The Book of John

Richmond Shee
Copyright © 2014 by Richmond Shee

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise, except as permitted under Section 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without the prior written permission of the Publisher. Requests to the Publisher for permission should be addressed to TheBookofJohn777@yahoo.com.

Scripture quotations are from the King James Authorized Version.

With gratitude to the Lord Jesus Christ for the gifts of eternal life and wisdom, and to my beloved wife, Jody.
Contents
Foreword ..............................................................5
Introduction ..........................................................7
Chapter 1 – Emmanuel ..........................................9
Chapter 2 – True Joy ..............................................30
Chapter 3 – Love .................................................43
Chapter 4 – Living Water .......................................67
Chapter 5 – Healer ...............................................87
Chapter 6 – Bread of Life .......................................103
Chapter 7 – Teacher .............................................121
Chapter 8 – Forgiver .............................................138
Chapter 9 – Sent One ...........................................161
Chapter 10 – Good Shepherd .................................176
Chapter 11 – Resurrection and Life ......................195
Chapter 12 – King of Israel .....................................213
Chapter 13 – Servant ...........................................233
Chapter 14 – Way, Truth, Life ...............................252
Chapter 15 – True Vine .........................................268
Chapter 16 – Advisor ...........................................284
Chapter 17 – Advocate ..........................................297
Chapter 18 – Truth ..............................................313
Chapter 19 – Lamb of God .....................................330
Chapter 20 – The Christ ........................................343
Chapter 21 – Master Fisherman ............................355
Works Cited .......................................................368
About the Author ................................................369
Foreword

had been praying for and witnessing to my coworker and dear
friend for a number of years. He was not interested in the
salvation of Jesus Christ and would often brush me off by telling
me that he would look into it at age 50. But God was faithful and
continued to draw him to Christ. Through the course of events, one
day he was ready, and I had the privilege of leading him to the Lord.

As many Bible believers do, I recommended that he read the
Gospel of John. When I followed up a couple of weeks later, he
happily reported that he had read the book. When I asked him what
he got out of it, he said, “A bunch of history.”

It dawned on me that I needed to help young believers in
Christ to get more out of the Bible and to learn how to apply God’s
truth to their lives.

Every passage in the Bible has three applications: historical
(past), inspirational (present), and doctrinal or prophetic (future).
The Bible is indeed an accurate history book. It is also a book of
prophecy by which we may know the future and chart the course of
our lives appropriately. More importantly, the Bible is an
inspirational book, where we can imagine ourselves in the story and
profit through personal application of its truth.

In this book I set out to explain the Gospel of John at the
young-believer level in the blended format of a Bible study and
commentary. There are 21 chapters, corresponding to each chapter
in the gospel. The title of each chapter reflects who Jesus Christ is in
that chapter. Each contains four sections: Historical Synopsis, Key
Spiritual Lessons, Prophecies (if applicable), and Summary. The
Historical Synopsis briefly describes the history covered in the chapter. The Key Spiritual Lessons is the meat of the chapter. The Prophecies section exposes the future events that are encoded in the chapter.

This book is recommended as a reference commentary for the Gospel of John and as an example of how to outline and study the Bible. It is my sincere hope that new believers in Christ may be able to study and understand the Bible and feed themselves with the truth of God.
Introduction

The Apostle John was one of the original 12 disciples of Jesus Christ. Jesus called John and his brother James while they were mending fishing nets on a ship with their father Zebedee, according to Mark 1:19-20. Immediately, the brothers left the ship to follow Jesus.

The Apostle John was also the beloved disciple of Jesus Christ, according to John 13:23, John 19:26, and John 21:7, 20. Today he is also known as the Apostle of Love by his extensive writings on love in the book of 1John.

John was the only original disciple who was spared from martyrdom. He spent the latter years of his life in exile in Patmos, a small Greek island in the Aegean Sea. There he penned the book of Revelation. John was uniquely used by God to document His outreach and plan of salvation for mankind, His love, and His wrath.


The gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are collectively known as the synoptic gospels because they include and describe events from a similar point of view, as contrasted with that of John. John omits many of the accounts in the synoptic gospels and includes a considerable amount of material not found in them. John’s purpose for the readers is noted in John 20:30, “And many
other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: (31) But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”

The Gospel of John can be outlined as such:

I. Christ’s outreach to the lost world – chapters 1–12
II. Christ’s ministry to His own – chapters 13–17
III. Christ’s sufferings and glory – chapters 18–21
1 – Emmanuel

Historical Synopsis

The Apostle John exposes Jesus Christ as the divine Word from heaven, who was God Himself. He describes the creativity of the Word as the one who crafted and owns the entire creation. He then reveals the outreach of the Word with His quickening virtue, having life as the light of men. Following, he talks about the humanity of the Word as the Savior of the world.

The Apostle John then describes John the Baptist, who was the forerunner of Jesus Christ and was sent by God to the Jews to bear witness of Jesus as the true Light.

Included in this chapter is the record of Christ’s manifestation to the nation of Israel through baptism. John the Baptist was privileged to baptize Jesus and witness the Spirit of God descend from heaven and abide upon Jesus when He came up out of the water.

This chapter concludes with the calling of the first disciples—Andrew, Philip, Nathanael, and an unnamed man, who is believed to be the penman of this gospel.

This chapter can be outlined as such:

I. Christ’s identity – John 1:1-18
II. Christ’s forerunner – John 1:6-8, 19-28
III. Christ’s manifestation – John 1:29-34
IV. Christ’s followers – *John 1:35-51*
Key Spiritual Lessons

The opening scene of the Gospel of John is as dramatic as the first two verses of the book of Genesis. In the first five verses, the Apostle John takes us from the most awesome God to the most awful darkness and from a lively creation to a deadly destruction. The rest of the verses deal with God’s outreach to the fallen human race.

This chapter provides crucial foundational biblical concepts for young believers. Following are the key spiritual lessons:

I. The ruin of mankind – John 1:1-5
II. The rescue of mankind – John 1:5-51

The Ruin of Mankind

[Verse 1] When the curtain lifts, the spotlight is on the Word. The identity of the Word is immediately established—“the Word was God.” Yet the middle of the verse suggests that God and the Word are two separate entities—“the Word was with God.” Furthermore, the Word is personified with the “him” pronoun in verse 3 and was made flesh (took on human form), according to verse 14. Who is this Word-God?

John the Baptist identified Him as Jesus Christ in verses 15-18. Jesus was the Word (100% God) who came into the world in human form. The Godhead is a Trinity that consists of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. They are not three separate Gods; they are the same God. Jesus Christ is the second person of the Trinity.

