jesus is troubled in spirit and announces his betrayal to the twelve.

B. Jesus' spirit was anguished because he was betrayed by a “close friend” —one of the twelve.

- (Psalm 41:9 ESV) Even my close friend in whom I trusted, **who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.**
- (John 13:18 ESV) I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. **But the Scripture will be fulfilled, ‘He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.’**

C. Jesus identifies Judas as the betrayer.

D. Jesus sends out Judas to initiate his part in the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.

Judas' betrayal of Jesus was according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God. He was one of those who delivered up Jesus to be killed.

- (John 13:27b) Jesus said to him, **“What you are going to do, do quickly.”**
- (Acts 2:22–24 ESV) Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man

attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— 23 this Jesus, **delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God**, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. 24 God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

Definite [ὁρίζω [horizo] – to be determined (planned); to be appointed or become definitely decided and described precisely in outcome or nature; to decree, ordain.

Foreknowledge [πρόγνωσις - prognosis] – forethought, pre-arrangement; planning or plotting in advance of acting.

Transition: Satan entered Judas and the plan to murder Jesus was now fully set in motion. The heavy darkness of sin and wickedness had settled on the spiritual landscape. John described it in this way ... **“And it was night”** ... and in this context Jesus directs the remaining eleven men to the glory of God and gives them a new commandment.

How would they make it through the night in such a way to bring glory to God? They would obey Jesus and love each other as Jesus had loved them.

A NEW (AND VITAL) COMMANDMENT ...

2. Jesus officially declares that now is the Son of Man glorified, 13:31-35.

- (John 13:31–35 ESV) When he had gone out, Jesus said, **“Now is the Son of Man glorified**, and God is glorified in him. 32 If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. 33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going you cannot come.’ 34 **A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.** 35 **By this all people will know that you are my disciples**, if you have love for one another.”

Setting the context for the giving of the new commandment ...

A. W. Pink ... But wherein was Christ's death on the Cross His glorification? Notice, first, that He said, **“Now**

is the Son of man glorified." It was the Son of God as incarnate who was "glorified" on the Cross. **But how?** ... in that He there performed the greatest work which the whole history of the entire universe ever witnessed, or ever will witness. For it the centuries waited; to it the centuries look back. [Pink, A. W. (1923-1945). *Exposition of the Gospel of John* (p. 744). Bible Truth Depot.]

- A. Jesus' announcement coincided with Judas' betrayal since this set in motion the means by which the Son of Man would be glorified—his death, burial and resurrection.
- B. Jesus would soon be leaving this earth.
- C. So he gave his disciples a new commandment.
- D. Obedience to this new commandment was vital to their ability to contend with the night while continuing in love and service to their Lord to the glory of God.

Vital: Absolutely necessary or important; essential; of the utmost importance; necessary for the success or continued existence of something.

- E. Obedience to this new commandment would identify them as Jesus' disciples.
- F. And conversely not obeying this new commandment would identify someone as **not** a disciple of Jesus.
 - (1 John 2:7-11 ESV) Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you have heard. 8 At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. 9 Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. 10 Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. 11 But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.
- G. The one who hates has stumbled in and has been overcome by the night ... the darkness.

EXCURSUS

WHY DOES JESUS CALL THIS A NEW COMMANDMENT?

- I. First, we should establish that this is a commandment and that a commandment is to be obeyed to receive the promised blessing of God in our lives.

- II. Second, we should establish that this is a new commandment because that is precisely what Jesus said it was.
- III. Third, to love in this way they must first learn that humility comes before love—the foot washing lesson.
- IV. Fourth, the precise details that Jesus gives as to how they are to obey this commandment demonstrates the newness of his command.
 - A. Jesus directs this new commandment to a specific group of people—our brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - B. Although loving out neighbor still applies to our lives, this command is distinct from the second great commandment in whom we are commanded to love.
 - C. Jesus makes another distinction in the new command in that they are to love one another just as he had loved them.
- V. Jesus gives them this new command with a very specific context and goal in mind—serving and loving him to the glory of God in the darkness of the night.

RELEVANT SCRIPTURES AND FURTHER INSIGHTS

Note: Jesus states "this is my commandment."

- (John 15:12-17 ESV) This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command you. ... 17 These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

Note: Through love serve.

- (Galatians 5:13 ESV) For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

Note: This love is to increase and abound as it is the means by which he establishes our hearts in holiness.

- (1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 ESV) And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, 13 so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Note: We are to love one another more and more.

- (1 Thessalonians 4:9-10 ESV) Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another. 10 for that indeed is what you are doing to all the

brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more.

Note: We are to motivate one another to love in this way and to regularly meet to promote this love.

- (Hebrews 10:24–25 ESV) And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Note: Obedience to the word of God purifies our souls resulting in loving one another from a pure heart.

- (1 Peter 1:22 ESV) Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart,

Note: To love one another has been taught since the beginning and this is love—that we walk according to his commandments. .

- (2 John 5–6 ESV) And now I ask you, dear lady—not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but the one we have had from the beginning—that we love one another. 6 And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it.

END EXCURSUS

THE BETRAYAL OF PETER ...

3. Peter will later learn that bringing glory to Jesus first means the bitter failure of self, 13:36-38.

- (John 13:36–38 ESV) Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus answered him, “Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward.” 37 Peter said to him, “Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.” 38 Jesus answered, “Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.”

A. Human courage and self-determination are not enough to lay down our lives for Jesus.

B. Until we are willing to lay down our lives for Jesus we are unable to lay down our lives for one another.

C. To bring glory to God as the body of Jesus Christ, we must obey his new commandment.

CONCLUSION: It is time to evaluate our love for Jesus by examining our love for the people of his pasture ... the sheep of his hand ...

What have we observed over our lifetime in the church?

Have we observed the people of God loving one another as Jesus loves us ...

Or have we observed mere human love ... loving each other as sinners love and pretending that we are loving as Jesus commanded us to love ...

- I. The love that Jesus commands is supernatural love and is only produced in our lives as we are led by the Spirit of God.

- (Galatians 5:22a–23 ESV) But the fruit of the Spirit is love ...

- II. The love that Jesus commands is to supersede all other love including the natural human love we have for our families.

- (Luke 6:32–33 ESV) If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.

- III. The love that Jesus commands is “by faith” love and is the only way to love our brothers and sisters in Christ that honors and pleases our Lord.

- (Hebrews 11:6 ESV) And without faith it is impossible to please him ...
- (Galatians 2:20 ESV) I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

- IV. The love that Jesus commands binds our fellowship in perfect harmony as the peace of Christ rules in our hearts.

- (Colossians 3:14–15 ESV) And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

BELIEVING IN JESUS



THE LORD LIVES, AND BLESSED BE MY ROCK,
AND EXALTED BE MY GOD, THE ROCK OF MY SALVATION.

(2 SAMUEL 22:47 ESV)

THE BLESSED REALITY OF THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN JESUS AND BELIEVE WHAT HE SAYS ...

1. Those who believe in Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God have untroubled hearts because we believe what he says and obey him, 14:1.

- (John 14:1 ESV) Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.

A. Those who believe in Jesus stop the shaking and moving at the very core of our being because we believe what Jesus tells us.

Troubled – to be distressed, disquieted; anxious, stirred up; struck with fear and dread.

Heart – figuratively our innermost being; the fountain and seat of our intellect, emotions and will.

B. Those who believe in Jesus make known to God our troubling, disquieting thoughts by prayers and supplications and he guards our hearts in Jesus.

- (Philippians 4:6–7 ESV) Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

C. Those who believe in Jesus fix our attention fully on Jesus and do not lose heart.

- (Hebrews 12:1b–3 NIV) And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

D. Those who believe in Jesus set him always before us.

- (Psalm 16:8 ESV) I have set the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.

E. Those who believe in Jesus wait for him alone.

- (Psalm 62:1–2 ESV) For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation. 2 He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.

F. Those who believe in Jesus trust in him at all times and wait in silence for him.

- (Psalm 62:5–8 ESV) For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from

him. 6 He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken.

7 On God rests my salvation and my glory; my mighty rock, my refuge is God.

8 Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us. Selah

G. Those who believe in Jesus know that the kingdom we belong to is unshakable.

- (Hebrews 12:27–29 ESV) This phrase, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, 29 for our God is a consuming fire.

H. Those who believe in Jesus know that he is our rock ... our refuge, shield, salvation and stronghold.

- (2 Samuel 22:2–3 ESV) He said, “The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, 3 my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge, my savior; you save me from violence.”

I. Those who believe in Jesus love Jesus who is our strength.

- (Psalm 18:1–2 ESV) I love you, O LORD, my strength. 2 The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

J. Those who believe in Jesus as our great God and great King worship him and bow down before him as the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.

- (Psalm 95:3, 6–7a ESV) For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. ... 6 Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! 7 For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

2. Those who believe in Jesus believe what he says about our future with him, 14:2-6.

- (John 14:2–6 ESV) In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have

told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. 4 And you know the way to where I am going.” 5 Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” 6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

- A. Jesus tells us that he has gone ahead to prepare a place for us.
- B. Jesus tells us that he will come again and take us to himself to be with him.
- C. Jesus tells those who believe in him and believe him everything we need to know about the way ... that he is, in fact, the way.
- D. Jesus tells us that he is the only way.
- E. The person who teaches that Jesus is a way and not the way teaches a false gospel and is accursed.
 - (Galatians 1:8 ESV) But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.
- F. Those who love Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, hate every evil, false way that reduces Jesus and his finished work on the cross as merely one option among many.
 - (Psalm 119:101–104 ESV) I hold back my feet from every evil way, in order to keep your word. 102 I do not turn aside from your rules, for you have taught me. 103 How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! 104 Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.
 - (Psalm 119:127–128 ESV) Therefore I love your commandments above gold, above fine gold. 128 Therefore I consider all your precepts to be right; I hate every false way.

3. Those who believe in and believe Jesus are doubly affirmed and assured because we know that knowing Jesus is knowing the Father also, 14:7-11.

- (John 14:7–11 ESV) If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.” 8 Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” 9 Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long,

and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. 11 Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

- A. No foe can stand against those who believe in Jesus and who hear and believe what he says about his affirming role in our lives.
 - (Romans 8:31 ESV) What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?
 - (Psalm 118:6–7 ESV) The Lord is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me? 7 The Lord is on my side as my helper; I shall look in triumph on those who hate me.
 - (Psalm 54:4 ESV) Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life.
 - (Psalm 56:4 ESV) In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can flesh do to me?
- B. Knowing Jesus is knowing the Father and this is eternal life.
 - (John 17:3 ESV) And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.
- C. Sometimes the lines of our human categories and reference points being blurred is a wondrous thing, such as seeing Jesus is seeing the Father.
- D. Knowing Jesus we know that his words and works are the words and works of the Father.

4. Those who believe in and believe Jesus receive and hold fast to the stunning, astonishing stewardship of the greater works with which Jesus blesses us, 14:12-14.

- (John 14:12–14 ESV) Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. 13 Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.
- A. Jesus forwards his mission agenda and vision of service to us as he promises amazing things to those who believe in him.

- Whoever believes in Jesus will do the works that Jesus did.
- Whoever believes in Jesus will do greater works than Jesus did.
- Whatever the person who believes in Jesus asks in Jesus' name Jesus will do.
- The person who believes in Jesus may ask Jesus anything in his name and he will do that.

B. Jesus promises that every saved person will do the works that Jesus did—whoever believes in me.

- (John 14:12 ESV) Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.

To understand this we need to set the context of the Gospel of John by reviewing the stated purpose.

- (John 20:30–31 ESV) Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

C. Those who believe in Jesus will do the work of revealing Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God, so that they may believe and have life in his name.

D. The signs and the miracles were means to an end—revealing Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God.

E. Revealing his identity and his glory on the cross were the works he was sent to accomplish.

F. The greater works are fulfilling Jesus' mission by the power of Jesus to the ends of the earth.

- (Matthew 24:14 ESV) And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

G. The greater works are also the more complete works as Jesus has returned to the Father through his death, burial and resurrection to complete his gospel mission and have it recorded in holy Scripture.

- (1 Corinthians 15:1–6 ESV) Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you

believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.

H. Whatever we ask in Jesus' name Jesus will do so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

- (John 14:13 ESV) Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

In Jesus' name describes the extent of the offer. Anything we ask that fits God's purpose and plan in Scripture in general and for us in particular Jesus will do—whatever we ask that is in accordance with the work, word, purpose and the glory of God Jesus will do.

- (John 14:14 ESV) If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.
- (Romans 8:28–29a ESV) And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.

CONCLUSION: Our astonishing stewardship and amazing mission ... to reveal Jesus and take his glorious gospel to the ends of the world.

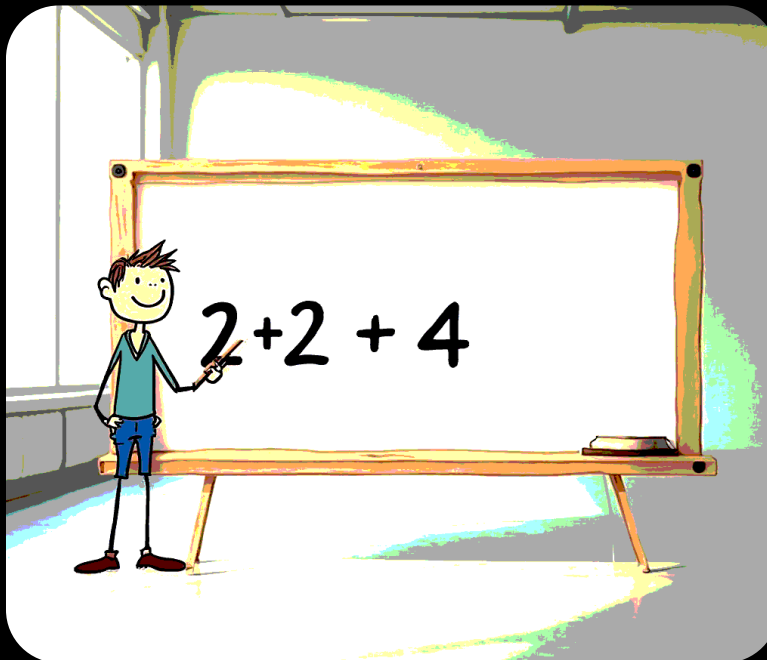
I. To reveal who the Bible says Jesus is so that people may believe that he is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing they may have life in his name—in his name meaning in total agreement with and conformity to the exact, precise nature of his Person and work and will as presented in Scripture.

II. To deliver his gospel to the ends of the earth.

- (1 Corinthians 15:3–4 ESV) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

LOVING JESUS EQUALS ...

KEEPS + MY COMMANDMENTS = LOVING JESUS



- JESUS GIVES US STATEMENTS AS SIMPLE AND CLEAR AS $2+2=4$ THAT AFFIRM OR DENY OUR LOVE FOR HIM

- LOVING JESUS EQUALS KEEPING HIS COMMANDMENTS
- LOVING JESUS EQUALS HAVING HIS COMMANDMENTS AND KEEPING THEM
- LOVING JESUS EQUALS JESUS MAKING HIMSELF PLAIN AND OBVIOUS IN OUR LIVES
- LOVING JESUS EQUALS HAVING THE PEACE OF JESUS

1. Loving Jesus equals keeping his commandments equals knowing the Spirit, 14:15-17.

- (John 14:15–17 ESV) **If you love me, you will keep my commandments.** 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. **You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.**

A. Keeping Jesus' commandments is paramount in our love relationship with Jesus.

Keep (τηρέω - *tayreho*) ... means to attend to carefully; to take care of; to guard; to observe (conform); to conform one's action or practice to.

Something that is "paramount" is of the utmost importance, exceeding all other things in significance. It is considered supreme or chief, ranking higher than anything else. In essence, it's the most important or significant aspect of a situation.

B. The person who shares a love relationship with Jesus by keeping his commandments will be given a Helper.

C. This Helper is the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive because the people of the world can neither see him nor know him.

D. The person who loves Jesus and keeps his commandments will know (by experience) the Helper because he will be with this person and dwell in him.

2. Loving Jesus equals having his commandments and keeping them and living with a conscious awareness of his and the Father's love and presence, 14:18-24.

- (John 14:18–21 ESV) **I will not leave you as orphans;** I will come to you. 19 Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. **Because I live, you also will live.** 20 **In that day** you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. 21 **Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me.** And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, **and I will love him and manifest myself to him.**

A. Jesus will not abandon as parentless the person he loves.

Orphans (ὀρφανός - *orphanos*) ... an abandoned person; someone or something who lacks support or care or supervision; especially the type of support that is characteristic of a parent-child relationship.

- i. The people in this first century world would soon lose the limited access they had to Jesus.
- ii. However those who have not been left as orphans will continue to by faith "see" him and will have forever access to Jesus.

- (2 Corinthians 5:7 NLT) **For we live by believing** and not by seeing.
- (2 Corinthians 4:18 NIV) So we fix our eyes not on **what is seen**, but on **what is unseen**, since **what is seen is temporary**, but **what is unseen is eternal**.

- iii. The person who loves Jesus and does not lose access to Jesus has an indwelling relationship with Jesus and lives with the conscious reality of the invisible, eternal relationship he now has with Jesus and the Father.

B. In that day the person who loves Jesus lives because Jesus lives and lives in him.

- (Galatians 2:20 ESV) I have been crucified with Christ. **It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.** And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

 - i. In that day is now—the time period in which we live since Jesus has ascended and the Father has given us another Helper.
 - ii. In that day we will experience the extreme opposite of abandonment as we will participate in a mutual indwelling with the Spirit, with Jesus and with the Father.

C. Whoever has possession of Jesus' commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Jesus.

This could be speaking of knowledge of the word of God in general but probably more specifically of commands attributed to Jesus, such as the new command that Jesus just gave them to love one another just as he loved them.

- i. The one who has Jesus' commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Jesus.
- ii. Having and keeping Jesus' commandments speaks of living under his sovereign authority.

14:21 command ... an authoritative direction or instruction to do something; an order, charge, precept.

D. This person is loved by the Father and Jesus will love him and make himself known to him.

E. This person is not an orphan, not abandoned, but has the indwelling presence of Jesus and the Father.

3. Loving Jesus equals Jesus making himself plain and obvious in our lives, 14:22-24.

- (John 14:22–24 ESV) Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” 23 Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. 24 Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me.

A. Jesus answers Judas’ question and explains how and to whom he makes himself known.

- i. Jesus makes himself known to those who love him—those who keep his word.
- ii. The Father will love that person.
- iii. Jesus and the Father will come and make their home with that person.

B. The startling truth is that God in his love for us will come to make a home with us ... a hospitable abode.

Home (*μονή* - *mon-ay*) ... a place to stay; a dwelling, abode; a hospitable area (within a house or building) where a person can remain for a period of time.

- (2 Corinthians 6:16–18 ESV) What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, “I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, 18 and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.”

C. Jesus does not make himself known to the world.

D. Jesus has never known those who do not love him who do not keep his words.

- (Matthew 7:22–23 ESV) On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ 23 And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

Paraphrase – I never knew you, depart from me, you who do not keep my words.

This simple, clear teaching should effectively purge all pretense and romanticism from our belief system regarding people who do not have a submissive, obedient relationship with Jesus Christ.

Romanticism prioritizes feelings, intuition, and personal experience over logic and reason and celebrates the unique individual and their inner world, valuing personal expression and creativity. The romanticist loves and clings to what seems right.

- (Proverbs 14:12 ESV) There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.
- (Jeremiah 23:36 NLT) But stop using this phrase, ‘prophecy from the Lord.’ For people are using it to give authority to their own ideas, turning upside down the words of our God, the living God, the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.

E. The person who does not keep Jesus’ words has no part in Christ or the Father since his words are the words of the Father who sent him.

- (Matthew 7:21 ESV) Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.
- (Matthew 12:50 ESV) For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.
- (John 15:14 ESV) You are my friends if you do what I command you.

4. Loving Jesus equals having the peace of Jesus, 14:25-31.

- (John 14:25–31 ESV) These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. 27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. 28 You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. 29 And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe. 30 I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me, 31 but I do as the Father has

commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.

A. The most direct application for 14:25-26 is to Jesus' disciples before his glorification.

- i. He taught these things while he was still with them.
- ii. The Helper would come and teach and remind them of these things.
- iii. For instance this would enable the disciples specifically to write accurate accounts of the gospel narratives.

B. The less direct application for 14:25-26 is for us now in that the Holy Spirit teaches us and reminds us in the things of God.

Example: A direct application for those of us who live "in that day" would be the Spirit teaching and reminding us this morning of Jesus' promise to leave his peace with us and to give his peace to us.

C. Jesus promises to leave his peace with us.

- (Romans 5:1 ESV) Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, **we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.**
- (Colossians 3:15 ESV) **And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,** to which indeed you were called in one body. **And be thankful.**
- (Philippians 4:7 ESV) **And the peace of God,** which surpasses all understanding, **will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**
- (Isaiah 26:3 ESV) **You keep him in perfect peace** whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.

D. The peace he gives effectively stops our hearts from being troubled because it is based on the character of God and the glorious purpose of God.

E. The peace he gives is not like the peace that the world gives which is based on the character and purpose of this world.

F. If they loved Jesus, they would have rejoiced that he was going to the Father.

- i. They should rejoice for him personally that he is returning to glory.
- ii. They should rejoice for the empowerment his leaving would introduce.

CONCLUSION: Do we love Jesus? Do we love Jesus more than we love ourselves? If we say we love Jesus, then where is our love, joy and peace?

Do we love him enough to obey his new commandment?

- (John 13:34 ESV) **A new commandment I give to you,** that you love one another: **just as I have loved you,** you also are to love one another.
- (John 15:12 ESV) **This is my commandment,** that you love one another **as I have loved you.**

Do we love him enough to walk in humility and obedience and do what is necessary to heal broken relationships within his Body—the Church?

- (Matthew 18:15–16 ESV) If your brother sins against you, **go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone.** If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, **that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.**

What does it say about our love for Jesus if we refuse to obey his teaching and continue in bitterness and as a root of bitterness that defiles many in his Body?

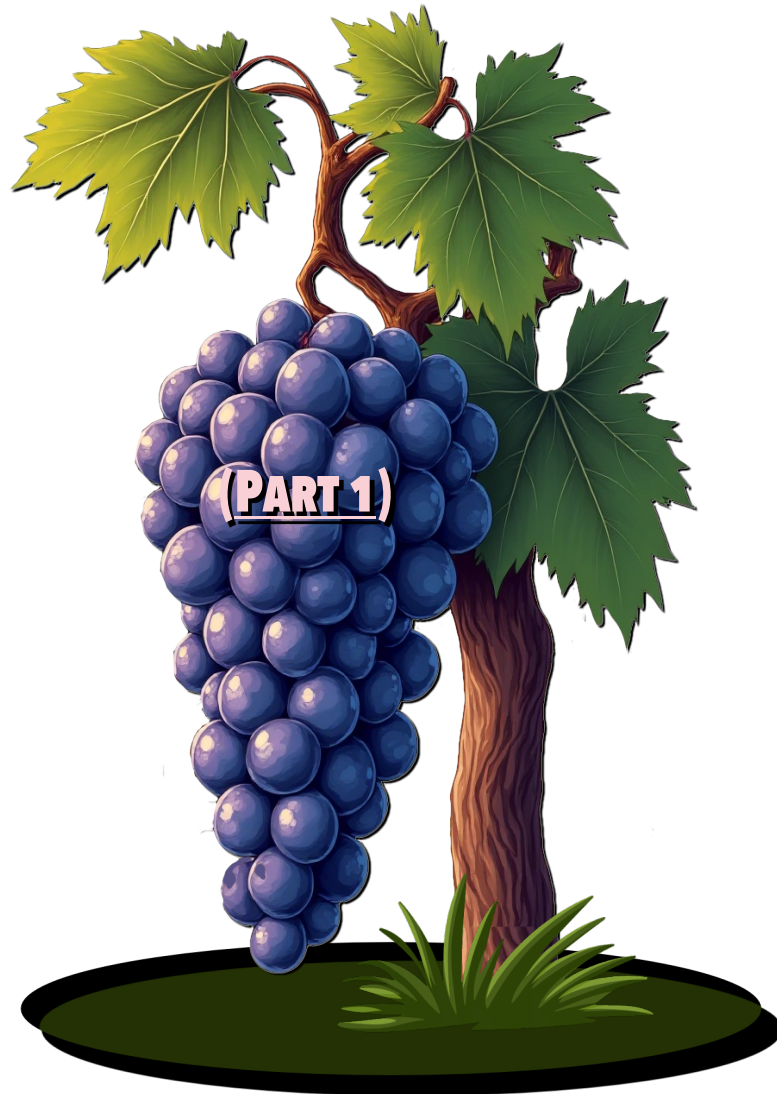
- (Ephesians 4:31–32 ESV) **Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.**
- (Hebrews 12:15 ESV) See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; **that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled.**

Could it be that this is why love, joy and peace have evaded the lives of so many who profess to know and love Jesus? That their disobedience to Jesus reveals an unrepentant heart that neither knows nor loves Jesus.

Does the simple, clear teaching of Jesus add up to the Helper producing love, joy and peace in your life?

- **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace ...**
(Galatians 5:22a ESV)

FULL JOY ...



FULL JOY IS THE VIVID AWARENESS THAT OUR GREATEST JOY HAS BECOME BRINGING GLORY TO OUR GOD

OVERVIEW: Jesus tells us what we need to know for our joy to be full.

- (John 15:11 ESV) These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

He uses several metaphors to do this. To understand our text we need to identify the metaphors. A metaphor is a figure of speech that directly compares two unrelated things by stating that one is the other. For instance, Jesus is the true vine, God the Father is the vinedresser. We are the branches.

1. Jesus tells us that every branch that bears fruit is pruned by the Father, 15:1-2.

- (John 15:1-2 ESV) I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

A. Jesus is the true vine and God the Father is the vinedresser who tends the vine.

B. Some of the branches abide in the vine and bear fruit.

C. Some of the branches are superficial and do not bear fruit and so the vinedresser removes them.

Superficial: As to the outward appearance only.

D. These false branches are associated with the group but they do not truly believe in Jesus.

E. Judas Iscariot was a branch by outward appearance only — he was not clean and did not bear fruit.

- (John 13:10b-11 ESV) And you are clean, but not every one of you.” 11 For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

F. The Father-vinedresser prunes every branch that does bear fruit so it may bear more fruit.

To prune is to cultivate, tend, and cut back the growth of a plant in order for it to grow healthier or to produce more fruit.

G. Pruning is discipline—not punitive, not punishment.

2. Jesus tells us that pruning is how the vinedresser loves us and shares his holiness with us.

A. Pruning affirms the Father's love for us as his sons.

- (Hebrews 12:5-8 ESV) And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? “My son, do not regard lightly the

discipline [pruning] of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. 6 For the Lord disciplines [prunes] the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.” 7 It is for discipline [pruning] that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline [prune]? 8 If you are left without discipline [pruning], in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children [branches] and not sons.

B. The vinedresser prunes us for our good.

- (Hebrews 12:10-11 ESV) For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. 11 For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

C. The vinedresser's goal in pruning is to present us one day before himself holy and blameless.

- (Ephesians 1:4a ESV) even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.
- (Colossians 1:22 ESV) He has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him.
- (Ephesians 5:27 ESV) So that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

3. Jesus tells us that the vinedresser tends the branches that have been cleaned by his word, 15:3.

- (John 15:3 ESV) Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.

A. These branches have been transformed by hearing the word and believing.

- (Hebrews 4:2 NIV) For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because they did not share the faith of those who obeyed.
- (John 6:68 ESV) Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, 69 and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”

B. Being clean here speaks of the person's holy, justified position before God in Christ.

Clean ... καθαρός [katharos] – clean, pure; free from guilt and sin.

Ephesians 1:1 ... saints (ἅγιος -hagios) – saint, holy one, most holy thing.

C. The clean branches have peace with God.

- (Romans 5:1 ESV) Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

D. Clean branches bear fruit.

E. Pruning the clean branches is the sanctifying (making us holy) work of the Father-vinedresser.

- (John 17:17 ESV) Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.
- (1 Thessalonians 5:23–24 ESV) Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

- (John 8:31 ESV) So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples.”

A. We bow in obedience to him through his word in every area and circumstance of our lives.

- (John 8:12 ESV) Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

B. We live in the light of the reality of God and his kingdom.

C. We have the light of life.

D. We have a growing passion to bring glory to God.

E. We eat the fruit of eternal life and grow in holiness.

- (Romans 6:22 ESV) But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.

F. We will not walk in darkness.

End Excursus

EXCURSUS: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ABIDE IN JESUS?

I. The clean branches are commanded to abide in Jesus.

- (John 15:4a ESV) Abide in me, and I in you.

Abide ... (μένω - menō) – means to hold, abide, stay, endure in; remain in a place or state expectantly and hopefully.

II. Abiding in Jesus means that Jesus is our life and we stay with, remain in and endure in Jesus no matter what.

Jesus is our everything, our lot in life, our portion.

- (Psalm 73:26 ESV) My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.
- (Psalm 16:5 ESV) The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot.
- (Psalm 119:57 ESV) The LORD is my portion; I promise to keep your words.
- (Psalm 142:5 ESV) I cry to you, O LORD; I say, “You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.”
- (Lamentations 3:24 ESV) “The LORD is my portion,” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in him.”

III. Abiding in Jesus is abiding in his word.

4. Jesus tells us that a branch cannot bear fruit unless it abides in him, 15:4-8.

- (John 15:4–8 ESV) Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

A. A branch must abide in Jesus—commanded.

- i. A branch must abide in Jesus to bear fruit.
- ii. We do not produce fruit but bear fruit and only when we abide in Jesus the vine.
- iii. The fruit-bearing branch is absolutely dependent on the vine to bear fruit.

B. The branches that do not abide in Jesus are thrown into the fire and burned.

C. Jesus will answer the prayers of the branches that

abide in him and his word in regard to bearing fruit to the glory of God.

D. The Father-vinedresser is glorified when we bear much fruit and so prove to be Jesus' disciples.

Excursus: What is the fruit?

I. The fruit of abiding in the Father and the Son in mutual love and indwelling.

II. The fruit of the Spirit.

- (Galatians 5:22–23 ESV) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

III. The fruit of sharing in God's holiness and the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

- (Hebrews 12:10b–11 ESV) He [the Vinedresser] disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. 11 For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.
- (Philippians 1:10–11 ESV) So that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, 11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

IV. The fruit of eternal life in knowing God.

- (John 17:3 ESV) And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

V. The fruit of being filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

- (Colossians 1:9 ESV) And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

VI. The fruit of justice dwelling and righteousness abiding.

- (Isaiah 32:16 ESV) Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness abide in the fruitful field.

VII. The fruit of the effect and result of righteousness.

- (Isaiah 32:17 ESV) And the effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever.

VIII. The fruit of the wisdom from above.

- (James 3:17–18 ESV) But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

End Excursus

CONCLUSION OF PART 1 — TRANSITION TO PART 2 ...

5. Jesus lays out the path to full joy, 15:9-11.

- (John 15:9–11 ESV) As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. 10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

A. We receive the truth of Jesus' love for us—that he has loved us as the Father has loved him.

B. We obey his command to abide in his love by keeping his commandments just as Jesus abides in the Father's love by keeping his commandments.

C. Keeping his commandments immerses us in the depths of his love.

- (Ephesians 3:18–19 NLT) And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. 19 May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

D. Immersed in his love we receive his joy.

E. Now our joy is full.

Full joy is the complete and ultimate joy of the redeemed one of God—the vivid awareness that his greatest joy has become bringing glory to his heavenly Father.

ABIDING IN JESUS



The unbounded fruitfulness of staying true to our Lord ...

- Unbounded ... having or appearing to have no limits ...

PART ONE

STAYING THE COURSE FOR UNBOUNDED JOY ...

Staying the course is an idiom that means to continue with a plan or effort, even when it is difficult or there are obstacles. It emphasizes perseverance and not giving up. The phrase originates from a nautical context, referring to a ship maintaining a set direction despite storms or rough seas.

- And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus (Hebrews 12:1b-2a NIV).

1. Jesus sets the scene to eliminate confusion and enable us to see the very clear distinctions between the two types of branches, 15:1-3.

- (John 15:1-3 ESV) I am the **true vine**, and my Father is the **vinedresser**. 2 Every **branch in me that does not bear fruit** he takes away, and every **branch that does bear fruit** he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 **Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.**

- A. Participants: true vine, vinedresser and branches.
- B. Branches that do not bear fruit the Father removes.
- C. Branches that bear fruit the Father prunes so that they will bear more fruit.
- D. The fruit-bearing branches are clean because they believed the word that was spoken to them.
- E. Fruit or no fruit identifies the branch.