It is important to emphasize that “the Word was God.” We can only know God and how to interact with and live for Him...
through His Word. Strictly speaking, we have the incarnate Word (Jesus Christ) and the written word. The Bible is the inspired word of God. (Inspiration is the mechanism that God used to communicate His mind to man.) 2Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. We should not pretend to know God if we do not know what the Bible says. Our relationship with God is as good as our obedience to His word. Sadly, nowadays the Bible is not relevant to many Christians. Pause and meditate on Hosea 4:6, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”

[Verses 2-3] Having revealed the identity of the Word, the Apostle John takes us to the beginning of creation to set straight the record on the origin of the universe and its rightful creator and owner. He also highlights the significance and centrality of the Word in creation.

The Word was in the beginning with God. The phrase “in the beginning” refers to the beginning of creation and not the beginning of the Word, for God does not have a beginning. To better understand this, consider “in the beginning” and “from the beginning.” Genesis 1:1 says, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” meaning God and the Word existed in eternity before the beginning of creation. The universe we now have exists from (or since) the beginning.

Verse 3 says, “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” As God spoke, the Word brought things into existence. Of God and by the Word, all things came into existence. Creation was not a random act, but according to wisdom and purpose. Proverbs 8:22-31 and Ephesians 3:9 are good cross references.
Nothing was ever created or made without the Word, from the highest angel to the finest dust. *Psalms 33:6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. Colossians 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: (17) And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

Everything owes its existence to the Word. This truth destroys the Big Bang theory and the theory of evolution.

[Verse 4] The spotlight shifts to the life in the Word—“*In him was life; and the life was the light of men.*” King David knew all along that the fountain of life was with God, and he wrote in *Psalms 36:9, “For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.”* As the fountain of life, the Word is the source of natural and spiritual life of all living creatures. Every living thing borrows life from the Word. Read *John 14:6, John 11:25.* Life is given, and as such we do not own it. We are stewards of it, and we must account for it in the end.

Consider Adam’s building blocks. *Genesis 2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.* Adam’s body was made of lifeless, inert material. It became a living being when God injected life into his body. Through the life that was in the Word, Adam was able to live, function, and fellowship with God. *Acts 17:28a* says, “*For in him we live, and move, and have our being.*”

According to the latter part of verse 4, “*The life was the light of men.*” The life in the Word with respect to mankind is a spiritual light that illuminates mankind to the knowledge of God. King David wrote in *Psalms 43:3,* “*O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.*
Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.” Read 2Corinthians 4:6, Psalms 119:105. Without the spiritual light of life from the Word of life, mankind has no access to God and no hope of eternal life. Jesus says in John 8:12, “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” Adam and Eve lost the light of life when they sinned.

Do you have the light of life from the Word of life? Unlike natural sunlight that falls on everyone, spiritual light is personal and must be obtained individually. 1John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (2) (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)” Read John 3:36, John 5:24, John 6:47, John 14:6.

In the first four verses we learn Jesus is the Word, God, the Creator, and the Life. There is no God besides the Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah 45:5a I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me. We must not serve any other gods. The Bible says, “No man can serve two masters.” When I was a Taoist I wore a bronze pendant that bore the image of a monk for protection and blessing. After receiving Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, I threw the pendant into a sewer drain.

[Verse 5] All was well in the preceding verses, but then darkness appeared—“And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.” What darkness is this that prevents people from comprehending the light of God? Those affected by the darkness do not know the truth and their loving Creator, who wants to restore them and give them eternal life. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of truth and repent. But how can people know God if they cannot comprehend the divine light because of the darkness?
This darkness is evil and is associated with spiritual wickedness in high places and the power of Satan, according to Ephesians 6:12 and Acts 26:18. Darkness shrouds the minds of sinners who are not regenerated and illuminated by the Spirit of God. Like a blind person who is unable to perceive physical light, these sons of Adam are spiritually blind and are incapable of comprehending the rays of divine light, no matter how smart they may be. The truths of God are foolishness to such minds. Consequently they establish their own system of righteousness and reject the true Messiah (Anointed or Savior), as is evident in verses 10 and 11—“He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”

What happened that plunged mankind into darkness, alienating individuals from the light and life of God? Where does this evil come from?

Sometime in eternity past, darkness broke out in heaven. There was an anointed cherub that covered the throne of God whose name was Lucifer. Lucifer is a good name. It means “light-bearer.” He was the epitome of God’s creative design. God commended Lucifer as follows:

- “Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty” – Ezekiel 28:12b.
- “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created” – Ezekiel 28:15a.

Lucifer’s body was magnificently adorned with precious stones of sardius, topaz, diamond, beryl, onyx, jasper, sapphire, emerald, carbuncle, and gold, for glory and beauty. Imagine the reflection of God’s light on him. Lucifer was also equipped with musical instruments. He far exceeded the other angelic beings in all aspects and was the showcase of God’s workmanship. He was No. 2
in heaven and enjoyed freedom and access to God’s throne, holy mountain, and garden.

Tragically Lucifer was corrupt. *Ezekiel 28:17a* *Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness.* Instead of honoring and glorifying God with his beauty and wisdom, Lucifer was vain, prideful, and consumed with self. Despite all the blessings, he wasn’t satisfied being No. 2. He wanted to take God’s place. According to *Isaiah 14:12-14*, Lucifer said in his heart, “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.”

Not surprisingly, God disagreed and said, “I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire” in *Ezekiel 28:16b*. God also said, “Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit” in *Isaiah 14:15*.

Lucifer rebelled against God and drew one-third of the angels with him. A galactic war erupted in heaven where life and light battled death and darkness, which continues even to this day. Lucifer, who became Satan and darkness, took the earth. When God looked on the earth that once was His footstool, He said, “I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light” in *Jeremiah 4:23*. Darkness overtook creation. Read *Ezekiel 28:13-19, Isaiah 14:12-15, Revelation 12:3-4, Jeremiah 4:19-26, Genesis 1:2, Isaiah 45:18*.

God began the restoration by plunging the earth into water for cleansing. And “the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” God then shined His spiritual light in darkness. He said in *Genesis 1:3-4*, “Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.”
Fast forward a few days, God created Adam and Eve and gave them a mission—“Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” Wait a minute, what was there to replenish if it was a perfect world? Something had to be missing. The truth is, Adam did not get a perfect world. Evil was in his garden. Adam and Eve were tasked to replenish that which was lost to Satan, but Satan was determined to destroy God’s seed. He appeared to Eve in the form of a serpent and beguiled her. She ate the forbidden fruit and shared it with Adam, who was not deceived, but willfully sinned against God by knowingly eating the forbidden fruit. The light of God departed from Adam and Eve, and they went dark. Without the light covering, they were cut off from the life of God, and they discovered their nakedness. They both died spiritually that day, even though Adam lived to be 930 years old before he physically died. In his lifetime, Adam produced sons and daughters after his own likeness and image, which was sinful in nature. Read Genesis 3:1-19, Genesis 5:1-5, Romans 5:12, 1Timothy 2:14.