2. Jesus commands us to abide, 15:4-10.

- (John 15:4-10 ESV) **Abide in me, and I in you.** As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. **Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit**, for apart from me you can do nothing. 6 **If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers**; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7 **If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.** 8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. 9 **As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.** 10 **If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love,**

just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

- A. Obeying the command to abide in Jesus results in the corresponding, effective action that he abides in us and bears fruit in our lives.
- B. Abiding in Jesus is staying the course—meaning that Jesus is our only plan for life.

And no wonder. What other plan could there be than staying true to the one who holds the entire universe together. Where else would we go?

- (Colossians 1:15-17 ESV) **He is the image of the invisible God**, the firstborn of all creation. 16 **For by him all things were created**, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—**all things were created through him and for him**. 17 And he is before all things, **and in him all things hold together.**

- C. Abiding connects, develops and reveals a person's relationship with Jesus the vine and the Father.
- D. Obeying the command to abide in Jesus affirms the authenticity of our relationship with him.
- E. Abiding in Jesus is a non-negotiable standard of a true, saving relationship with him.
- F. The branch who abides in Jesus bears much fruit in contrast to the branch who does not abide and does nothing.
- G. The branch that does not abide has no part in Jesus and is thrown into the fire and burned.
- H. Jesus answers the prayers of those who obey his command and abide in him.

Those who obey Jesus and abide in him will be in accord with the work and the character of God in Christ. These are prayers that are shaped and formed in the heart of the one who abides in Jesus and Jesus' words abide in him—the person who now knows the truth. God answers prayers that align with his purpose as we do the works of Christ.

- (John 14:12-14 ESV) Truly, truly, I say to you, **whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do**; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. 13 **Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do**, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 **If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.**

- (John 8:31–32 ESV) So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

I. Bearing much fruit brings glory to the Father and proves [shows a person has become] a true follower of Jesus.

The question here ... proves to whom?

The best answer seems that this is speaking of an authentication and affirmation process that happens within the person by the witness of the Spirit to our spirit as we live in the truth of God and do the will of God. This is blessed affirmation of the highest degree.

Living by the Spirit we become and live as the courageous people of God – no longer fearful slaves.

- (Romans 8:14–16 ESV) For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

J. Conversely: A non-fruit bearing branch does not bring glory to the Father and is void of the inner witness of the Spirit as a Jesus follower.

K. The command to abide in Jesus’ love speaks to the necessity of abiding in “as the Father has loved Jesus” love.

- The love in which we are to abide is the divine, mutual love of the Father and the Son.
- We will abide in that love if we keep his commandments.
- It is the same powerful principle by which Jesus keeps the Father’s commandments and abides in his love.

3. Jesus states that his purpose in speaking these things is to complete our joy, 15:11.

- (John 15:11 ESV) These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

A. Jesus speaks these things to us so that his joy may be in us and that our joy may be full.

B. We were chosen, created, called and crafted to love

God and bring him glory.

- (Ephesians 1:4–5 ESV) Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will.
- (Isaiah 43:6–7 NLT) I will say to the north and south, “Bring my sons and daughters back to Israel from the distant corners of the earth. 7 Bring all who claim me as their God, for I have made them for my glory. It was I who created them.”
- (Ephesians 4:1–2 ESV) I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love.
- (Ephesians 2:10 ESV) For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

C. Jesus’ words tell us how that happens—how we walk worthy of the manner with which we have been called.

D. This is full joy.

PART TWO

STAYING THE COURSE FOR UNBOUNDED LOVE ...

1. Jesus commands us to love as he has loved us, 15:12.

- (John 15:12 ESV) This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

2. Jesus further describes this love as one who lays down his life for his friends, 15:13.

- (John 15:13 ESV) Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

3. Jesus gives us the qualification for friendship with him, 15:14

- (John 15:14 ESV) You are my friends if you do what I command you.

4. Jesus gives us powerful insight as to what it means to be a friend of God, 15:15.

- (John 15:15 ESV) No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, **for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.**

What does it mean to be a friend of Jesus?

A. We do what Jesus commands us to do (15:14).

B. We know what God is doing because Jesus gives us inside knowledge into the mind of God.

C. We believe God as did Abraham.

- (James 2:23 ESV) And the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "**Abraham believed God,** and it was counted to him as righteousness"—**and he was called a friend of God.**

D. We are not friends with the world.

- (James 4:4 ESV) **You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?** Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

E. The world hates us.

- (John 15:18–19 ESV) If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; **but because you are not of the world,** but I chose you out of the world, **therefore the world hates you.**

5. Jesus further develops our relationship to him by directing our attention to the beginning where he chose and appointed us, 15:16.

- (John 15:16 ESV) **You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide,** so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

A. We did not choose Jesus.

B. Jesus chose us to go and bear fruit that lasts.

C. We are to go and teach others to observe (keep) all that he has commanded us.

- (Matthew 28:18–20 ESV) And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 **teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.** And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

D. We are to go and bear fruit, not produce fruit.

- We go in the authority of Jesus with the intent of making true Jesus followers.
- We make true Jesus followers by teaching them to **observe** all he has commanded us.

Observe is our familiar word **keep** (τηρέω - *tay-reh-o*) – to guard; to observe with the intent of obedience; to conform one's action or practice to. **No surprise then that he commands us to go and teach them exactly what he has been teaching us.**

- (John 14:15 ESV) If you love me, **you will keep my commandments.**
- (1 John 2:3–4 ESV) **And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. 4 Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar,** and the truth is not in him.

E. We go with the confidence and assurance that Jesus is with us always, even to the end of the age.

6. Jesus' states his reason in commanding us in these things, 15:17.

- (John 15:17 ESV) These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

A. Jesus makes it very clear how we are able to love one another as he commands us to.

B. We keep his commandments.

C. Jesus' teaching method — he commands, we obey, we learn to love as he loves.

D. Keeping his commands builds the foundation upon which we learn his love.

E. The person who does not obey Jesus in these things does not know his love and does not know Jesus.

STAYING TRUE IN OUR WITNESS FOR JESUS

*ESSENTIALS FOR CONTINUING TO BELIEVE **GOD** (AND NOT STUMBLE) AS THE
FAITHFUL WITNESSES OF **JESUS THE CHRIST**, THE **SON OF GOD** ...*



1. Jesus is saying these things so that we will stay true to his witness and not stumble—fall away.

- (John 16:1 ESV) **I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away.**

"These things" refers back to 15:18 and following but in the broader context his instructions on foot washing (humility), loving one another, and abiding in him prepare us for the spiritual reality before us **so that we do not stumble in disbelief.**

A. Jesus said these things to keep us from stumbling in our witness for him, 16:1.

Keep you from falling away ... to disbelieve, stumble; to disbelieve permanently or finally, conceived of as stumbling and falling down; to cause a person to begin to distrust and desert one whom he ought to trust and obey.

B. Jesus said these things so that when this happens we would remember that he said it would happen, 16:4a.

- (John 16:4a ESV) **But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes** you may remember that I told them to you.

C. An obedient, submissive life enables a person to hear Jesus as he warns and instructs.

D. Following Jesus in this way prepares us to understand the "hour" in which we live.

2. We stay true in our witness for Jesus if we do not stumble in disbelief over the harsh reality of our hate relationship with the world which is based on the world's intense hatred for Jesus, 15:18-19.

Example: The teaching on the hate of the world for Jesus followers in our text is plain and clear ... but it is beyond human insight and reasoning. The stumbling comes when the person chooses to rely on human perspective rather than believing and submitting to the holy word of God.

- (John 15:18–19 ESV) If the world hates you, **know that it has hated me before it hated you.** 19 If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, **therefore the world hates you.**

A. Defining terms — the world ...

World ... κόσμος [kosmos] – the inhabitants of the earth; the whole mass of humans alienated from God, and therefore hostile to the cause of Christ; the people constituting the world whose values, beliefs, and morals are opposed to and in rebellion against God

and his kingdom of righteousness.

B. The phrase "If the world hates you" identifies you as one who Jesus chose out of the world.

C. To understand our hate relationship with the world we need to know that it hated Jesus first.

D. We must believe God over human reasoning and false perceptions to not stumble in disbelief over the truth that the world hates Jesus.

- (John 3:19–20 ESV) **And this is the judgment:** the light has come into the world, and **people loved the darkness rather than the light** because their works were evil. 20 **For everyone who does wicked things hates the light** and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.
- (John 8:12 ESV) Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, **"I am the light of the world.** Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

E. The world loves its own who are of the world and hates us because Jesus chose us out of the world.

3. We stay true in our witness for Jesus when we remember his teaching on servants and Masters and persecution, 15:20.

- (John 15:20 ESV) **Remember the word that I said to you:** 'A servant is not greater than his master.' **If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you.** If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.

A. Defining terms — persecute ...

Persecute ... διώκω [dioko] – to run after; to pursue (in a hostile manner); to cause to suffer, whether physically or emotionally; to make to run or flee, put to flight, drive away.

B. We need to examine the biblical evidence to accurately identify the persecutors.

Preview: The persecutors of Jesus, the prophets, Paul, Stephen are identified over and over in the Bible as the Jews who held the positions of power and authority in the established religion of the one true God, the keepers of the law of God.

- (Acts 7:52 ESV) **Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered.**
- (Matthew 5:11–12 ESV) **Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you** and

utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

- (Luke 11:49–50 ESV) Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,' 50 so that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation.
- (John 5:16 ESV) And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath.
- (Acts 8:1–3 ESV) And Saul approved of his [Stephen's] execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. 3 But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.
- (Acts 13:50 ESV) But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district.
- (2 Timothy 3:10–12 ESV) You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, 11 my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. 12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

C. Summary of the biblical evidence: In Scripture the greatest perpetrators of persecution were those in the established religion of God.

D. How can that be? Because the world was in the synagogues then and in our churches now.

- (John 8:44 ESV) You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

- (Revelation 2:9 ESV) [*Church at Smyrna*] I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.
- (Revelation 3:9 ESV) [*Church at Philadelphia*] ... I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you.

Synagogue ... congregation of the faithful; a local, religious gathering of those allied with and trusting in the God of Israel for religious services; in the NT, an assembling together of Jews to offer prayers and listen to the reading and expositions of the scriptures.

E. If Jesus is your Master, you will be persecuted.

It is the pride of man that fools a person into thinking that he can relate to the world in such a way as to not be persecuted—that he the servant is greater than Jesus the Master in human relations.

F. Those who keep Jesus' word will keep your word.

- (1 John 4:5–6 ESV) They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.
- (1 John 2:19 ESV) They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

4. We stay true in our witness for Jesus when we acknowledge that the people who do these things do not know God and even hate God, 15:21-25.

- (John 15:21–25 ESV) But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me. 22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 Whoever hates me hates my Father also. 24 If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. 25 But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: 'They hated me without a cause.'

A. We are persecuted because we keep Jesus' words and do not deny his name.

- (Revelation 3:8 ESV) I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.

B. Reminder: These people hate Jesus and so hate us.

C. These people do not know the Father.

D. These people have no excuse for their sin.

E. These people will face harsher judgment than Sodom and Gomorrah and Tyre and Sidon.

- (Matthew 10:15 ESV) Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.
- (Luke 10:13 ESV) Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

If Jesus had not come and had not spoken of God as he has, then God would not yet have spoken his final word of love to the world and the world would not yet have given God its final answer. But now that the world has not "known" the Father in the mission of his Son, no reservations or excuses remain with respect to sin. [Ridderbos, H. N. (1997). *The Gospel according to John: A Theological Commentary* (J. Vriend, Trans.; pp. 524-525). William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.]

F. Those who reject Jesus' words and works (which are the words and works of the Father) reveal their hate for both Jesus and the Father.

5. We stay true in our witness for Jesus when we never shrink back from the witness of the Holy Spirit and our witness to the truth of Jesus and the gospel, 15:26-27.

- (John 15:26-27 ESV) But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. 27 And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.
- (John 20:31 ESV) But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ,

the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

A. The Holy Spirit bears this witness about Jesus.

B. Led by the Spirit we must be unrelenting (not softening or yielding in determination) in bearing witness about Jesus.

- (Hebrews 10:36-39 ESV) For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised. 37 For, "Yet a little while, and the coming one will come and will not delay; 38 but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him." 39 But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

CONCLUSION: We stay true in our witness for Jesus when we remain ever vigilant in the fierce battle within the professing Church so that we recognize the hour of apostasy (falling away) when it comes, 16:1-4a.

- (John 16:1-4a ESV) I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. 2 They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. 3 And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me. 4 But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.

A. We win the battle to not stumble by continuing to believe God and his holy word above all else.

- (1 John 5:4-5 ESV) For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

B. Those who persist in believing God will be expelled from the community of those who fall away.

C. The time is coming when they will even kill us in the name of service to God.

D. These people do these things because they have not known the Father or Jesus.

OUR AMAZING HELPER



THE POWERFUL, ASTOUNDING, MERCIFUL, LOVING, GRACE-FILLED INDISPENSABLE ROLE OF THE SPIRIT IN
CONVICTING AND CONVINCING THE WORLD CONCERNING SIN, RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUDGMENT.

1. **Review:** Jesus tells us these things so that we do not fall away into disillusionment and unbelief and so that we know what is going on when these things take place, 16:1-4a.

- (John 16:1–4 ESV) I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. 2 They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. 3 And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me. 4 But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.

2. It is always to our advantage for God to carry out his sovereign plan and purpose, 16:4b-7.

- (John 16:4b–7 ESV) I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. 5 But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

The Helper ... παράκλητος [paraklete] – one who pleads another’s cause before a judge, a pleader, counsel for defense, legal assistant, an advocate; one who pleads another’s cause with one, an intercessor; in the widest sense, a helper, succorer, aider, assistant.

A. Generally speaking we need to note that God speaks his truth to us as we are ready to hear it.

B. In the sovereign will and purpose of God it was necessary for Jesus to leave so that he could send the Helper to us.

- i. God’s plan is always the best plan.
- ii. God’s plan had not changed—it was always that Jesus would return to the One who sent him.
- iii. They could not yet see that this was good and necessary regardless of their emotional pain.
- iv. God carrying out his sovereign will and purpose is always to the advantage of those he calls.
- v. God’s sovereign will and purpose often conflicts with our expectations and brings sorrow.

Sorrow ... λύπη [loo-pay] – sadness; emotional pain experienced when sorrowful or unhappy.

- vi. We must continue to hear God speak his truth to

us no matter the pain and disappointment of our unmet and misguided expectations.

vii. Avoiding the pain of following God is avoiding a life of righteousness.

- (Hebrews 12:11 ESV) For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

C. In the sovereign will and purpose of God we let go of our expectations for life and find true life in Christ.

- (Matthew 10:38–39 ESV) And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

D. The person who clings to his earthly expectations rejects the sovereign will of God and forfeits his soul.

- (Mark 8:35–36 ESV) For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it. 36 For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?

3. Those who stay true in their witness for Jesus come to understand the astounding, indispensable, blessed role of our amazing Helper, 16:8.

- (John 16:8 ESV) And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.

A. When the Helper comes, he will convict the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment.

Convict ... ἐλέγχο [elegcho] – to convict, convince with the suggestion of guilt and shame; to prove or show to be guilty; to bring to the light, to expose; to find fault with and to call to account in showing one his fault.

B. The indispensable role of the Helper in convicting us of sin should be seen as God’s mercy, grace and love in regard to our salvation.

- (Ephesians 2:4–5 ESV) But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved.

Klink ... Just as Jesus “takes away the sin of the world” (1:29), so also does the Paraclete convict the

world of its sin. The grace of God is that the work of the Spirit is to reveal the sinful condition of the world and the work of the Son is to remove it. ... The reason the Paraclete convicts the world of sin is to make the world aware of its true condition and present need. ... The reader is to see that the conviction of sin by the Spirit is an expression of the love of God and a perfect reflection of the "grace and truth" that he alone can provide (1:17). [Klink, E. W., III. (2016). *John* (C. E. Arnold, Ed.; pp. 678-679). Zondervan.]

C. The convicting/convincing work of the Helper prepares us to receive the grace and truth of God.

D. It was necessary for Jesus to leave so that the Helper could do his integral work in fulfilling the salvation plan of God.

Integral: Essential to completeness; necessary to make a whole complete; essential or fundamental.

E. Prerequisite to a person believing in Jesus is knowing what God means when he speaks of sin, righteousness and judgment.

4. To do the Spirit's work in the world we must be led by the Spirit and have integrity and diligence in our approach to God's word, 16:8-11.

- (John 16:8-11 ESV) And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; 10 concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; 11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

A. The world has no biblical, accurate concept of sin, of righteousness or of judgment.

- The Spirit communicates the concepts of sin, righteousness and judgment through God's word.
 - (2 Timothy 3:16 ESV) All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.
- We do our part in the Spirit's work when we rightly handle the word of truth.
 - (2 Timothy 2:15 ESV) Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

CONCERNING SIN, BECAUSE THEY DO NOT BELIEVE IN ME ...

B. The world does not know what sin is because they do

not believe in Jesus who is the only way out of sin.

- Sin is missing the mark (falling short of the glory of God) and not merely missing the mark (the glory of God) but that the mark is so far beyond us to be out of sight.

- (Romans 3:23 ESV) For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

- We are under sin and the only way to get out from under sin and to the Father and his glory is believing in Jesus Christ.

- (Romans 3:9 ESV) What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin.
- (John 14:6 ESV) Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

- Sin is not believing in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, and believing having life in his name.

CONCERNING RIGHTEOUSNESS, BECAUSE I GO TO THE FATHER ...

C. The world does not know what righteousness is because they do not accept Jesus as the righteousness of God which was affirmed by his return to the Father at his ascension.

- Jesus went back to the Father affirming his words and works as true and he was the one sent by the Father and the only way of righteousness.

- The world needs convicted because they cling to their own righteousness.

- (Romans 3:10-11 ESV) As it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; 11 no one understands; no one seeks for God.
- (Matthew 5:20 ESV) For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

- Scripture affirms that only in Jesus can we be righteous before God.

- (Philippians 3:9 ESV) ... be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.
- (Romans 10:2-3 ESV) For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not

submit to God's righteousness.

CONCERNING JUDGMENT, BECAUSE THE RULER OF THIS WORLD IS JUDGED ...

D. The Helper convicts/convinces the world regarding judgment because the world does not know the wrath they are under now and their future judgment.

- (John 3:36 ESV) Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.
 - (Romans 2:8 ESV) ... but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.
 - (Ephesians 5:6 ESV) Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.
 - (1 John 3:23 ESV) And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.
- i. The fate of the god of this world is sealed—he will be cast into the lake of fire in the final judgment.
- (Revelation 20:10 ESV) And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.
- ii. There will be no scales brought out to weigh their good deeds versus the bad things they've done.
- iii. There will be no presenting their case before God or meeting with Peter at the pearly gates.
- iv. There will only be a great white throne.
- (Revelation 20:11–15 ESV) Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. 13 And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged.

each one of them, according to what they had done. 14 Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

5. We stay true in our witness for Jesus by being led by the Spirit in all truth, 16:12-15.

- (John 16:12–15 ESV) I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. 14 He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. 15 All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

A. God gives us the truth we need as we can bear it.

Bear ... to carry the weight of; to endure, whether by physical or mental force; to accept; to cognitively receive something difficult to understand or accept; to take up in order to carry.

B. The Spirit was instrumental in reminding and directing the apostles and the other disciples so that they could communicate the truth about Jesus.

C. In a less direct but still effective and powerful way the Spirit will guide us progressively in the truth that is necessary to follow Jesus—both as a group and as individuals.

- (Psalm 25:5 ESV) Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long.
- (Psalm 86:11–13 ESV) Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name.

D. As with Jesus the Spirit did not speak on his own authority but spoke what he heard.

E. The Spirit glorifies Jesus by revealing the truth of Jesus and guiding them in their lives and in the writing of Scripture.

F. When the Spirit takes what is Christ's and declares it, it is the same as what is the Father's.

THE WAY OF THE OVERCOMERS ...



... SORROW THEN JOY

1. Jesus is the way of the overcomers.

A. He is the way to the Father.

- (John 14:5–6 ESV) Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” 6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

B. He is the door by which we enter salvation.

- (John 10:9 ESV) I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

2. Overcomers overcome by believing in and following Jesus.

- (1 John 5:5 ESV) Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

A. We have victory in Jesus when we follow Jesus.

B. Jesus is speaking in the immediate context to the eleven apostles as Judas has defected.

C. In the broader context he is speaking to all those who truly believe and follow him.

D. Following Jesus transforms our lives as we behave and become more like Jesus along the way.

Follow ... ἀκολουθέω [ak·ol·oo·teh·o] – to follow as in following and in behavior in accordance or in agreement with the one we are following.

- (Romans 8:29 ESV) For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.

E. Jesus called people and they followed him.

- (Matthew 4:18–22 ESV) While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. 19 And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed him. 21 And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

F. Whoever follows Jesus does not walk in darkness.

- (John 8:12 ESV) Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

G. Those who follow Jesus come to know that they know him because they keep his commandments and are not liars but have the love of God perfected in them.

- (1 John 2:3–5a ESV) And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. 4 Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, 5 but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected.

3. Overcomers interpret life in the world with an accurate understanding of our relationship with the world (John 15:18–19).

- (John 15:19 ESV) If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

4. Overcomers hear and believe Jesus and recognize the times in which we live (John 16:1, 4a).

- (John 16:1, 4a ESV) I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. ... I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.

5. Overcomers trust God and his word even when confused by his words (John 16:16–18).

- (John 16:16–18 ESV) “A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me.” 17 So some of his disciples said to one another, “What is this that he says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me’; and, ‘because I am going to the Father’?” 18 So they were saying, “What does he mean by ‘a little while’?” We do not know what he is talking about.”

A. While faithfully following Jesus we will at times be confused and perplexed by what God says to us.

Jesus may have been speaking of ... his post-resurrection appearances, his presence in the Spirit which began at Pentecost, or his Second Coming to earth. Some believe he may have been making reference to all three.

B. This is our opportunity as overcomers to grow in our ability to trust the Lord with all our heart and to defeat the temptation to lean on our own understanding.

- (Proverbs 3:5-8 ESV) Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. 7 Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. 8 It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.

C. It should really be of no wonder to us that when our infinite, eternal God speaks to us that at times we will be confused and perplexed.

D. It is helpful to remember at these times that God in his written word speaks his truth to finite humans in the temporal context of earth while also in the context of eternity past and present.

6. Overcomers hear God and come to know the major role that sorrow plays in the sovereign will and purpose of God in our lives (John 16:19-24).

- (John 16:19-24 ESV) Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, "Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, 'A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me'? 20 Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. 21 When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. 22 So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. 23 In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. 24 Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

A. Jesus did not speak to their confusion but directed their minds to his purpose for sorrow which is to transform and direct our expectations away from this world to the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

B. It is unmistakable that sorrow is a vital, blessed part of God's will for our lives.

C. Simple definition: Sorrow is the disappointment or sadness we experience over unmet expectations.

D. Followers of Jesus learn that in sorrow God shifts our expectations from now to forever.

E. God uses sorrow and trouble to direct our hearts away from unreliable earthly expectations and toward joy which is based on his good, sovereign purpose.

F. Example: Anticipating pure joy when meeting trials because of the steadfastness that results.

- (James 1:2-3 ESV) Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, 3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

Steadfastness – the characteristic of a person who is not swerved from his deliberate purpose of faith and love for Jesus by even the greatest trials and sufferings.

G. Example: Rejoicing in suffering because we know that endurance, character, hope and love will result.

- (Romans 5:3-5 ESV) Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

H. Example: Rejoicing through the sadness of various trials that prove the genuineness of our faith.

- (1 Peter 1:6-8 ESV) In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 8 Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory.

Resulting in ...

Praise and glory and honor to Jesus upon seeing Jesus. Loving Jesus even though we do not see him now. Belief in Jesus that is filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy.

Auxiliary effects ...

Filled with joy in believing and abounding in hope. Not abandoning our love for Jesus.

- (Romans 15:13 ESV) May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,

so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

- (Revelation 2:4 ESV) But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.

7. Jesus speaks plainly to overcomers about our relationship with the Father (John 16:25–30).

- (John 16:25–30 ESV) “I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father. 26 In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; 27 for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. 28 I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.” 29 His disciples said, “Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech!” 30 Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God.”

- A. Jesus spoke about the changes that occurred in their relationship in that day.
- B. We live “in that day” and have access to the Father directly in the name of Jesus.
- C. We can do this because the Father loves us because we love Jesus.
- D. They now had very true, but yet untested, information regarding their relationship with the Father.

8. In times of confusion overcomers sometimes return to what is familiar (John 16:31–32).

- (John 16:31–32 ESV) Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe? 32 Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.”
- (John 21:3 ESV) Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We will go with you.” They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

A. Knowing truth—*“now we know”* (16:30)—is necessary but incomplete and insufficient to defeat our fears and anxieties.

B. We must live by the truth we know to become strong and courageous and steadfast in the Lord.

Grasping only the abstract truth of the Father’s love may give us an illusion, or misperception, of joy and victory in Jesus while missing the reality of living in the Father’s love within his sovereign care over our lives.

9. Overcomers have peace *in* Jesus and that is our victory over the distress of the world (John 16:33).

- (John 16:33 ESV) I have said these things to you, that *in me* you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.

A. Our peace in Jesus is untouchable by the world because he has overcome the world.

B. Peace *in* Jesus is based on our union *with* Jesus.

- (Ephesians 1:3 ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us *in* Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.
- C. Overcomers have peace in Jesus because we follow him and he produces righteousness in our lives.
 - (Isaiah 32:17 ESV) And the effect of righteousness will be *peace*, and the result of righteousness, *quietness and trust forever.*
 - (Hebrews 12:11 ESV) For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of *righteousness* to those who have been trained by it.
 - i. Righteousness is doing the right thing.
 - ii. The Father disciplines us to produce the peaceful fruit of righteousness.
 - iii. If the *effect* of righteousness is peace, and if the *result* of righteousness is quietness and trust, then it seems to be a biblical, fair and logical conclusion that a person who does not have peace and quietness and trust does not have righteousness.
 - iv. So what does that mean?

JESUS PRAYS

FOR HIS PEOPLE

PART 1



WHAT AMAZING LOVE ...

1. Jesus' prayed following "these words" of instruction, encouragement and warning in John 14-16.

- A. John 14:1-14 The affirmation of believing in Jesus and knowing him and the Father; the stewardship of fulfilling Jesus' mission by doing Jesus' works and proclaiming his gospel throughout the world.
- B. John 14:15-31 Loving Jesus, keeping his commandments and having his peace.
- C. John 15:1-11 Fruit-bearing branches that abide in Jesus, the Father (Vinedresser) pruning the fruitful branches to produce more fruit, full joy.
- D. John 15:1-17 The unbounded fruitfulness of abiding in Jesus, unbounded love and what it means to be a friend of Jesus.
- E. John 15:18-16:4 Paying attention to what Jesus says so we keep believing and recognize the times we live in, understanding our relationship with the world and staying true in our witness through the world's hate, the coming Helper the Spirit.
- F. John 16:1-15 The powerful, merciful, indispensable blessed role of the Spirit in convicting and convincing the world of sin, righteousness and judgment, the necessity of being led by the Spirit in truth.
- G. John 16:16-33 Jesus is the way of overcomers, we overcome when we follow Jesus, interpreting life as we follow Jesus, following Jesus through sorrow to true joy, having our peace in Jesus because he works his righteousness in us as we follow him.

2. The hour has come and Jesus prays that the Father would glorify the Son so that the Son would glorify the Father, 17:1-5.

- (John 17:1-5 ESV) When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, 2 since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. 4 I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed."

A. To glorify here means to clothe in splendor.

Glorify ... δοξάζω [doxazo] – clothe with splendor to impart glory to something; become clear or obvious to the eye or mind.

B. This is a prayer for the people of God that we would see and know God in his glory—both Father and Son.

C. This is eternal life—knowing the God of glory and Jesus Christ whom he sent by personal experience.

Know ... γινώσκω [ginosko] – to come to know, get knowledge of; experiential knowledge; knowledge gained through personal experience, relationship, and observation, rather than just factual information.

D. Only this knowing relationship with the God of glory is a saving relationship — anything else or anything less is a lie.

E. Jesus was given authority over all humans, and since he had authority over all, he had authority to give eternal life to those whom the Father had given him.

- (John 6:37-40 ESV) All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. 38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. 40 For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.
- (John 6:44-45 ESV) No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. 45 It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me.

F. Those whom the Father has given to him will ultimately come to believe in him.

G. This is not a prayer for the salvation of his people but for spiritual sight—a vision of the glory of God.

H. We are transformed into the image of Christ when we see the glory of the Lord.

- (2 Corinthians 3:18 ESV) And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

I. Jesus glorified the Father by accomplishing his assigned work on earth.

J. He now prays that he would be clothed in splendor as he was before the world existed.

3. In this entire prayer Jesus prays exclusively for the people of God—those whom the Father has given him out of the world, 17:6-19.

- A. The immediate context is that he is praying for his current disciples.
- B. Jesus continues his major theme of clearly revealing who God is to the people of God and in doing this clarifies our relationship with him.
- (John 17:6–7 ESV) I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you.

Manifested ... φανερώω [phaneroō] – means to make visible or known, whether by words, or deeds, or in any other way; make actual, realized; to cause to become clearly revealed; expose to view; to be thoroughly understood who and what one is.

- C. The work of making God known by Jesus was exclusive to the people who were the Father's and have been given to the Son—the saved, believers.

Name ... ὄνομα [onoma] – knowing the one true God according to his reputation and character; the name is used for everything which the name covers regarding who he is.

- D. It is extremely important that the people of God know that the words we keep are the words of the Father.

- (John 17:6b–8 ESV) ... and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. 8 For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.

- i. The people of God have kept the Father's word.
- ii. Have received the truth that Jesus came from the Father.
- iii. Have believed that the Father sent Jesus.

- E. Jesus is praying for his very own who are also the Father's very own and who are still in the world that the Father would keep them in his name.

- (John 17:9–11 ESV) I am praying for them. I

am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. 11 And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.

- i. Jesus prays for the people given to him by the Father, not the people of the world.
- ii. The people of God belong to the Father and the Son and Jesus is glorified in us.
- iii. Jesus speaks as though he had already left.
- iv. Jesus prays that the Father would keep us in his name.

- F. Jesus kept and guarded those which were given to him while he was in the world in the Father's name.

- (John 17:12 ESV) While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

- G. Jesus prays for the Father to watch over his disciples who will remain in the world when he is gone.

- (John 17:13–16 ESV) But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15 I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

Jesus' checklist before departure ...

- i. Jesus speaks necessary things before he leaves so that we may have his joy fulfilled in ourselves.
- ii. He has given us the Father's word.
- iii. His request is not to take us out of the world but to keep us from the evil one.
- iv. He states that we are other worldly.

CONCLUSION

1. Jesus prays that the Father would sanctify his people.

- (John 17:17–19 ESV) Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18
As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19
And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.

2. Observations from the plain statements Jesus makes in his prayer.

- A. Jesus prays that the Father would set his followers apart and make them holy with the truth.**

Sanctify ... ἁγιάζω [hagiazō] – to be set apart; to make holy, to cause one to have the quality of holiness; to make as dedicated to God; dedicate people to God; either in becoming more distinct, devoted, or morally pure.

- B. Jesus states that the Father's word is truth.**

- C. Jesus states that he sends his followers into the world as the Father sent him into the world.**

- D. Jesus says he will finish the work to which he was set apart so that the Father could set apart his followers based on his finished work on the cross.**

3. Reasoned, biblical judgments we can make based on the plain statements of Jesus.

- A. We, as the people of God, are to be set apart and made holy.**

- B. Truth is the main ingredient God will use to set us apart and make us holy.**

- C. Specifically it is God's word that is the truth by which he sets us apart and makes us holy.**

17 Truth ... ἀλήθεια [al·ay·thi·a] – objective truth; what is true in any matter under consideration; in reality, in fact, certainly; that which is honest in expression and free from affection, pretense, simulation, falsehood, deceit.

- D. To be ready and able to be sent out into the world to do the works of Jesus we must be set apart from the world by the truth of the word of God.**

- E. Anyone who turns aside from the truth of the word of God—adding to or taking away—will not be a fit vessel to serve Jesus and share his gospel.**

- F. This is an essential truth to which we must pay much more careful attention when calling and sending pastors, teachers and missionaries into the harvest fields of this world if we are to honor our Lord.**

- (Hebrews 2:1 ESV) Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

JESUS PRAYS

FOR HIS PEOPLE

PART 2



In John seventeen Jesus prays for the people of God according to the sovereign will and purpose of God ...