Sinful Adam set off a new human kind that is contrary to God’s original design. His descendants are born with his sin nature in the realm of spiritual darkness alienated from the light and life of God. Below are some of their traits:

1. None by default have access to God. Fellowship with God is destroyed because “what communion hath light with darkness?”

2. None by default can comprehend the light (or truth) of God because everyone is born with hereditary spiritual blindness.

3. Everyone is a spiritual child of the devil and is inclined to fulfill his will. Read John 8:44, 2Timothy 2:25-26. The saying, “We are all God’s children” is a lie, because all are born in the realm of spiritual darkness and resemble
their spiritual father the devil. The proof is right at home. Parents need not teach children to be bad. Children are born fully equipped to sin—lie, disobey, steal, hate, kill, etc., because of the sin nature they inherit from Adam. Left unchecked, they will turn into monsters, to the dismay of their loving parents. Adoption by Jesus Christ is the only way out of the devil’s family. (Learn more about God’s family and the devil’s family in Chapter 8.)

Thank God, He did not give up on sinners. He wanted them to know Him and have fellowship with Him. He employed human witnesses to proclaim the Light. He manifested Himself to mankind in human form and established a rescue team that consisted of John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, and the disciples. They were to give to sinners the knowledge of salvation that they might be reconciled to God. Fast forward about 4,000 years from Genesis 1:2, John the Baptist appeared as prophesied. Read John 3:16-17, Isaiah 40:3.

Following are the members of God’s rescue team.

1. John the Baptist—herald of the Light
2. Jesus Christ—the Light
3. Jesus’ disciples—proclaimers of the Light

The Rescue of Mankind

John the Baptist—herald of the Light

[Verse 6] The son of Zacharias and Elisabeth, John the Baptist, is described as righteous and blameless before God. John’s conception was the fulfillment of prophecy as well as a miracle, because his parents were well past their child-bearing years. The angel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias while he was performing his priestly duty of burning incense in the temple of God. Gabriel told
Zacharias that his wife Elisabeth would bear a child and he should name him John, which means “Jehovah is a gracious giver.”

Elisabeth was a cousin to Mary, the mother of Jesus. That made John the Baptist a second cousin to Jesus. John was six months older than Jesus. Read Luke 1:5-80.

John the Baptist was a unique individual:

- He was the fulfillment of prophecies in Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1.
- He was filled with the Holy Ghost while he was in the womb – Luke 1:15.
- He was endowed with the spirit and power of Elijah – Luke 1:17.
- He was called the prophet of the Highest. Jesus credited John as such: “Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet.” Read Luke 1:76, Luke 7:28.
- He had the ability to see the Spirit of God descending upon Jesus – verse 32.
- He stood for righteousness, even when it cost him his life. He reproved king Herod Antipas to his face for wanting to marry Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, and for all the evils he had done. John was put in prison and later beheaded. Read Matthew 14:1-12.

[Verses 7-8] John the Baptist had a specific ministry to the Jews and lived a purposeful life. In his ministry he turned many Jews back to God through his preaching and baptism. Read Matthew 3:1-12. Jesus was the Word and John was the voice. Following is a brief summary of John’s purpose and ministry.

- To be a forerunner of Jesus Christ – verses 19-28
- To bear witness of the true Light – verses 7-8, 15-18, 29-36
To administer the baptism of repentance – verse 31
To give the knowledge of salvation to the Jews – *Luke 1:77*
To give light to them that sat in darkness – *Luke 1:79*
To guide the Jews in the way of peace – *Luke 1:79*

John’s prospect in the work of ministry was to be fruitful—“*that all men through him might believe.*” His goal was that the Jews to whom he preached might believe that Jesus was the Light and Messiah. Twice the Pharisees asked John “*Who art thou?*” and he told them he was “*the voice of one crying in the wilderness,*” quoting *Isaiah 40:3.*

Can God count on you to be the voice in a dark and dying world? As special as John was, he was a man. God employs common people to be His witnesses in this dark world. You are fearfully and wonderfully made; you have the Holy Spirit of God in you; you are a son of God. God can use you as He used John.

Do you know that you can live a purposeful life as John the Baptist? What is your purpose and prospect in life? Do you know that God saved you on purpose and for a great purpose? Just as He put Adam and Eve in the garden to dress it, He has a purpose for you. Read *2Corinthians 5:18-20, John 15:16.* You are made to matter for God. You are a steward of His truth and He has called and sent you as His witness for the following reasons?

- Because darkness does not comprehend light – verse 5
- Because the world is sinful – verse 29, *John 3:19*
- Because no one has seen God – verse 18
- Because the world does not know God – verses 10, 26
- Because God can be known – verse 12, *Romans 1:19-20*
- Because God should be made manifest to sinners – verse 31
Jesus Christ—the Light

Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, according to the prophecy in *Isaiah* 7:14, which was written about 680 years prior to the nativity. God chose Mary, who at the time was espoused to Joseph from the lineage of David. The angel Gabriel appeared and broke the news to Mary that she would conceive a son and should name him Jesus, which means “Jehovah is salvation.” Mary’s premarital pregnancy did not bode well with Joseph, who being a just man, thought of putting her away privately. But the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and confirmed that the child in Mary was of the Holy Ghost. So Joseph took Mary as his wife, but did not have an intimate relationship with her until after Jesus was born. Read verses 1, 14, *Matthew* 1:18-25.

[Verses 9-13] Jesus Christ is the true Light that shines on everyone who comes into this world, in order that sinners may know the truth and be reconciled to God. Unfortunately mankind in its sinful corruption is incapable of comprehending the Light and chooses darkness. They try to establish their own righteousness through religion. But we who receive Jesus Christ by faith are given the power (right or privilege) to become the sons of God and are ensured eternal life. We are born again by the Spirit of God—a spiritual operation that results in a second birth. See Chapter 3 for what it means to be born again by the Spirit. Read *John* 8:12, *John* 12:46, *John* 3:19-21.

Following are the salient points:

1. Jesus Christ is the true Light. This reveals that there is false light, such as false Christs, bibles, teachers, prophets, and disciples. Beware that you are not deceived by genuine-looking counterfeits. *Matthew* 24:24 *For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the
very elect. Read Matthew 7:15-20. You need to know the truth, which reveals falsehood. This means you need to have a working knowledge of the Bible.

2. Jesus Christ “was in the world,” but He was not of the world like us. Jesus Christ was of the Father. He was God the Son. The Jews struggled with Jesus’ origin in chapters 7 and 8. They mistook Him as an ordinary man, the son of Joseph, and did not own Him as the Messiah. John the Baptist, whom the religious rulers of the Jews held in high regard, positively testified of Jesus’ superiority three times in this chapter (verses 15, 27, 30). John also said that Jesus was before him, even though Jesus, as a man, was six months younger than John. This was because Jesus was an eternal being from everlasting. Jesus was before Abraham and Adam. Read Proverbs 8:22-31. Psalms 90:1-2, John 8:58.