Listen carefully and behold his glory, his infinite wisdom and the amazing love he has for his people ...

SECTION ONE: NEED TO KNOW FACTS TO UNDERSTAND AND RECEIVE THE FULL BLESSING AND INSIGHT OF JESUS' PRAYER.

1. Jesus' prayer is exclusively for his people.

2. Jesus' prayer will be answered.

If God answers our prayers in Jesus' name then be assured that he will answer Jesus' prayer on our behalf.

- (John 11:22 ESV) But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you.
- (John 15:16b ESV) ... so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.
- (John 16:23b ESV) ... Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.

3. Jesus prays for what has been predetermined by the Triune Council of Father, Son and Holy Spirit before the creation of our world.

SECTION TWO: OBSERVATIONS AND RELEVANT INSIGHTS INTO THE MIND AND HEART OF JESUS AS HE PRAYS FOR HIS PEOPLE.

1. The people of God know who God is and know who they are.

- (John 17:6 ESV) I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.

A. Jesus has clearly revealed who God is to the ones the Father gave him out of the world.

B. Note the repetition: You gave them to me out of the world ... you gave them to me ... they keep your word.

C. Insight: The people of God are the possession of God and they keep God's word.

2. The people of God are those who know the unity between Father and Son.

- (John 17:7–8 ESV) Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. 8 For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.

3. Jesus prays for the people of God exclusively.

- (John 17:9 ESV) I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.

4. The people of God belong to God and Jesus is glorified in their lives.

- (John 17:10 ESV) All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.

5. Jesus prays that the Father will keep the people of God in his name so that they may be one.

- (John 17:11 ESV) And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.

A. Jesus is leaving and asks the Holy Father to keep—to guard; to attend to carefully, take care of; to preserve ones position; to cause a state, condition, or activity to continue—those who will remain.

B. The Holy Father's work of keeping will result in the people of God being one just as Jesus and the Holy Father are one.

Keep ... τηρέω [tereo] – to guard, attend to carefully, take care of; to keep one in the state in which he is.

C. What Jesus prays for was predetermined in the Triune Council of Father, Son and Holy Spirit before the creation of our world—that we would be one even as the Father and Son are one.

D. We should note the significance of God using the number one to express this unity.

One ... εἷς [heis] – means one as in the numeral one; used of a single unit or thing; not two or more.

6. Jesus kept and guarded his people while on earth.

- (John 17:12 ESV) While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

Guarded ... φυλάσσω [foo-las-so] – to keep watch over; to have an eye upon; to keep from being snatched away, lost or perishing.

7. Jesus directed his words to the people of God so that we may have his joy fulfilled in our lives.

- (John 17:13 ESV) But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

8. Jesus gave his people the word of the Father and the world hates them because having the word of the Father shows they are not of this world.

- (John 17:14 ESV) I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

9. Jesus petitions the Father to not take his people out of the world but to keep them from the evil.

- (John 17:15 ESV) I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.

10. Jesus prays that the people of God who are not of the world need to be set apart by the word of God to be able to live as those who are not of the world.

- (John 17:16-17 ESV) They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

11. The people of God are those who Jesus has sent into the world as the Father sent him into the world.

- (John 17:18 ESV) As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.

12. Jesus lived a righteous life—a life not of this world—so that his people could live holy lives by the truth of the Father.

- (John 17:19 ESV) And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.

13. Jesus prayed for all his followers—then and now.

- (John 17:20 ESV) I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word.

A. Those who were following Jesus then but also for all those who would believe in Jesus through their word.

B. Note the necessary progression of the true disciple of Jesus: 1) Set apart by the Father's truth ... 2) The Father's truth becomes their truth/word ... 3) Their word of the truth of the gospel saves.

14. Jesus prayed that his followers would be one.

- (John 17:21 ESV) That they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

A. This is not unity as humans think of unity.

B. This is being one with the Father, one with Jesus because we are in the Father and in Jesus.

C. This witness of oneness results in the world finally believing the truth that the Father sent Jesus.

15. The people of God are one with Jesus and the Father because of the glory which the Father gave to Jesus which he in turn gave to us.

- (John 17:22 ESV) The glory that you have

given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one.

16. Being perfectly one in Jesus and the Father, the body of Christ, the people of God, convince the world that the Father sent Jesus and that the Father loved his people even as he loved Jesus.

- (John 17:23 ESV) I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

17. Jesus now prays expressing his strong feelings that his followers will be with him in glory.

- (John 17:24 ESV) Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

A. Those who the Father has given to Jesus will be with Jesus in heaven and see his glory.

- (John 14:2–3 ESV) In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

B. These people who were given to Jesus by the Father were chosen by the Father to be given to Jesus before he created the world.

- (Ephesians 1:3–5 ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he [the Father] chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he [the Father] predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will.

- (1 Peter 1:20–21a ESV) He [Jesus] was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you 21 who through him are believers in God.

18. The people of God are those who know God and have eternal life because they know that the Father sent Jesus.

- (John 17:25 ESV) O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me.

- (John 17:3–5 ESV) And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

It is necessary for salvation that a person knows that Jesus—and not the world—knows the Father. Only Jesus knows and reveals the truth about the Father because he was sent by the Father. So then it is only the person who knows that Jesus was sent by the Father who knows the truth about the Father ... and who knows the truth about the salvation that God offers.

- (Hebrews 1:1–2a ESV) Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.
- (John 8:42–43 ESV) Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. 43 Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word.”

19. Jesus prays regarding what he has done and will continue to do in securing the eternal destiny of his followers.

- (John 17:26 ESV) I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.

A. Those to whom Jesus has made known the Person and character of the Father he will continue revealing the God of glory to them.

B. The effect of this loving, secure relationship in the Person and character of God is being filled with the love of the Father and the presence of Jesus Christ.

- (Romans 5:5 NASB95) And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.
- (Romans 5:5 NLT) And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.

A person to whom God is revealed as God and to whom this process of knowing continues is filled with a sense of awe and wonder at the love the Father has for him and cannot help but love others in that way.

C. Jesus is the only source of knowing God—he makes known to all true believers the Person and character of God.

D. When we know God as God, we will have in us the love with which the Father loved Jesus.

E. And Jesus himself will be living in us.

- (Galatians 2:20 ESV) I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
- (1 John 3:1–3 ESV) See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2 Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. 3 And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

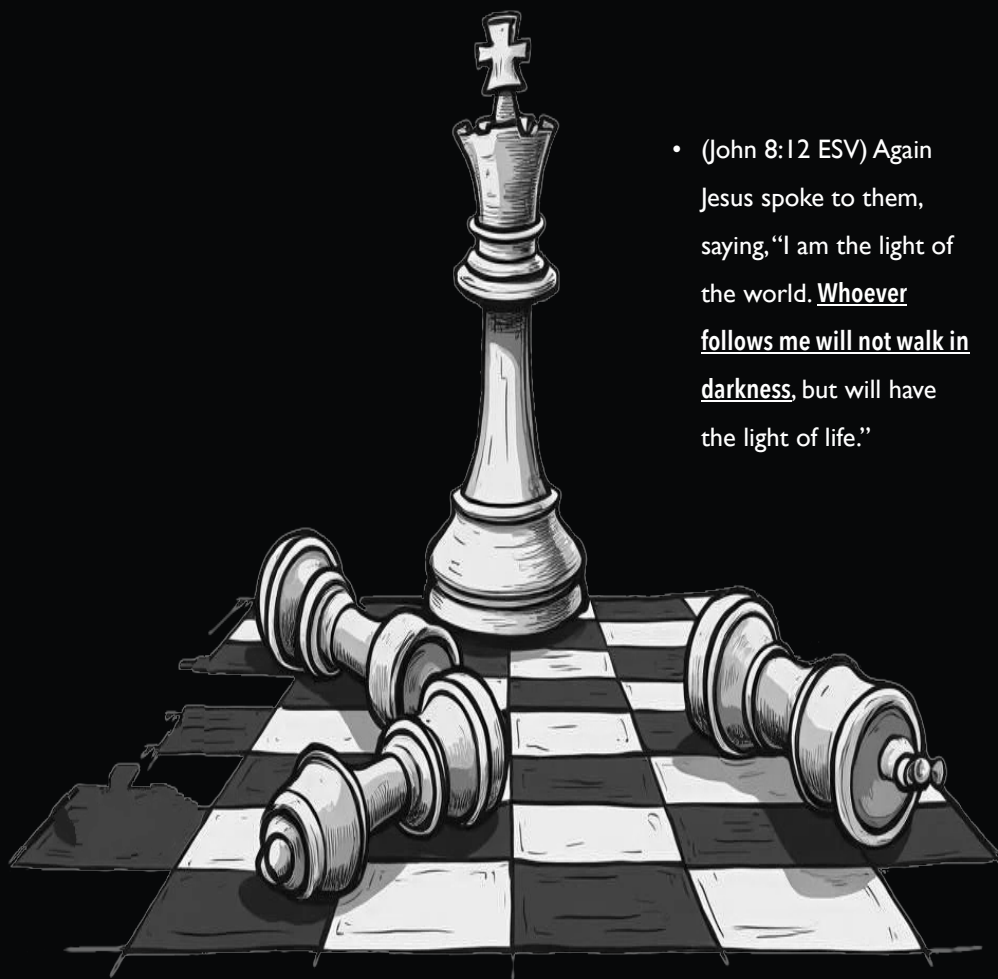
CONCLUSION: ARE YOU ONE IN THE FATHER AND IN JESUS AND IN THE BODY OF CHRIST? DOES YOUR LIFE REFLECT THE LOVE, PEACE AND SECURITY THAT TESTIFIES TO GOD LIVING IN YOU?

1

That they may all be one,
just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you,
that they also may be in us ...

(John 17:21a)

ESSENTIAL TRUTHS FOR FOLLOWING JESUS THROUGH THE DARKNESS



- (John 8:12 ESV) Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

KING JESUS SET THEM UP ... "WHOM DO YOU SEEK?"

AND KNOCKED THEM DOWN ... "I AM"

1. **Essential Truth #1:** Always follow Jesus, 18:1-9.

- (John 18:1–9 ESV) When Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. 2 Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, for Jesus often met there with his disciples. 3 So Judas, having procured a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons. 4 Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to him, came forward and said to them, “Whom do you seek?” 5 They answered him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “I am he.” Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. 6 When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they drew back and fell to the ground. 7 So he asked them again, “Whom do you seek?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” 8 Jesus answered, “I told you that I am he. So, if you seek me, let these men go.” 9 This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken: “Of those whom you gave me I have lost not one.”

A. Follow Jesus onto the battlefield.

The garden where Jesus had before gone to find peace and rest would this night become a fierce battleground between Jesus and Satan himself.

The band of soldiers referred to was most likely a Roman cohort of up to 600 men. Combined with the officers of the chief priests and Pharisees and various others, the crowd that Satan brought to capture Jesus wielding torches and weapons was probably around 1,000 people.

The darkness of night would have been unbearable for anyone other than Jesus as Judas now filled with the presence of Satan arrived to complete his betrayal.

- (John 13:27, 30 ESV) Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, “What you are going to do, do quickly.” ... So, after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

B. Make sure you know which side you are on in the battle between Jesus and Satan.

- (2 Corinthians 13:5 ESV) Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize

this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!

- (John 8:31–32 ESV) So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

C. Jesus picked this fight — Being omniscient Jesus Son of God knew all that would happen to him because it was his battle plan.

- (Acts 2:23 ESV) ... this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

D. Jesus’ decision to go to the garden was very intentional as he carried out his sovereign purpose.

E. Being omnipotent Jesus Son of God was fully in control—directing the actions of Judas and all the others like mere pawns on his divine chess board.

**King Jesus set them up ... “Whom do you seek?”
And knocked them down ... “I AM”**

F. With his show of power and majesty Jesus protected the disciples by providing their escape from the murderous crowd.

2. **Essential Truth #2:** Keep your sword in its sheath, 18:10-11.

- (John 18:10–11 ESV) Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant and cut off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.) 11 So Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?”

A. Do not implement your plan ... ever.

B. Understand these two things ... **1)** your plan is contrary to the Father’s plan ... **2)** you do not even know the Father’s plan unless you are being transformed by the renewal of your mind.

- (Romans 12:1–2 ESV) I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

C. Your plan is self-directed and controlled by your pride, emotions, human reasoning, misguided religious training/tradition and personal experience.

D. Your plan will inevitably focus on the things of earth and not on the things of God.

- (Matthew 16:22–23 ESV) And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” 23 But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”
- (Matthew 16:24–25 ESV) Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”

Come after ... ἔρχομαι [erchomai] – to follow regarding behavior; to behave in accordance or in agreement with; to come.

Deny ... ἀπαρνέομαι [aparneomai] – refuse to recognize or acknowledge; to forget one's self, lose sight of one's self and one's own interests.

The person who is able to follow Jesus in a life changing way (“come after”) must be someone who is able to lose sight of himself (deny himself) and refuse to acknowledge himself in regard to his own self-interests.

3. **Essential Truth #3:** Never expect the world to play fair, 18:12-14.

- (John 18:12–14 ESV) So the band of soldiers and their captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound him. 13 First they led him to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. 14 It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that it would be expedient that one man should die for the people.

A. Never expect liars and devils to play fair or to even abide by their own rules.

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God – verse 3 ... And tho' this world with devils filled, Should threaten to undo us, We will not fear for God hath willed, His truth to triumph thru us, The prince of darkness grim, We tremble not for him, His rage we can endure, For lo his doom is sure, One little word shall fell him. [Martin Luther]

B. Everything they did in arresting Jesus and bringing him to trial was in violation of their law — arrest at night, trial at night, seeking witnesses to accuse, not seeking witnesses to absolve, etc.

4. **Essential Truth #4:** Never deny Jesus, 18:15-18.

- (John 18:15–18 ESV) Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, 16 but Peter stood outside at the door. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the servant girl who kept watch at the door, and brought Peter in. 17 The servant girl at the door said to Peter, “You also are not one of this man's disciples, are you?” He said, “I am not.” 18 Now the servants and officers had made a charcoal fire, because it was cold, and they were standing and warming themselves. Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself.

A. Peter did not have to lie.

B. Jesus would have protected him.

C. Peter's failure was used by the Lord for great good. (We will see this in John 21:15-19 later in our study.)

D. We must be very wary of denying Jesus.

- (Matthew 10:32–33 ESV) So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, 33 but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

E. The blessing of saying it out loud ... Openly acknowledging our relationship with Jesus before others confirms, strengthens and energizes our faith.

5. **Essential Truth #5:** Always live in the presence of Jesus and under the authority of his teaching so that we know who he is, 18:19-24.

- (John 18:19–24 ESV) The high priest then questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. 20 Jesus answered him, “I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. 21 Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me what I said to them; they know what I said.” 22 When he had said

these things, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" 23 Jesus answered him, "If what I said is wrong, bear witness about the wrong; but if what I said is right, why do you strike me?" 24 Annas then sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

- A. In questioning Jesus, Annas (who was not actually the high priest at the time) exposed his willful ignorance regarding the identity of Jesus.
- B. If he had listened to what Jesus taught in the synagogues and the temple, he would have known.
- C. The Messiah that Annas desired was the product of a wicked heart and a faulty understanding of the Scriptures—religious beliefs and traditions that cultivated his self-righteousness.
- D. Our lesson: We must live in the presence of Jesus who is to judge the living and the dead.
 - (2 Timothy 4:1 ESV) I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom.

6. Essential Truth #6: Joyfully anticipate the glory work that our Father God will accomplish in our lives through our miserable failures, 18:25-27.

- (John 18:25–27 ESV) Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. So they said to him, "You also are not one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." 26 One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" 27 Peter again denied it, and at once a rooster crowed.
- A. Peter's utter failure was absolutely necessary for him to be made ready to be strong for his brothers.
 - B. Peter would be sifted but his faith would not fail.
 - (Luke 22:31–34 ESV) "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, 32 but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers." 33 Peter said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death." 34 Jesus said, "I tell you, Peter, the

rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me."

There is a good reason that Satan demanded to sift Peter. He knew that Peter would be the strong leader of the early church. What better way to thwart God's plan than to discourage him. But from the tears of what Satan intended for evil God brought great victory.

7. Essential Truth #7: Be ready for the absurd accusations and seemingly unbounded hypocrisy of your self-righteous opponents, 18:28-32.

- (John 18:28–32 ESV) Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters. It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover. 29 So Pilate went outside to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" 30 They answered him, "If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you." 31 Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law." The Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death." 32 This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die.
- A. The absurdity and unbounded hypocrisy of those who do not follow Jesus will boggle your mind but will seem normal and even spiritual to them.
 - B. Be ready for this in the world and in the church.
 - C. It is of utmost importance for these people to be perceived as good and righteous and law abiding (as in God's law).
 - D. Don't be that person.

CONCLUSION: FOLLOWING JESUS IS THE ONLY GOOD CHOICE

- Follow Jesus and always walk in the light ...
- Follow Jesus and bring glory to God ...
- Follow Jesus and win ...
- Follow Jesus and never be afraid ...
 - Never be afraid of the darkness ...
 - Never be afraid of what is ahead ...
 - Never be afraid ... period ...

OUR ***TRUTH*** DILEMMA

Our truth dilemma is this ... we humans, who are all born into this world as liars, will at some point come face to face with Jesus who not only declares himself to be the truth but also states that his purpose in being born and coming into this world was to give solemn witness to the truth.

So the truth about the truth is this ... Jesus is the truth and Jesus is the solemn witness to the truth. Our truth dilemma is solved only when we listen to Jesus.



Dilemma — a situation in which a difficult choice has to be made between two or more alternatives; a problem offering two possibilities, neither of which is unambiguously acceptable or preferable.

1. The Jews' Dilemma: How to crucify Jesus while still being perceived as doers of the truth, 18:28-32.

- (John 18:28–32 ESV) Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters. It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover. 29 So Pilate went outside to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" 30 They answered him, "If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you." 31 Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law." The Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death." 32 This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

A. They tried Jesus in the early morning to "make it legal" since the previous trial was at night and violated their law.

- (Mark 15:1a ESV) And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council.

B. They took specific actions so as not to be defiled.

C. They were evasive regarding the accusation in order to serve their purpose before Pilate.

- (Matthew 26:65–66 ESV) Then the high priest tore his robes and said, "He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy. 66 What is your judgment?" They answered, "He deserves death."

D. They lied in regard to the accusation.

- (Luke 23:1–2 ESV) Then the whole company of them arose and brought him before Pilate. 2 And they began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king."

E. Their hateful, devil-inspired intent was not merely to kill Jesus but that he would be crucified on the cross and be portrayed as a curse.

- (Deuteronomy 21:23a ESV) ... his body shall not remain all night on the tree,

but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God.

- (Galatians 3:13 ESV) Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree."
- (Acts 5:27–30 ESV) And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, 28 saying, "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us." 29 But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men. 30 The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree."

2. Pilate's Dilemma: How to control the story and make truth work in his best interests, 18:33-38a.

- (John 18:33–38a ESV) So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" 34 Jesus answered, "Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?" 35 Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?" 36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world." 37 Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." 38 Pilate said to him, "What is truth?"

A. Pilate, ever self-protective, tries to sort out the political ramifications of Jesus' status as king.

B. Jesus makes it clear that the nature of his kingdom is spiritual and not primarily of this world system.

C. Now Pilate seems to have understood that Jesus is a king and asks him directly again.

D. Jesus does not answer directly but states that his purpose for being born and for coming into the world is to be a witness for the truth.

Bear witness ... μαρτυρέω [martureo] ... to be a witness, to bear witness, i.e. to affirm that one has seen or heard or experienced something; to solemnly assert something, offering firsthand authentication of the fact; often concerning grave or important matters.

E. And the truth is that Jesus is a King.

Excursus #1: Analyzing Pilate's approach to truth with the intent of helping us analyze our approach to truth.

- I. Pilate had as his audience Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, who is the truth.
- II. But Pilate distances himself from the reality of Jesus (who is the truth) standing before him by reverting to the hypothetical – “*What is truth.*”
- III. Pilate's fatal error in trying to solve his dilemma was thinking that by some method of human rationalization he could make a right decision regarding the truth.

He weighed his decision on whether or not to follow the truth on what he perceived to be the advantages or disadvantages of receiving and obeying the truth— what will I gain, what will I lose.

- IV. He ultimately decided that giving Jesus over to the Jews was what worked best for him.

Excursus #2: Analyzing our approach to truth in view of Pilate's example and other scriptural principles.

- I. We are finite, fallen, frail humans who were born into this world as liars.
- II. We need to pay close attention to the clear teaching of Scripture or we will not grasp the magnitude of the role of truth in the very fabric of God's universe—both in his created realm and in the spiritual, eternal realm.
 - (John 14:6 ESV) Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
 - (John 18:37b ESV) For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.
 - (Romans 1:18–20 ESV) For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. 19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal

power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

- III. We must understand that when we reject truth that we are rejecting Jesus and the essence of who he is and the nature of the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

Essence ... the intrinsic nature or indispensable quality of something, especially something abstract, that determines its character.

- A. Lying is always wrong because it is contrary to the truthful nature of God and his universe.
- B. Lying in any and every form is choosing to affirm a reality that ultimately rejects Jesus—who he is, what he stands for.
- C. Lying is always contrary to the truth.
- D. Lying runs contrary to the essential nature of God's universe ... no exceptions ... not Rahab (Joshua 2:4-5), not the Hebrew midwives (Exodus 1:15-21), not Corrie ten Boom, not you and not me.
- IV. It is important to understand that the person who does not listen to Jesus does not know Jesus.
 - (John 10:27 ESV) My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.
 - (John 10:16a ESV) And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice.
 - (John 5:25 ESV) Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.
 - (John 10:3–4 ESV) To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.
- V. We must be prepared to be treated like Jesus who is our teacher and master when we listen to him and speak his truth and follow him.
 - (Matthew 10:24–25 ESV) A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. 25 It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household.

VI. We must not allow the fear of people to put us in "decision mode" as opposed to simple obedience.

- (Proverbs 29:25 NLT) **Fearing people is a dangerous trap, but trusting the Lord means safety.**
- (Matthew 10:26–28 ESV) **So have no fear of them**, for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. 27 What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. 28 **And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.** Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

- A. Everything will one day be revealed.
- B. We must proclaim every truth God speaks to us.
- C. We must not suppress the truth by omission because we fear people.

VII. We must fully embrace and properly display the truth we are given.

- (Mark 4:21–25 NLT) Then Jesus asked them, **"Would anyone light a lamp and then put it under a basket or under a bed? Of course not! A lamp is placed on a stand, where its light will shine.** 22 For everything that is hidden will eventually be brought into the open, and every secret will be brought to light. 23 **Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand.**" 24 Then he added, **"Pay close attention to what you hear.** The closer you listen, the more understanding you will be given—and you will receive even more. 25 **To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given. But for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them."**

- A. We must never lower the truth to a subordinate position—in effect removing it from its stand and limiting the scope of its light-giving influence.
- B. The person tempted to do this is now warned that he will one day be exposed.
- C. We are able to avoid lowering God's truth to a subordinate position by paying close attention so that if we have ears to hear we will hear.
- D. The person who does not pay close attention to the truth will lose the truth he or she has.

3. Pilate never solved his truth dilemma and gave in to those demanding the death of Jesus, 18:38b–40.

- (John 18:38b–40 ESV) After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, **"I find no guilt in him.** 39 But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover. **So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?"** 40 They cried out again, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a robber.

- A. He knew the truth in this matter.
- B. His guilt was in not doing the truth.
- C. He tried to free himself from blame.
- D. He continued loving darkness rather than light.

CONCLUSION: Strive to believe God ... to solve your truth dilemma ... and to win your fight for truth ...

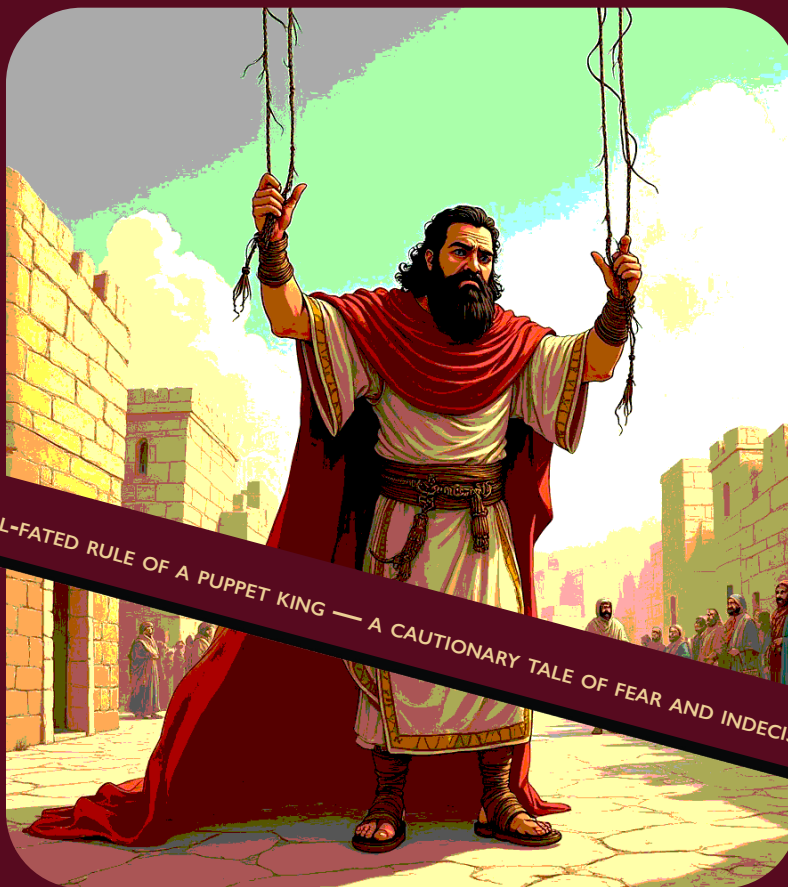
- (Luke 13:23–24 ESV) And someone said to him, **"Lord, will those who are saved be few?"** And he said to them, 24 **"Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able."**

Strive ... ἀγωνίζομαι [agonizomai] ... to enter a contest; to contend with adversaries; to fight, to exert much effort or energy.

- A. Striving here is the fight in our mind and heart to believe God and turn away from our own truth.
- B. It is the battle over who to believe — God or ourselves or other humans.
- C. To win we must believe God and not the liars.
- D. To win we must listen to Jesus who is the truth and who came into our world to witness to the truth.
 - (Hebrews 1:1–2a ESV) Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, **but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.**
- E. Only those who hear the voice of Jesus and believe in him win this fierce battle and find the path of life.
- F. And only as Jesus followers who keep hearing him and keep keeping his word do we bring glory to God.

PILATE

AND THE CRUCIFIXION NEGOTIATIONS



THE ILL-FATED RULE OF A PUPPET KING — A CAUTIONARY TALE OF FEAR AND INDECISION ...

1. A brief background on the negotiations ...

- (Luke 3:1–2 ESV) In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, 2 during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

A. POSITION: Pilate had the authority to rule as the Roman governor of Judea.

B. LEVERAGE: But the Jews pulled the strings as they had the political power in their dealings with Pilate regarding their customs and beliefs.

C. This was due to two factors: Pilate's previous examples of incompetence and the Jews clever manipulation in their relationship with Rome.

Pilate was known for his cruel behavior and his enmity toward the Jewish authorities. He had the political authority but they had the political power because of his incompetence in handling their religious zeal in regard to their customs and beliefs. Rome and the emperor wanted peace and Pilate already had numerous failures in that regard and so his support from Rome was wavering. The Jews knew this and had used their harmonious relationship with Rome to win various power struggles over Pilate. They had humbled this puppet king on more than one occasion. Governing Jerusalem was a difficult assignment that needed a man of discretion of which Pilate was not. One more poor decision could cost Pilate not only his career but possibly his life.

2. Pilate negotiated with the Jews for the release of Jesus, 19:1-5.

- (John 19:1–5 ESV) Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. 2 And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. 3 They came up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck him with their hands. 4 Pilate went out again and said to them, "See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him." 5 So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!"

A. Flogging Jesus was a failed negotiation tactic.

B. Pilate knew Jesus was innocent and was trying to save his own life and career by somehow finding a way to release Jesus.

- (Matthew 27:17–19 ESV) So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" 18 For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. 19 Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream."

C. But Satan was pulling the strings and Pilate the puppet king performed the bidding of his dark master and carried out his role in the humiliation of Christ.

Satan, blinded by rage, possibly believes he finally has his chance to achieve some measure of vengeance against God.

If you ever wondered what Satan would do if he could get his hands on God, then here you have it. He would savagely beat him and humiliate him with the most spite, malice and hatred he could muster.

How dare Christ refuse his offer to give him all the kingdoms of the world. He would make him pay for that decision.

- (Luke 4:5–8 ESV) And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, 6 and said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. 7 If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." 8 And Jesus answered him, "It is written, " 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.' "

D. The soldiers, though out of ignorance, spoke the truth and rightly proclaimed that Jesus was indeed the King of the Jews.

E. The innocence of Jesus is once again proclaimed to his accusers.

F. Behold the man indeed — Jesus, the Word who became flesh.

- (Hebrews 10:5–10 ESV) Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; 6

in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. 7 Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'" 8 When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), 9 then he added, "Behold, I have come to do your will." He does away with the first in order to establish the second. 10 And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

- (John 1:14 ESV) And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- (Romans 1:1–3 ESV) Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, 2 which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, 3 concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh.
- (Romans 8:3 ESV) For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,
- (Galatians 4:4 ESV) But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law.
- (Philippians 2:7–8 ESV) ... but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
- (Colossians 1:21–23 ESV) And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, 22 he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.
- (1 Timothy 3:16 ESV) Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the

Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.

- (Hebrews 2:14 ESV) Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil.

3. The Jews played hardball and demanded the death of Jesus on a cross, 19:6-7.

- (John 19:6–7 ESV) When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him." 7 The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God."

A. The Jews insisted that the Romans crucify Jesus so that they would not be held responsible.

- (Acts 5:27–28 ESV) And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, 28 saying, "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us."

B. Pilate told the Jews to crucify him themselves because he found no guilt in him.

C. The Jews responded with their demand that Jesus must die because he made himself out to be God.

4. Pilate became even more afraid as the far reaching implications of this looming dilemma dawned on his consciousness, 19:8-11.

- (John 19:8–11 ESV) When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. 9 He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. 10 So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" 11 Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin."

A. Two reasons Pilate's fear increased.

#1: Pilate had already lost to the Jews in two or more encounters regarding emperor worship versus their zealous belief in one God.

#2: Pilate had been involved in intense interaction with Jesus and seems to be more and more aware that he was not dealing with a mere man. Adding to his apprehension was the Jews charge that Jesus is making himself out to be the Son of God. This seems to be cause to wonder if Pilate is somewhere in the recesses of his mind beginning to comprehend the true identity of Jesus.

B. Pilate was now in full panic mode as Jesus refused to answer and asked Jesus — **"Where are you from?"**

C. Though thoroughly shaken Pilate attempted to fall back on his position of authority.

D. Jesus set him straight on who was the authority.

5. Pilate caved in to the Jews and delivered Jesus to them to be crucified, 19:12-16a.

- (John 19:12–16 ESV) **From then on Pilate sought to release him**, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar." 13 So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. 14 Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, **"Behold your King!"** 15 They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, **"Shall I crucify your King?"** The chief priests answered, **"We have no king but Caesar."** 16 So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.

A. Pilate is convinced of the innocence of Jesus and now seeks to release him.

B. The Jews pull their trump card — If you release this man who makes himself out to be a king, you are not Caesar's friend.

C. Lashing out Pilate calls out to them to behold their King and the Jews call out for Jesus' crucifixion.

D. Mocking them again Pilate challenges the Jews —

"Shall I crucify your King?"

E. The chief priests vehemently respond — **"We have no king but Caesar"** — and the irony was that they were telling the truth.

F. Pilate attempted to salvage what was left of his life and delivered Jesus to the Jews to be crucified.

G. Pilate came close to the truth but decided to save his life in this worldly realm rather than believe the truth of the kingdom of God.

CONCLUSION: PILATE CHOSE TO NOT DIE WITH JESUS AND SO LOST HIS OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE WITH JESUS FOREVER ...