3. Jesus Christ debunks the following false teachings with the phrase “as many as received him” in verse 12.
   a. God has a certain quota for the number of souls in heaven.
   b. God only saves those of a certain race or skin color.
   c. God predestinated certain persons to be saved.

4. Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation and eternal life.

   [Verse 14] We learn so many things about Jesus from this verse alone—“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

   Jesus was the embodiment of the Word, who was the Almighty God. Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is
given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Jesus was Emmanuel, meaning “God with us.” Matthew 1:23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. God was ready to dwell with man. In the Old Testament, God dwelled with man in the tabernacle as described in Exodus 25 and 26. In the New Testament, God dwells with man through Jesus Christ. Thus no one can claim to have God in their lives without Jesus Christ.

Jesus also was the glory of the Father and the express image of His person, according to Hebrews 1:1-3. No one has ever seen the Father, but what can be known of Him has been declared by Jesus in the pages of the Bible. Verse 18 says, “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” This means to know God is to know His Word.

Christians should have a working knowledge of the word of God, otherwise, we will default to trusting in feelings and practicing things that are unbiblical. The Bible gives specific instructions and counsel for us to live by. We are not to live by feelings. We may know the God we serve and His dealings with mankind by His words and testimonies. The Bible says, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.” We may know the truth that delivers us from falsehoods, for the word of God is truth, according to John 17:17. We may know the reason for our existence, the plan for our life, and find true happiness and contentment in this utterly vain world by navigating our lives according to the precepts of the word. Psalms 119:105 says, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” We may know Old Testament Bible stories that serve as examples for our admonition, according to Romans 15:4 and 1Corinthians 10:11-12. We may know the future by the prophecies in the Bible. A biblical view of end times helps us set proper affections and
priorities in life. Perhaps above all, we may make known to our children the praises of the Lord, His strength, and His wonderful works that they may set their hope in God – *Psalms 78:1-8.*

Jesus was the only begotten of the Father. The Father had no other Savior besides Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Read verses 29, 36, *John 3:16, 1John 4:9.* All other so-called saviors are antichrists. Your future is in jeopardy if your salvation is based on anything or anyone besides Jesus alone.

Jesus was full of grace and truth. Verse 16 says, “And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.” The grace (favor with God) and truth that we get from Jesus is of His fullness. How full? According to Colossians 1:19, “For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.” This means Jesus is more than sufficient. We absolutely need not (and should not) go to another source to obtain favor with God and truth. If we want favor with God, the answer is Jesus—period. If we want truth, the answer is also Jesus—period.

Jesus offers “grace for grace” (or grace upon grace). Verse 17 says, “For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” Thank God we are not under the law, but under grace. No one can fulfill the law. Just think of the times you have broken the Ten Commandments. *Romans 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

In verses 32-34, John confirmed that Jesus was the Son of God. God Himself validated this with His Spirit descending and remaining on Jesus. So if Jesus was the Son of God and the Word was God the Father, and now they are joined by the Spirit of God, what do we have here? Colossians 2:9 gives the answer, “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” Jesus Christ was 100% God in the flesh.
Other titles of Jesus in this chapter include the Messiah, the King of Israel, and the Son of man. Read verses 41, 49, and 51. A prophecy is revealed by building up the titles of Jesus as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Word = God = Jesus Christ = Lamb of God = Son of God</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verse 1</td>
<td>The Word was God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verses 14, 17</td>
<td>Jesus was God in human form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verses 29, 36</td>
<td>Jesus, as the innocent Lamb of God was sacrificed for the sins of the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verse 34</td>
<td>Jesus will return as the Son of God to establish His kingdom on earth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verse 41</td>
<td>The Jews will acknowledge that Jesus is the Messiah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verse 49</td>
<td>Jesus will be hailed as the King of Israel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verse 51</td>
<td>Jesus is the Son of man prophesied in Daniel 7:13. As the Son of man, Jesus will be the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, according to Daniel 7:14.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is the word of God to you? You would do well to resolve this early in your Christian life. One of the things that separates Christianity from other religions is its claim to an absolute written authority from God. The Bible is the word of God; it is the word of truth.

The word of God is essential to your growth in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. There is so much treasure in the Bible that can only be seen and understood by those whose spiritual eyes are enlightened by the light of the gospel of Christ. The treasures
are yours to mine. Read the Bible daily and ask the Holy Spirit of God to teach you how to apply the principles to your life. The Bible is not just a collection of stories, it is God’s words to live by and should be your final authority. Remember that no one can violate the word of God and not fall.

Finally, are you able to explain the gospel to others? You must be able to explain how you received Jesus Christ for the pardoning of your sins and show others the salvation verses in the Bible.

**The disciples—proclaimers of the Light**

[Verses 35-51] Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathanael, and an unnamed person (who could be the Apostle John, the penman of this gospel) were the early disciples of Jesus Christ. A disciple is a learner. If you are to know and grow in the knowledge of the truth and be fruitful, then you need to be a disciple.

A disciple learns from a master. What better master can one have than the Lord Jesus Christ? Andrew, Nathanael, and the unnamed disciple called Jesus Rabbi, a title used by the Jews to address their teachers. They came to Jesus to be His students. You too can learn at the feet of Jesus. Pick up your Bible and read it daily. You can learn from another person, but eventually you must learn from Jesus. Read *Proverbs* 2 about receiving wisdom and understanding. Notice the transfer of mastership from John the Baptist to Jesus in verses 35-37. (See the definition of discipleship in Chapter 21.)

A disciple confirms Jesus’ identity by the word of God. According to verse 37, Andrew and his pal first heard John the Baptist speak concerning Jesus, for John had testified, “*This was he,*” “*This is he,*” “*This is the Son of God,*” and “*Behold the Lamb of God,*” in verses 15, 30, 34, and 36 respectively. Thereafter they
followed Jesus and examined Him by spending time with Him, and confirmed that they had found the Messiah. Philip also was able to authenticate that Jesus was the Messiah by searching the scriptures—“We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” In John 5:39, Jesus advised the Jews who had trouble believing in Him: “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” You should do likewise. Search the scriptures and confirm for yourself that Jesus is precisely who the Bible says He is. Don’t simply believe what others say. Remember the Bible is our final authority.

A disciple follows Jesus. Consider the principle in John 10:27, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” Jesus said to Philip, “Follow me,” and He would say the same to you. The first disciples couldn’t have imagined how their lives would change once they decided to follow Jesus. Their faith and obedience transformed the world.


- Luke 9:57 And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. (58) And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

Following Jesus is not about getting more of the world and its comforts. It is about gaining or winning Christ. After all, nothing in this world is worth anything compared to knowing and following the Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul wrote, “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have
suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.”

- **Luke 9:59** And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. (60) Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

Following Jesus is to be about the Father’s business and to let nothing distract us from it.

- **Luke 9:61** And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. (62) And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

Following Jesus means no turning back. We cannot serve two masters. Read *Matthew* 6:24. We must burn the bridges to the past.

A disciple also evangelizes the lost. As a result of spending time with Jesus, Andrew told his brother Simon Peter, that he had found the Messiah and brought him to Jesus. In like manner, Philip brought Nathanael to Jesus. What about you? Remember that you are a member of God’s rescue team. Share your faith in Christ with your family. Show them the pathway to salvation and how they can obtain forgiveness of sins. Your testimony is extremely important. Be careful to maintain a pure and blameless life so that people see Jesus through you. The light of God is in you. You, the earthen vessel that encapsulates the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, must be broken for the light to shine through. Read *2Corinthians* 4:6-7. The most effective evangelism is accomplished through the demonstration of your life (your priorities, decisions, and choices) and communicated in love, humility, and brokenness of spirit.
Summary

The Word is God, the Creator of the universe, and the source of life. The Word is the light of life that illuminates mankind to the knowledge of God. Unfortunately the minds of sinners are shrouded by darkness disallowing them to comprehend the divine light of God. In His great mercy, the Word reached out to mankind in human form in the person of Jesus Christ.

God is not willing that any sinner should perish, but that all should come to repentance. God uses human witnesses to bear witness of the true Light, beginning with the prophets in the Old Testament, to John the Baptist, to Jesus Christ, to the early disciples and apostles, and to you and me. We are a member of God’s rescue team and we have a responsibility to testify the Word (Jesus Christ) to unbelievers that they might be reconciled to God. Romans 10:14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? (15) And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! (16) But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? (17) So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
Buy The Book of John on Amazon: http://goo.gl/4I4T3Z
3 – Love

Historical Synopsis

This chapter begins with the famous story of Nicodemus, who visited Jesus by night to learn more of His doctrine. Nicodemus was no ordinary man. He was a man of eminence and authority in Jerusalem, a ruler of the Jews, and a member of the Sanhedrim of the sect of the Pharisees. Among the Jews, the Pharisees were the strictest sect for religion and holiness that focused on external purity and performance. Although corrupt, they highly regarded the Messiah and all the writings of the Old Testament. They believed in doctrines of angels and spirits and the resurrection of the dead, which the Sadducees denied. Yet the Pharisees were irreconcilable enemies of Christ, making it interesting that such a one should come to Jesus and desire a conversation with Him.

This chapter concludes with John the Baptist’s discourse with his disciples concerning baptism. Since Jesus’ disciples also baptized people, John’s disciples weren’t sure whom they should follow. This prompted John to clarify his standing with Christ.

This chapter can be outlined as such:

I. Jesus’ discourse with Nicodemus concerning spiritual regeneration – John 3:1-21
II. John the Baptist’s discourse with his disciples concerning baptism and his standing with Christ – John 3:22-36
Key Spiritual Lessons

This is the most-referenced chapter in the Gospel of John because it contains the most famous, quoted, and displayed verse in the Bible—John 3:16, which talks about God’s great love and sacrifice for mankind. This chapter is packed with doctrine. The amount of truth challenges the best preacher, writer, and commentator. We could camp here a long time. The chapter explains life’s greatest necessity, which is eternal life. After all, what is life without eternal life?

Following are the key spiritual lessons:

I. The necessity of spiritual regeneration – John 3:1-13
II. The necessity of Christ’s suffering and death – John 3:14-21
III. The necessity of making Christ preeminent in your life – John 3:22-36
The Necessity of Spiritual Regeneration

[Verse 1] Nicodemus, whose name means “Conqueror,” was an ecclesiastical ruler of the Jews and a member of the Sanhedrim, which was an assembly of 20 to 23 men, consisting of wise men, priests, Levites, and elders of the people. Jesus referred to Nicodemus as “a master of Israel” in verse 10.

[Verse 2] Fearing the reproach of his peers, Nicodemus went to see Jesus at night under the cover of darkness. He was attracted to Jesus by the miracles He performed. The Sanhedrim was convinced that Jesus was a teacher who came from God because the miracles were real and no man could perform them except God was with Him. Nicodemus called Jesus Rabbi, a title used by the Jews to address their teachers whom they believed possessed great treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Nicodemus couldn’t figure out if Jesus was the Messiah, which could have been the reason for the
visit. (The Jews were expecting a political savior who would appear in external pomp and power. Jesus did not fit that image in His first appearance to Israel. He was a meek and lowly person.) Since Nicodemus mentioned God in the conversation, Jesus took the opportunity to present the Kingdom of God and switched the conversation from miracles to the mystery of regeneration or second birth.

Note:

Unlike Gentiles, Jews couldn’t deal with faith. They required signs. Therefore the miracles were Jesus’ credentials. They were proofs to the Jews that God the Father and Jesus were one. Read 1Corinthians 1:22, John 5:36, John 10:24-25, 37-38, John 14:10-11.

[Verses 3-5] Jesus positively and vehemently asserted to Nicodemus that “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Jesus began the speech with “Verily, verily,” which means amen, surely, truly, and of a truth. Double that since He said it twice. The matter was non-negotiable and irreversible. This doctrine caught Nicodemus off guard because the Jews rested in the Law of Moses. Read Romans 2:17-29. Imagine a master of Israel who knew the Old Testament inside-out being told he would miss the Kingdom of God.

Nicodemus didn’t comprehend the idea of a natural and spiritual body and that the new birth was to be a spiritual operation. It was obvious from his statement, “How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?” To him, this was absurd, to say nothing of impossible, as any natural person would think. So Jesus expounded the mystery: “Verily, verily, except a man be born of water (first birth, physical) and of the Spirit (second birth, spiritual), he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” Read 1Corinthians 15:39-50. One cannot be physically born into a relationship with God.
The doctrine of spiritual regeneration is simple:

- Problem of mankind
  The entire human race must be spiritually regenerated because of sin. The first birth (of flesh) is defective.
  Romans 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.* Read Romans 5:12, Psalms 51:5. The natural man is not patchable or repairable by worldly or physical means. No amount of education, religion, morality, or good works can erase sin and secure a right relationship with God. Read Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 11:6, Hebrews 11:6.

- Penalty of sin
  The Bible says, “The wages of sin is death.” Sinners who die in their sins are eternally separated from God. Their unrighteous souls will stand in judgment according to their works instead of according to their faith in Jesus Christ. In this case, they will be found guilty 100% of the time, and they will burn in the lake of fire for eternity.
  Ezekiel 18:4 *Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.* Any questions? All unregenerated sinners will die a second death. As the faithful saying goes, “If you are born once, you will die twice; if you are born twice, you will die once.” Read Hebrews 9:27, Isaiah 64:6, John 8:23-24, Revelation 20:11-15.