It seems we observe much of that in our society and in the church today as we view life through the lens of Scripture ...

People profess that they want to live with Jesus ... that they want to have Jesus in their lives ...

But they are not willing to die with Jesus ... and they hope this is enough and that everything will work out in the end ...

But trusting in false hope and basing our lives on the wrong authority ... never, ever works out ...

This is wishful thinking ... a lie that contradicts Scripture and never ends well ...

- (2 Timothy 2:11–13 ESV) The saying is trustworthy, for: **if we have died with him, we will also live with him**; 12 if we endure, we will also reign with him; **if we deny him, he also will deny us**; 13 **if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.**
- (Mark 8:34–35 ESV) And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, **let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.** 35 **For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it.**"

So our question this morning is this:

Am I willing to die with Jesus that I might live with him?

THE GOSPEL, PARTS 1 AND 2

THE HISTORICAL, VERIFIABLE ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF JESUS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD, AS DOCUMENTED BY THE APOSTLE JOHN.



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- (1 CORINTHIANS 15:3–4 ESV) FOR I DELIVERED TO YOU AS OF FIRST IMPORTANCE WHAT I ALSO RECEIVED: 1) **THAT** CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCRIPTURES, 2) **THAT** HE WAS BURIED, 3) **THAT** HE WAS RAISED ON THE THIRD DAY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCRIPTURES.
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THE APOSTLE PAUL PREACHED THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD

1. The gospel is the historical, verifiable, documented account of the good news of God that reveals the saving grace of God in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- A. Historical speaks of providing evidence for a fact of actual history, past events; as in recorded events that have happened, and once existed, as opposed to being part of mere legend or fiction.
- B. Verifiable means something that can be proved to be true, genuine or real; able to be checked and proved to be true, accurate and correct.
- C. Documented ... If something is documented it has been written down or recorded with the purpose of showing the existence of, evidence for or truth of an event or process.

2. The Apostle Paul identified, clarified and emphasized that the gospel he preached was the good news of God for the salvation of humankind.

- (1 Corinthians 15:1–2 ESV) Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.
- A. This was the gospel they had received, in which they stood and by which they were being saved.
- B. They were being saved by this gospel if they held fast to the gospel that Paul preached ... unless they believed in vain, i.e. they say they have faith but do not truly believe what they profess to believe.
- C. Paul notes in Galatians how quickly people desert Christ by turning to a different gospel.
 - (Galatians 1:6 ESV) I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel.
- D. Paul also notes that there will be people who trouble those in the Church by distorting the gospel.
 - (Galatians 1:7 ESV) ... not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.
- E. Paul emphasizes that there is only one gospel and if anyone preaches otherwise let him be accursed.
 - (Galatians 1:8–9 ESV) But even if we or

an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

3. The Apostle Paul was very clear and concise in defining the gospel.

- (1 Corinthians 15:3–4 ESV) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

4. Any other “gospel” is a false gospel that seems right because it fits—it is acceptable and suitable to the ways and thoughts of earth.

- A. A false gospel is the product of a deceived heart and is non-historical, undocumented and unverifiable.
- B. A false gospel is an imagined way to God and heaven that seems right to people but leads to death.
 - (Proverbs 14:12 ESV) There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.
- C. A false gospel is the notion of a self-righteous fool.
 - (Proverbs 12:15 ESV) The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.
- D. Humans by nature believe their concept of the gospel is pure and righteous.
 - (Proverbs 16:2 ESV) All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the spirit.
 - (Proverbs 21:2 ESV) Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the heart.
- E. The person who believes a false gospel is wise in his own eyes—he rejects what God says in his word.
 - (Proverbs 26:12 ESV) Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.
 - (Proverbs 3:7 ESV) Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.

THE APOSTLE JOHN DOCUMENTED THE EVENTS OF THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD

The historical, verifiable account of the death and burial of Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, as documented by the Apostle John. In this account John documents parts one and two of the gospel, the death and burial of Jesus.

1. Jesus was crucified, 19:16-27.

- (John 19:16–27 ESV) So he delivered him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus, 17 and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. 18 There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. 19 Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” 20 Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. 21 So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but rather, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’” 22 Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.” 23 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, 24 so they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.” This was to fulfill the Scripture which says, “They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.” So the soldiers did these things, 25 but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son!” 27 Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

A. Pilate delivered Jesus over to be crucified.

- i. Pilate had lost the the negotiations with the Jews over the fate of Jesus.
- ii. To satisfy their demands he delivered Jesus over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified.

B. The soldiers took Jesus and crucified him.

C. Providence: Pilate wrote a sign to be hung above Jesus on the cross.

It was common that a crime the person had committed would be written on a sign and either hung around the person’s neck as he traveled to the cross or hung on the cross itself. Since Jesus had committed no crime Pilate, in the providence of God, chose the title that not only proclaimed a powerful truth but also was a stern rebuke for the Jews who had betrayed their King.

D. Providence: The Roman soldiers fulfilled Scripture.

- i. The soldiers crucified Jesus, took his clothes and divided them—one piece of clothing for each soldier.
- ii. This left his tunic which was one piece so they cast lots to determine who would get the tunic.
- iii. The dividing of his clothes and casting lots for the tunic fulfilled Scripture.

E. Four faithful women stood by the cross.

- (Matthew 27:55–56 ESV) There were also many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him, 56 among whom were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.
- (Luke 23:48–49 ESV) And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts. 49 And all his acquaintances and the women who had followed him from Galilee stood at a distance watching these things.
- (Luke 8:2–3 ESV) And also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, 3 and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod’s household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.

2. Jesus died, 19:28-30.

- (John 19:28–30 ESV) After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), “I thirst.” 29 A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a

sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. 30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "**It is finished**," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

A. Jesus knew his work was finished.

B. Debt paid in full he gave up his life.

C. He had struck the death blow—crushing the devil, the ancient serpent.

- (Hebrews 2:14 ESV) Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, **that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil.**
- (Genesis 3:15 ESV) I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; **he shall bruise your head**, and you shall bruise his heel.
- (Romans 16:20a ESV) **The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.**

3. Jesus' death was verified, 19:31-37.

- (John 19:31-37 ESV) Since it was the day of Preparation, **and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away.** 32 So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him. 33 **But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.** 34 But one of the soldiers **pierced his side with a spear**, and at once there came out blood and water. 35 **He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe.** 36 For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken." 37 And again another Scripture says, "They will look on him whom they have pierced."

A. The soldiers knew Jesus was dead—the blood and water verified his death.

B. John verifies the death of Jesus.

- i. He saw this as an eye witness and gave testimony.
- ii. He asserts that his testimony is true and accurate as described and he has the deep conviction of the Holy Spirit that his testimony is true.
- iii. His example teaches that true testimony must be given so that people may believe and be saved.

4. Jesus was buried, 19:38-42.

- (John 19:38-42 ESV) After these things **Joseph of Arimathea**, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, **and Pilate gave him permission.** So he came and took away his body. 39 **Nicodemus also**, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. 40 **So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.** 41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. 42 So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.

A. Joseph of Arimathea asked permission to take away the body of Jesus and Pilate gave his permission.

B. Nicodemus helped and these two men who were members of the Sanhedrin buried Jesus.

CONCLUSION: DO WE KNOW WE ARE TELLING THE TRUTH?

John knew ... So do we have that strong, true testimony of the word of the truth of the gospel alive in our hearts? Do we share a true Gospel so that people may believe and live?

- (1 John 5:13 ESV) **I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know** that you have eternal life.
- (John 20:31 ESV) But **these are written so that you may believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

THE GOSPEL

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS, PART 3

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCRIPTURES



- ☒ THAT CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS ...
- ☒ THAT HE WAS BURIED ...
- ☒ THAT HE WAS RAISED ON THE THIRD DAY ...
- ☒ THAT WE ACCEPT, BELIEVE AND LIVE OUR PART IN THIS AMAZING REALITY ...

SECTION I: THE HISTORICAL, VERIFIABLE ACCOUNT OF THE EVENTS OF THE THIRD DAY OF THE GOSPEL — THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD, AS DOCUMENTED BY THE APOSTLE JOHN.

SECTION II: THE HISTORICAL, VERIFIABLE ACCOUNT OF THE HIGHLY PROFITABLE NATURE OF THE REALITY OF THE TRANSFORMATIVE EFFECT OF THE DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST IN THE EVERYDAY LIVES OF THOSE WHO HAVE BELIEVED IN HIM AS DOCUMENTED BY THE APOSTLE PAUL.

SECTION I: The Apostle John documents the events of the day of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

- (1 Corinthians 15:3–4 ESV) For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, **[PART 3] that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.**

1. Mary Magdalene and some other women came to the tomb and discovered that the dead body of Jesus was not there and reported this to Peter and John, 20:1-10.

- (John 20:1 ESV) **Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early**, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. 2 So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, **“They have taken the Lord out of the tomb**, and we do not know where they have laid him.” 3 So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. 4 Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5 And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. 6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, 7 and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw **and believed**; 9 **for as yet they did not understand the Scripture**, that he must rise from the dead. 10 Then the disciples went back to their homes.

A. In spite of their initial skepticism Peter and John ran to the tomb and discovered the women were correct.

- (Luke 24:10 ESV) Now it was **Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women** with them who told these things to the apostles.

B. John it seems had begun to believe but his belief did not yet have the strong affirmation of understanding these things from the Scriptures.

Lesson: Our strongest, most affirming convictions of the truth of God come when that truth is grounded in the clearest, plainest statements of Scripture.

2. Must ask ... Why did they not go to the tomb fully expecting Jesus to be gone?

A. Jesus had clearly and directly told them this was going to happen.

- (Matthew 16:21 ESV) **From that time Jesus began to show his disciples** that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, **and be killed, and on the third day be raised.**

- See also Matthew 17:23, 20:9.

B. So why were they so surprised and confused to find the tomb empty that morning?

Lesson: It is impossible to know and receive the good news of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ in a saving way except by the work of the Holy Spirit of God in a person's life. We must not be so foolish to believe that we can persuade someone into believing in Jesus.

Lesson: As those approved by God we must accurately handle the word of truth regarding the gospel so that we communicate the clear, plain truth that saves.

- (2 Corinthians 2:17 ESV) **For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.**
- (2 Timothy 2:15 ESV) Do your best to **present yourself to God as one approved**, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, **rightly handling the word of truth.**

3. Mary Magdalene stayed at the tomb and tried to find out where they had taken the body of Jesus, 20:11-18.

- (John 20:11–18 ESV) **But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb**, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. 12 And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. 13 They said to her, “Woman, **why are you weeping?**” She said to them, **“They have taken away my Lord**, and I do not know where they have laid him.” 14 Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus said to her, “Woman, **why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?**” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, **if you have carried him away**, tell me where you have laid

him, and I will take him away.” 16 Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and said to him in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” 18 Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”—and that he had said these things to her.

A. Mary talked to two angels.

Mary was crying and stooped to look into the tomb and saw two angels. The angels questioned Mary as to why she was crying. She stated for the second time that “they” had taken away her Lord. (See 20:2 for first.)

B. Mary talked to Jesus.

She turned around, saw Jesus standing and he questioned her as to why she was crying. For the third time Mary spoke of Jesus having been taken away. Jesus called her by name and she recognized him.

- (John 10:27 ESV) My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.
- (John 10:2–5 ESV) But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. 5 A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”

C. Mary talked to the disciples.

4. That evening Jesus came and stood among the disciples, 20:19-23.

- (John 20:19–23 ESV) On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” 20 When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. 21 Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” 22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy

Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.”

A. Jesus spoke his peace to the frightened disciples.

- (John 14:27 ESV) Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.
- (Romans 5:1 ESV) Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

B. He authenticated his bodily presence by his crucifixion wounds and the disciples were glad.

C. He spoke his peace to them again and sent them with his message of peace with God to the world.

D. He breathed on them to receive the Holy Spirit.

E. He authorized their message of forgiveness of sins through him.

SECTION II: The Apostle Paul provides a biblical account of the reality of the highly profitable, transformative effects of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ in the everyday lives of those who believe.

We will most profit from the power of the gospel—the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ—when we receive and believe the clear, plain teaching of Scripture. This will build in us a heightened awareness of the intended and sometimes overlooked effects of the gospel in our daily pursuit of godly living and our battle against sin and the old self.

1. In the infinitesimal space of time that a person believes in Christ, he or she is immersed into Christ by the Holy Spirit ... and would now be defined and identified in Scripture as “in Christ.”

- (1 Corinthians 12:13 ESV) For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.
- (Romans 8:1 ESV) There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus now have real effects in our lives. ... our dying and rising with Christ occur in this present life, at the time we become Christians. [Grudem, W. A. (2004). *Systematic theology: an introduction to biblical doctrine* (p. 842). Inter-Varsity Press; Zondervan Pub. House.]

2. For those who are ***in Christ***, the plain teaching of Scripture is that when Jesus died, was buried and raised on the third day ... so were we.

- (Romans 6:3–6 ESV) Do you not know that all of us who have been ***baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?*** 4 We were ***buried*** therefore with him by baptism into death, ***in order that, just as Christ was raised*** from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For ***if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection*** like his. 6 We know that ***our old self was crucified with him*** in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

3. We must understand that this is not speaking of water baptism or we will miss the point of the text.

- A. The word for baptize, or baptism, means to put into, to immerse, to identify with.
- B. Water baptism is a human work in which one person immerses another into water.

Water baptism is a human work that is blessed by God when it is properly represented according to Scripture—not as part of our salvation, but as a step of obedience by someone who is already a believer.

C. In Scripture water baptism is clearly set apart from baptism by the Spirit in action, intent and purpose.

D. The Apostle Paul distinguishes between water baptism and the preaching of the gospel.

- (1 Corinthians 1:17a ESV) For ***Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel*** ...

E. Water is present in water baptism.

- (Matthew 3:11 ESV) I ***baptize you with water*** ...but he who is coming after me ... ***will baptize you with the Holy Spirit*** and fire.
- (John 1:26a ESV) John answered them, “I ***baptize with water*** ...
- (Acts 1:5 ESV) For John ***baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit*** not many days from now.

F. Paul speaks of the children of Israel being baptized into Moses—clearly not speaking of water baptism.

- (1 Corinthians 10:1–2 ESV) ***For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, 2 and all were baptized into Moses*** in the cloud and in the sea,

G. The baptism in Romans 6 is the spiritual work of God alone—no mention of water.

4. To understand the reality of and to fully benefit from our participation in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we must understand and accept the concept of Jesus being our representative head even as incomprehensible as this may seem to our human, finite minds.

A. Jesus Christ is our representative head in salvation as Adam is our representative head in damnation.

- (Romans 5:18–19 ESV) Therefore, ***as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.*** 19 For as by the ***one man's disobedience*** the many were made sinners, so ***by the one man's obedience*** the many will be made righteous.

This point is that there can be an ***assurance of justification and life***, on one side, that is ***just as strong and certain as the assurance of condemnation*** on the other. Paul wants to show, ***not how Christ has made available*** righteousness and life for all, ***but how Christ has secured*** the benefits of that righteousness for all who belong to him ... that Christ affects those who are his just as certainly as Adam does those who are his. [Moo, D. J. (1996). *The Epistle to the Romans* (p. 343). Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.]

B. By faith we share in the reality of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ and this is the foundation for the new chapter in our lives in that we are now dead to sin and alive to God.

- (2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV) Therefore, ***if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.***
- (John 3:3 ESV) Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, ***unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.***”

THE GOSPEL

BELIEVE AND HAVE LIFE IN JESUS' NAME



... THESE ARE WRITTEN SO THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD,
AND THAT BY BELIEVING YOU MAY HAVE LIFE IN HIS NAME.

(JOHN 20:31 ESV)

1. Thomas' *absence at the first appearance* was used specifically by God to serve his sovereign purpose in teaching us what it means to truly believe in and have life in Jesus' name, 20:24-25.

- (John 20:24–25 ESV) Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

A. By the sovereign will of God Thomas was not with the other disciples when Jesus first appeared to them.

- (Proverbs 16:33 ESV) The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.
- (Lamentations 3:37 ESV) Who has spoken and it came to pass, unless the Lord has commanded it?
- (Romans 11:33 ESV) Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!
- (Romans 9:21 ESV) Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use?
- (Job 42:1–2 ESV) Then Job answered the LORD and said: 2 "I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted."