- Provision of God
  Verse 16 says, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Salvation is God’s free gift made available through Jesus Christ only.
  Romans 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*
[Verses 6-8] The natural man’s greatest necessity is to be born again by the Holy Spirit of God, which is a spiritual operation through faith in Jesus Christ. The spiritual birth is distinctly different than the first birth by flesh—“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” Unlike physical birth, spiritual birth is invisible. However, the evidence should be very clear.

Seeing that Nicodemus was astonished at the doctrine of the new birth, Jesus used the wind as an illustration. (The wind is a type of the Holy Spirit of God.)

- “The wind bloweth where it listeth”—The Holy Spirit of God is a free agent in regeneration. He works how, where, and when He pleases.

- “Thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth”—No one can tell when the Holy Spirit of God begins and ends the operation, but one should be able to notice a clear change in the person whom the Holy Spirit has regenerated.

Being saved or born again is based on knowledge of the word of God combined with faith and not feelings, good works, visions, experiences, or membership in a certain religion or denomination. Sadly, many overturn Bible truth with their feelings and experiences.

You need to know that you are a sinner bound for hell and that God loves you, sent His Son to die for your sins, and salvation is a free gift available only in Jesus Christ. Salvation is a transaction—a conscious decision to exchange sin and death for forgiveness and eternal life. Be extremely careful, because Christendom has many professing Christians who are not Christians. Their salvation testimonies are uncertain and incorrect. Examples include surviving
a terrible accident or near-death experience, speaking in tongues, water baptism, good works, church membership, familiarity with Jesus’ stories, someone praying for them, and so on. I once asked a man if he knew the Lord. He replied, “Oh, I was baptized when I was 12.” He was basing his salvation on his baptism and was living with a false hope. Just when I thought I’d heard it all, a young lady claimed to be a Christian because she prayed and God healed her sick dog.

Here is a test: If God were to ask you why He should let you into heaven, what would you say?

What is required to be born again? Accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior by faith through a simple prayer with the following understanding:

- Admission of sin before Jesus Christ. Jesus is of no use to the self-righteous, just as doctors are of no use to sick people who refuse to admit they are sick. Read Mark 2:17. You must see yourself as lost before you can be saved.

- Understanding the penalty of sin is death.

- Realizing that only Jesus Christ can forgive sins. Read 1Timothy 2:5, John 14:6, 1John 2:23, 1John 5:11-13, Acts 4:10-12, Matthew 7:13-14.

- Agreeing that God’s salvation is a free gift and not a loan or debt that should be repaid through good works. All that is necessary is to simply receive the gift with a sincere prayer and a believing heart. A gift is free to the recipient. The giver is the one who pays the price. God’s salvation is a free gift that is dearly paid for by Christ’s bloodshed on the cross.
Accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior by faith through a simple prayer. Romans 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (10) For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

[Verse 9] Unfortunately Nicodemus still couldn’t understand the doctrine of regeneration. He said, “How can these things be?” The concept of being born again by the Holy Spirit of God in order to enter into the Kingdom of God was too strange and foreign to him. It wasn’t because he was a dumb person. Nicodemus was highly educated. His problem, like all unsaved people, was that “the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”

[Verse 10] Jesus reproved Nicodemus. It was unacceptable for him as a master of Israel who taught others to not grasp the doctrine. Jesus said, “Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?”

[Verse 11] Yet Jesus continued to assert the certainty of the doctrine to Nicodemus by beginning His speech with “Verily, verily” for the third time. He said, “We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.” Jesus’ words were faithful and true based on the knowledge and testimony of the Godhead (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost), but the Jews did not receive their witness. Verse 32 says, “And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.” Read Proverbs 8:5-9, Proverbs 22:17-21.

[Verses 12-13] Jesus sometimes used similitudes taken from nature, such as human birth, water, and wind in this case, to help
people understand spiritual truth. This is because spiritual truth can be known and visualized by familiar earthly elements.

No man had ever gone up to heaven to bring back the knowledge of divine and heavenly things, but the Son of man, who came down from heaven. He presented the spiritual doctrines in a way that people could relate to and understand. Therefore when the Jews would not believe, it no longer was a case of lack of understanding, but a case of willful rejection. It was also silly not to believe, because none had been to heaven to be able to prove what Jesus said was wrong.

God never wanted people to blindly believe His doctrines. The Bible is full of similitudes to help people understand and believe His truth. Each time you come across such words as “like” and “as,” God is teaching His truth using a familiar similitude that you can easily comprehend.

Note:

Embedded in verse 13 is the doctrine of God’s omnipresence. We are bound by time and space, but not Jesus. Consider verse 13, “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.” This is because Jesus and the Father are one, and they are omnipresent.

Nicodemus’ response to spiritual birth serves as a window into the minds of unsaved (or lost) people. He represents people (including religious elites) who have no personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. This understanding helps us to be better witnesses. The following can be gleaned from the first 21 verses.

- [Verse 2] Lost people are intrigued by the supernatural miracles of Jesus by which they conclude He came from God. They are interested in learning more about the
person of Jesus, whom they mislabel, but will not openly inquire.

- [Verses 3-10] Lost people are physically minded and have difficulty grasping the concept of spiritual birth. Once I had a discussion with a lost person about the poor people in India, explaining that their foremost need is to be born again through a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. He couldn’t understand that and suggested that they needed education the most.

- [Verses 11-18] Lost people are ignorant of heavenly things because they do not receive the witness or testimony of the Son of man who came down from heaven. Yet there is no one else who has been or can go up to heaven to bring back the knowledge of divine and heavenly things. They also do not believe “in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” As a result, they miss the great love of God and eternal life, and they remain in condemnation. Read verses 31-36.

- [Verses 19-20] Lost people reject God’s Light and love darkness because their deeds are evil.

### The Necessity of Christ’s Suffering and Death

Adam’s failure left mankind hopelessly lost in sin and eternally separated from God. In Adam, all die because there is no solution for sin, for it is impossible to produce a sinless person from a sinner. *Job 14:4 Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.*

Adam’s failure also put God in a seeming tough spot. On one hand, He had to judge sin, which meant the entire human race
would be wiped out. On the other hand, He so loved the world. In His infinite wisdom, God found a solution that satisfied both interests. He sacrificed His only perfect, innocent, obedient, and righteous Son Jesus Christ, and made Him to be sin for mankind so that we might obtain God’s righteousness in Him. Therefore in Christ, all can be made alive. Read 2Corinthians 5:21, 1Corinthians 15:22.

God charged our sins to Jesus’ account. Sin is painful, ugly, costly, and deadly. Jesus drank the full cup of God’s wrath. He was tortured and beaten beyond recognition, humiliated, and cruelly crucified. He suffered, bled, and died to fully pay for our sins.

[Verse 14] The suffering and death of Christ was prophesied and played out in Moses’ days. While Israel was wandering in the wilderness, they were bitten by fiery serpents because of their complaining sin, and many died. When the people realized and confessed their sins, they entreated Moses to ask God to remove the serpents. God did not remove the serpents. Instead He instructed Moses to make a serpent of brass and set it on a pole so that when those who were bitten looked upon it, they lived. Read Numbers 21:4-9. (Incidentally, the serpent on a pole is the logo of the World Health Organization.) Since the time of Adam and Eve, the serpent is a cursed animal. Christ was made a curse for mankind. Read Galatians 3:13. Brass represents God’s judgment. The serpent of brass was put on the pole. Christ was judged and put on the cross.

Why did God put Jesus on the cross? Verse 15 gives the answer, “That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

Why did God want sinners to have eternal life? Verse 16 gives the answer, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Let’s break this verse down.
“For God”—It was God’s own initiative according to His mercy and compassion.

“So loved”—The Greek language has several words for love: “phileo” (φιλία), “eros” (ἔρως), “storge” (στοργή), and “agape” (ἀγάπη). “Phileo” is brotherly or friendship love. The city of Philadelphia is known as the city of brotherly love. “Eros” is where we get the word “erotic,” which refers to love of sexual nature. “Storge” is the love that parents have for their children. “Agape” is the highest form of love. It is selfless, sacrificial, and charitable. It is a sacrificial love regardless of the response (acceptance or rejection) from the recipient. God’s love is agape love. (The Greek word for love in this verse is “agapao” (ἀγαπάω), which is the verb form of the noun “agape”.)

“The world”—God so loved the world of fallen and wicked men. He loves every person from every nation and ethnicity.

“That he gave his only begotten Son”—God’s love was fulfilled when He sacrificially gave His only begotten Son to suffer and die for His enemies. It is inconceivable that this sinful world is worth the death of His Son. Read Romans 5:6-10. God did not have another Savior besides Jesus Christ. He was and is a gift to sinners.

“That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life”
  o The gift of eternal life is for whosoever will believe in Jesus Christ by faith. This belief is not an intellectual faith as one believes in Abraham Lincoln or George Washington. (No one believes
in Jesus Christ more than the devil himself. Read *James 2:19.*) It is also not a temporal faith where one prays and trusts God for safety or blessing. Your belief needs to be a saving faith. This means trusting or casting your faith on Jesus Christ, according to verses 16-17, and accepting Him as Lord.

- There is no limit to the number of people who can come to Christ to obtain forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

This gospel is good news for sinners. It is so wonderful that the prophets of old inquired and diligently searched the scriptures for the exact time when Christ should come to work out the salvation of His people. Even the angels desired to look into this wonderful gospel. Read *1Peter 1:10-12*. Do not miss this great salvation. *Hebrews 2:1* Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. (2) For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; (3) How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.

And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Savior's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain?
For me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, should die for me?

Refrain:
Amazing love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, should die for me!

He left His Father's throne above,
So free, so infinite His grace!
Emptied Himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race!
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,
For, O my God, it found out me. [Refrain]

Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night.
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray;
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light!
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth and followed Thee. [Refrain]

No condemnation now I dread:
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine!
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness divine,
Bold I approach the eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own. [Refrain]

(“And can it be that I should gain?”
hymn by Charles Wesley)

If Christ paid the penalty for your sins, this means He not only is your Savior, but your Master. He bought you with a price. He owns you, and you are no longer your own. You are to serve Him the rest of your life. His agenda and priority trump yours. His will, wishes, and wants also trump yours. He must be preeminent in your life. Keep your body and actions holy and right. Employ a steward mindset and invest in things that advance the gospel of Christ and glorify God. He expects you to be fruitful. You don’t want God to have buyer’s remorse after paying such a high price for you. Demonstrate with your life that you are worth the price rather than a worthless asset. Read 1Corinthians 6:9-20, John 4:34, John 6:38, Luke 12:42-48, Luke 16:1-13.

[Verse 17] It is important to note that God did not send Jesus Christ into the world to condemn sinners, but that they may
be saved through Him. It was a rescue mission. This is because sinners are condemned already. There was no need to further condemn them, but to save them.

[Verse 18] While verses 14-17 give the doctrine of love, verses 18-21 give the doctrine of condemnation. The flip side of love is wrath—“he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” Yes, there is wrath. God is not only about love as some bad preachers like to portray in order to profit from people. Those who reject Jesus Christ reject God’s love and remain in condemnation with no hope of eternal life, because there is no other Savior besides the only begotten Son of God.

Those who believe in Jesus Christ escape condemnation. Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (2) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. Read John 5:24. All it takes is for one to fully believe in Jesus Christ.

Verses 19-20 explain why sinners remain in condemnation—“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.”

- The light of the gospel reaches everyone who comes into this world, according to John 1:9. No one can accuse God for not revealing Himself and His salvation. Romans 1:19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. (20) For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.”
The Book of John

- Sinners love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. They love to sin and persist in it.

- Sinners hate the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, neither will they come to the light because it reveals their transgressions and convicts and condemns them. It is natural for them to shun the light. They can’t stand to be told their faults.

[Verse 21] But some sinners respond to God’s call for repentance. They come out of darkness and welcome the light of the gospel. They trade in their evil deeds for works of truth and righteousness. Their deeds are no longer the hidden things of dishonesty.

Christians are to love sinners. We should love all homosexuals, adulterers, drunkards, idolaters, murderers, and such like, but hate their sin. Understand that we too were once lost and were servants of sin. Read Romans 6:17-18, 1Corinthians 6:9-11. We need to view sinners, some of whom may be our own relatives, through the gospel lens. The Son of God bled and died for them.

The Necessity of Making Christ Preeminent in Your Life

[Verses 22-26] Having celebrated the Passover in Jerusalem, driven out the buyers and sellers from the temple, done the miracles that caused many to believe on Him, and completed the discourse with Nicodemus concerning regeneration, Jesus and His disciples went into the country, in the land of Judea in southern Israel. He tarried there with His disciples, and people came to Him and were baptized.

At the same time, John the Baptist also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim. There arose a dispute between John’s disciples
and the Jews, who had not submitted to John’s baptism of repentance. Purification (religious washings) was the core issue. The Jews practiced various washings and purifications; some were instituted by the Law of Moses, while others were imposed by the tradition of the elders. Read Mark 7:3-4. It could be that John’s disciples, being immature in the faith, touted their baptisms as superior to and superseding all the purifications of the Jews. It was likely that the Jews in this dispute raised a doubt about John’s baptism because there was another baptism in Jesus’ camp, and people were going to Him. Whose baptism was right and safer to follow, and why were more people going to Jesus? John’s disciples were ruffled by the objection and went to him for clarification.