B. The stated facts in the text ...

- Thomas was not with the other disciples when Jesus appeared to them the first time.
- The other disciples informed him that they had seen the Lord.
- Thomas responded that he would never believe without clear evidence of the crucifixion wounds.

C. The facts surrounding the text ...

- Thomas' absence was the sovereign will of God.
- The unstated, unfounded speculations regarding Thomas' absence are the result of reading insights into the text that are not there.

We need to take note of God's sovereignty in Thomas' absence *and also take note* of the fact that the Spirit compelled John to record both Thomas' absence and presence in his Holy Word. This should direct us to

understand the events more in the context of God's providence than in the context of Thomas' perceived personality. And this in turn will hopefully neutralize our biases so that we have a more solid basis on which to focus on God's intent in what is actually written.

- The popular notion of casting Thomas as a doubter has no evidence in Scripture.
- This is important because seeing the text through the lens of "doubting Thomas" distorts the picture and we miss the main point.

D. So let's look at Thomas through the lens of Scripture.

- Thomas was appointed as one of the twelve by Jesus himself.
 - (Mark 3:16–18 ESV) He [Jesus] appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter) ... and Thomas.
- Thomas was a passionate, loyal, courageous follower of Jesus.
 - (John 11:14–16 ESV) Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus has died, 15 and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." 16 So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."
- As a faithful, passionate follower of Jesus Thomas exhibited humility, courage and a desire to get the facts straight.
- It was his admission of ignorance that prompted Jesus' powerful "I am" statement in John 14:6.
 - (John 14:2–6 ESV) In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. 4 And you know the way to where I am going. 5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."
- When Thomas requested confirmation regarding Jesus' crucifixion wounds, he was, in effect, asking to see the same evidence that Jesus had shown the other disciples eight days earlier.

- (John 20:20 ESV) When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

2. Thomas' presence at the second appearance was used specifically by God to serve his sovereign purpose in teaching us what it means to truly believe in and have life in Jesus' name, 20:26-29.

- (John 20:26–29 ESV) Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." 27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." 28 Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

- Thomas had been hand-picked for this moment.
 - Eight days later the disciples were gathered and Thomas was with them and Jesus came.
 - Jesus prompted Thomas in telling him to examine the evidence by touching his wounds.
 - Jesus prompted Thomas again to ... not not believe ... but to believe.

So what did Jesus mean? I believe there was an overwhelming, rising consciousness in Thomas ... that he was beginning to realize that he was on the cusp of something beyond himself ... that the truth of who Jesus was had begun to overflow the finite limits of his humanity ... and that he was indeed standing on holy ground in the presence of the one who would soon sit down at the right hand of Majesty on high ...

And I believe that when Jesus exhorted him to "*not disbelieve, but believe*" that he was prompting him to speak the reality of what was before him ... "*Thomas, who do you see standing before you? Yes, you see your risen Lord. So do not not believe but believe*" ...

So he answered him – "My Lord and my God" ...

- (Hebrews 1:3 ESV) He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

- Jesus then attributed Thomas' confession as a statement of genuine, saving belief.
- Thomas had believed because he had seen Jesus, but Jesus pronounced his blessing on those who have not seen and yet have believed.
- The common element was the recognition of Jesus as Lord and God.

3. Purpose Statement: These signs were written in this Gospel so that the reader might believe and by believing have life in Jesus' name, 20:30-31.

- (John 20:30–31 ESV) Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

- Many other signs were performed which were not written in this book.
- These signs were written with the specific purpose of producing in the reader an explicit belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing in this Jesus in this clear and exact way the reader may have life in his name.

Explicit means stated clearly and in detail, leaving no room for confusion or doubt; leaving nothing implied, definite. The intent was that the reader would believe in the accurate, correct, precise, exact, specific, detailed, clear-cut, unerring revelation of Jesus in the holy Scriptures ... and that by believing without a doubt that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God that he would have, hold fast to and possess life in his name.

- Probably the most significant sign was the sign of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

- (John 2:18–22 ESV) So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" 19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 20 The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" 21 But he was speaking about the temple of his body. 22 When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

Our lesson: We must be crystal clear and accurate in our presentation and proclamation of the gospel.

D. Belief that is true and effectual is evidenced in the one believing having life in Jesus' name.

Effectual means successful in producing a desired or intended result. The result of effectual belief in Jesus is having life in Jesus' name.

20:31 ... "*by believing you may have*" – ἔχω [echo] – to have, i.e. to hold; to have (hold) in the hand, in the sense of wearing, to have (hold) possession of the mind; to hold fast keep; to have i.e. own, possess.

E. Having life in Jesus' name means ...

- i. A changed life ... a life transformed by belief in Jesus, characterized by a commitment to following his teachings.
 - (John 8:31–32 ESV) So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "**if you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.**"
- ii. A submitted life ... living under Jesus' authority, by his power, aligning with his will, submitting to his will, and doing all for his glory.
 - (John 14:15 ESV) If you love me, you will keep my commandments.
 - (2 John 6 ESV) And this is love, **that we walk according to his commandments;** this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it.
- iii. A new life ... a new identity expressed by turning from our old ways and living according to our new identity in Christ.
 - (2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV) Therefore, **if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away;** behold, the new has come.
- iv. A hopeful life ... focusing on eternal significance rather than earthly matters.
 - (Romans 15:13 ESV) May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, **so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.**
- v. A maturing life ... growing in an intimate, personal relationship with God that is built on our love for and trust in God.
 - (John 14:23 ESV) Jesus answered

him, "**if anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.**"

- vi. A serving life ... directing one's thoughts, words, and deeds towards serving God and others,
- vii. A holy life... living in such a way that we reflect the name of God—his holiness, power, authority, love, light, majesty, wisdom, etc. in every aspect of our daily lives.
 - (Isaiah 46:8–10 ESV) Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors, 9 remember the former things of old; **for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me,** 10 declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, "**My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.**"
- viii. A worthy life ... a life that honors our calling.
 - (Colossians 1:10 ESV) **So as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him:** bearing fruit in every good work and **increasing in the knowledge of God.**
 - (1 Thessalonians 2:12 ESV) We exhorted each one of you and **encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God,** who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.
 - (Philippians 1:27 ESV) **Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ,** so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you **that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.**

CONCLUSION: Do I have that? (See above)

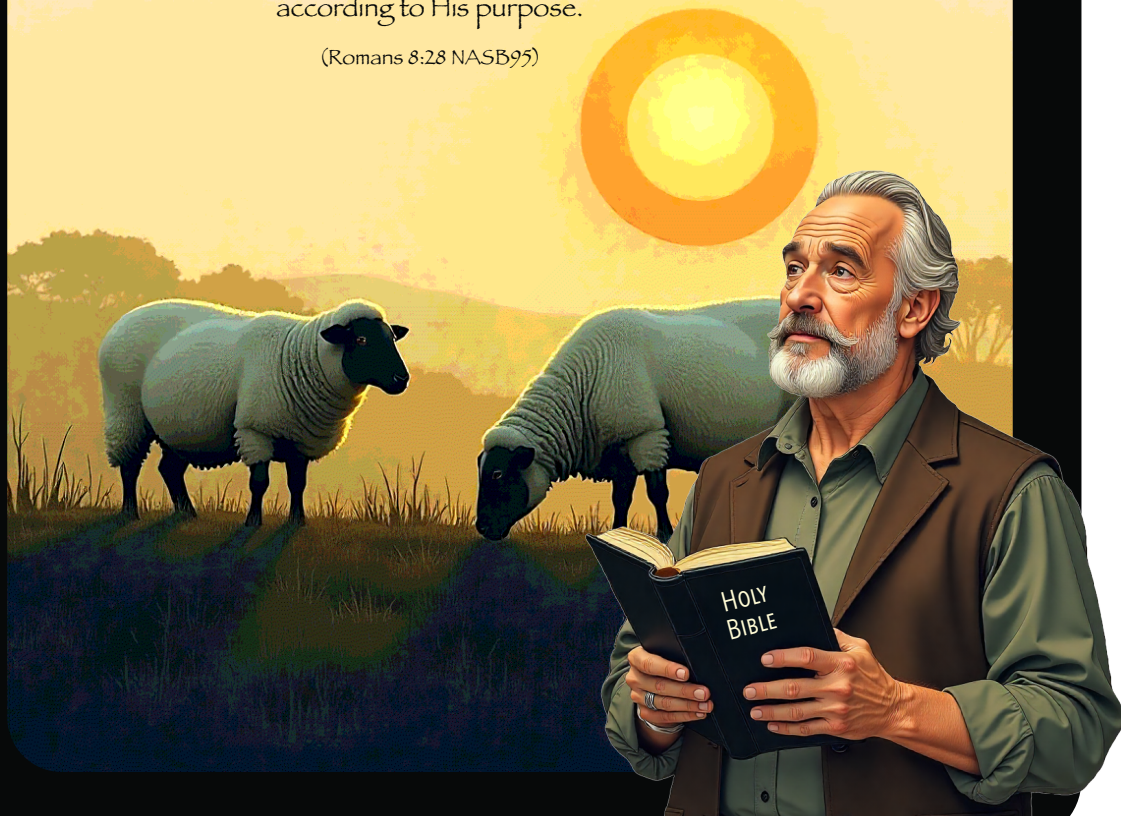
JESUS SHEPHERDS HIS SHEPHERDS

**THE PROVIDENTIAL CARE OF JESUS FOR HIS SHEEP BY HIS
PROVIDENTIAL SHEPHERDING OF HIS SHEPHERDS.**

PROVIDENCE ...

And we know that God causes all things to work together for
good to those who love God, to those who are called
according to His purpose.

(Romans 8:28 NASB95)



- Providential ... effected by the providence of God; referable to divine providence; proceeding from divine direction or superintendence; marked by or involving divine foresight; occurring by an intervention of God; occurring at a favorable time or the right time; peculiarly appropriate as if resulting by divine intervention.

1. Jesus finds his disciples in retreat and makes himself known to them, 21:1-14.

A. Jesus' sheep had been scattered.

- (Matthew 26:31–33 ESV) Then Jesus said to them, **"You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'** 32 But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." 33 Peter answered him, **"Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away."**

B. Jesus had forty days to gather and prepare them before his return to the Father.

C. To accomplish this Jesus revealed himself to them in such a way that they would be able to face all the challenges of taking his gospel to the world, 21:1-3.

- (John 21:1–3 ESV) **After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples** by the Sea of Tiberias, **and he revealed himself in this way.** 2 Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. 3 **Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you."** They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Reveal... φανερώω [phaneroō] – to make manifest; to show one's self; to be plainly recognized, thoroughly understood who and what one is.

D. Jesus would gather and prepare them through his love relationship with them.

- (John 14:21–23 ESV) **"Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me.** And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and **I will love him and manifest myself to him."** 22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, **"Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us,** and not to the world?" 23 Jesus answered him, **"If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."**

E. Jesus found them at their earthly place of solace.

Solace... comfort or consolation in a time of grief, distress, sadness or misfortune.

F. Jesus revealed himself to them by performing a miracle, 21:4-8.

- (John 21:4–8 ESV) Just as day was

breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; **yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.** 5 Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No." 6 He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. 7 **That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!"** When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and **threw himself into the sea.** 8 The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.

- Jesus shows his tender care for them as he asks ... "Children, do you have any fish?" and meets their need for fish by performing a miracle.
- When Peter heard that the person on the shore was Jesus he threw himself into the sea.

The revealing of Jesus through this miracle supplied their literal and immediate emotional need for food but more importantly supplied their spiritual need for perspective and reassurance.

G. He made them breakfast, 21:9-14.

- (John 21:9–14 ESV) When they got out on land, **they saw a charcoal fire in place,** with fish laid out on it, and bread. 10 Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." 11 So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. 12 **Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?"** They knew it was the Lord. 13 Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. 14 **This was now the third time** that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

2. Jesus resets Peter's coordinates by asking the question—Do you love me, 21:15-17.

This is what was necessary to prepare, restore and commission Peter—and indirectly the others—to lead the early church. He asked the same basic question three times—Do you love me?

A. With his prodding of Peter Jesus established that love for him must be preeminent—*surpassing, having paramount rank*—in our relationship with him.

i. If we love him, we will keep his commandments.

- (John 14:15 ESV) **If you love me, you will keep my commandments.**
 - (John 15:9–11 ESV) As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. 10 **If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love,** just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. 11 These things I have spoken to you, **that my joy may be in you,** and **that your joy may be full.**
- ii. The great commandment is that we love him.
- (Mark 12:28–30 ESV) And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, **"Which commandment is the most important of all?"** 29 Jesus answered, **"The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 And you shall love the Lord your God** with all your **heart** and with all your **soul** and with all your **mind** and with all your **strength.**"

B. The instruction is specific—that the shepherd is to feed Jesus' sheep.

- i. If the shepherd loves the Great Shepherd, then he will obey him and feed **his** sheep.
- (Ephesians 4:11 ESV) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, **the shepherds and teachers.**
- ii. The pastor/shepherd is called specifically to feed Jesus' sheep, not merely the person in the pew.
- iii. The pastor/shepherd's love for and obedience to Jesus must be foremost if he is to make decisions that honor God in feeding and tending his sheep.

C. FIRST TIME JESUS ASKS ... Do you love me?

- (John 21:15 ESV) When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, **"Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?"** He said to him, **"Yes, Lord; you know that I love you."** He said to him, **"Feed my lambs."**

THIS QUESTION COULD BE INTERPRETED IN THREE WAYS:

Do you love me more than you love these things—aka this earthly life? *Do you love me more* than you love your fellow disciples? *Do you love me more* than these others love me?

D. Grace: Three times Peter denied Jesus and now as Jesus purges him of his pride he gives him the opportunity to profess his love for him three times.

SIDEBAR: A SAMPLING OF PETER'S PRIDE ...

He boasted that he would never fall away even if everyone else did ...

- (Matthew 26:33, 35 ESV) Peter answered him, **"Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away."** ... Peter said to him, **"Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!"** And all the disciples said the same.

He thought that he was ready when he obviously was not ...

- (Luke 22:31–33 ESV) "Simon, Simon, behold, **Satan demanded to have you,** that he might sift you like wheat, 32 but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. **And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.**" 33 Peter said to him, **"Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death."**

He said he was ready to follow Jesus and die ...

- (John 13:37–38 ESV) Peter said to him, **"Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you."** 38 Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times."

E. Jesus knew that Peter's pride must be thoroughly defeated for him to be ready for what was ahead.

- i. Ready for leading, pasturing and feeding Jesus' sheep.
- (Psalm 23:1–3 ESV) The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 **He makes me** lie down in green pastures. **He leads me** beside still waters. 3 **He restores my soul. He leads me** in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- ii. Ready and courageous when facing the wolf.
- (John 10:11–13 ESV) I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12 **He who is a hired hand** and not a

shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13 He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

- (Acts 20:29–30 ESV) I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

F. SECOND TIME JESUS ASKS ... Do you love me?

- (John 21:16 ESV) He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.”

Now the question is simplified to what is most basic. The emphasis should not be on the Greek words used but on Jesus’ purging, sanctifying method in repeating the question.

G. THIRD TIME JESUS ASKS ... Do you love me?

- (John 21:17 ESV) He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.

- i. Jesus’ method of course works as Peter is humiliated and brought to face the failure and grief of his pride and self-sufficiency.

21:17 grieved ... λυπέω [lupeo] – to make sorrowful; to affect with sadness, cause grief, to throw into sorrow; to make one uneasy.

- ii. In his pride Peter had previously taken Jesus aside and rebuked him for predicting his death.
 - (Matthew 16:22–23 ESV) And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” 23 But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”

- iii. At some point after the resurrection Peter had his “Job moment” and he saw Jesus as ... the omnipotent, omniscient, all-wise, Sovereign Lord of all creation *who knows everything*.

3. Jesus twice reminds Peter of his life direction—“follow me”, 21:18-23.

Jesus rebuked Peter for questioning his will for John and exhorted him to single-minded devotion to follow him and not be concerned about John’s fate.

- (John 21:18–23 ESV) Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.” 19 (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, “Follow me.” 20 Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who also had leaned back against him during the supper and had said, “Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?” 21 When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, “Lord, what about this man?” 22 Jesus said to him, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!” 23 So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?”

4. THE EVENTS OF THIS GOSPEL: Witnessed, written down and authenticated—the testimony is true, 21:24-25.

- (John 21:24-25 ESV) This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true. Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

CONCLUSION: Our *passion* in life – love Jesus - our *direction* in life – always follow Jesus ...