John’s disciples might have expected him to debate the Jews, but instead they received a lesson on ministry and preeminence. John explained his place and purpose in ministry, why Jesus was superior, and that the disciples should cheer the increase in Jesus’ camp. Responding to the disciples’ concern of “all men come to him” in verse 26, John gave the following advice:

- Don’t worry about what others have.
  [Verse 27]
  Why? Because “A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.” God decides who gets what and how much according to His sovereign will. Every person comes into this world naked and everything that the person has, including breath, is a gift from heaven.

  Every minister also receives gifts according to the sovereign will of God. There are diversities of gifts, differences of administrations, and diversities of operations. These are not designed for personal benefit, but for the common good of the body of Christ. Read 1Corinthians 12, 13, 14.
• Do worry about fulfilling your calling in ministry.
[Verses 28-29]
John was very clear on his calling in ministry—“I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.” And John fulfilled his calling—“He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.”

John was the friend of the Bridegroom (Jesus Christ) as one sent by Him to negotiate the match. He was privileged to bring together the Savior and those He came to save. John rejoiced greatly to stand with the Bridegroom, to hear His voice, and to witness the blessed espousals. In other words, John was just happy to see people get saved. He was an evangelist indeed.

Ministers should be like John, aspiring to be the friend of the Bridegroom, introducing the bride (saved sinners or the church) to Him. Joy in ministry is not based on the number of followers, or the size of the congregation.

• Do remember that Jesus Christ must increase and ministers must decrease.
[Verse 30]
The end goal of ministry is that Jesus Christ must increase and ministers must decrease. Jesus Christ alone is exalted. In John’s mind, it was a good thing that he was losing people to Jesus, because Jesus came from heaven and was above all.

Always remember “He must increase, but I must decrease.” The more Christ increases in your life, the better off you are. The more He is in charge of your life, the happier you are. The Bible says, “Trust in the LORD
with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” Many people have trouble trusting the Lord and turning control of their lives over to Him. They want Jesus to take care of them in the afterlife, but won’t let Him have the pilot seat in their present life. Magnify Jesus by making Him preeminent in your life. Give him control over everything—family, finances, future, etc, and trust Him. Make His agenda your agenda, His will your will, His thoughts your thoughts, His heart your heart, and His business your business. Then your joy will be fulfilled.

[Verse 31] The reason Jesus must increase and all human ministers must decrease is because Jesus Christ came from heaven and is above all. To get our attention, John said it twice in this verse. Jesus came to reveal celestial things, and His words were the words of the Father. Human ministers from the root of Adam are earthy, and their expositions, preaching, and testimonies, even when speaking by the power of the Holy Ghost, are nothing compared to the eternal word delivered by the Lord Himself. In chapter 7, the officers who were sent by the Pharisees to apprehend Jesus heard Him speak and returned empty handed and reported, “Never man spake like this man.” Of course John wanted people to hear directly from Jesus. I too would rather you read the Bible than my commentary.

“He that cometh from above is above all”—Jesus Christ is above all teachers, preachers, pastors, prophets, priests, and popes. He is your source of truth and final authority. You need to read the Bible for yourself. This is not to say you should not listen to your church elders, but if there is a certain view, doctrine, tradition, or belief that is contrary to the Bible, then the Bible is right. Whenever the word of God disagrees with you, the smart thing to do is to agree with it, submit to it, and do what it says. The Bible says, “It is
hard for thee to kick against the pricks.” What’s really sad is that some people know full well that their beliefs are contrary to the Bible, and yet they refuse to accept the testimony of Jesus Christ.

We will dive into the doctrine of baptisms next. Some readers may disagree and struggle with the biblical truth of baptisms, perhaps due to tradition or a contrary position held and taught by church elders. If so, remember that Jesus Christ is the incarnate Word from heaven and He is above all. The Bible is your final authority.

[Verses 32-36] Having presented Jesus as the Lord from heaven, who was above all, John the Baptist expressed his sadness that the majority of Jews would not receive Jesus’ testimony, even though He testified of heavenly truth. However, the remnant who received Jesus’ testimony set to their seal that God was true. They subscribed to the truth of God as follows:

1. “For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God”—Jesus Christ was the Sent One of God. He was God’s official spokesman. Let the Bible be your final authority and not a mortal person who can be wrong. Proverbs 8:6 Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things. (7) For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips. (8) All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them. (9) They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.

2. “For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him”—Unlike the prophets and apostles who received partial communication and abilities by the Spirit, Jesus Christ received a full measure of the Spirit. According to John 1:33, the Spirit of God descended and remained on Jesus Christ.
3. “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand”—God entrusted everything into Jesus’ hands. Human ministers are entrusted with the word of reconciliation, but it doesn’t even come close to what God entrusted to Jesus. Read Psalms 2:8, John 5:22, John 13:3, Matthew 11:27, Matthew 28:18, Ephesians 1:22, Philippians 2:9-11.

Unfortunately today many Christians do not read their Bibles, but they consume an incredible amount of Jesus materials. Just visit a Christian bookstore and you will know what I mean. Did you know the Bible is the owner’s manual for a successful life written to you by your Creator? It has everything you need on how to fix your life.

If there can be only one reason why Jesus must increase, it is the conclusion of John’s speech, that is “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” Of course John wanted people to go to Jesus and hear from Him directly, because it could mean the difference between life and death. Don’t base your hope of salvation on things you hear from someone, but search the scriptures for yourself.

The doctrine of baptisms

Since this chapter touches on baptism, let’s explore the doctrine of baptisms. This is needful, as virtually all Christian denominations teach and practice some form of baptism.

Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are the only two ordinances given to the New Testament church to observe. Did you know there are at least six types of baptism in the Bible? Hebrews 6:2 says “Of the doctrine of baptisms...,” meaning all baptisms communicate one
The Book of John

doctrine, which is the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are physical and spiritual baptisms. Among the baptisms are:

- Baptism of Moses for the Israelites who left Egypt. 1Corinthians 10:1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; (2) And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.


- Baptism of fire is for non-believers. Read Matthew 3:7-12.

- Baptism of death where the wrath of God was poured out on Christ. Read Matthew 20:20-23, Matthew 12:40. Christians are spiritually baptized into Jesus’ death, according to Colossians 2:8-12 and Romans 6:3-5.

- Baptism of the Holy Ghost is for believers of Jesus Christ and takes place at the point of salvation. Read Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, Acts 1:5. This is the true baptism. Ephesians 4:4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; (5) One Lord, one faith, one baptism, (6) One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. The Holy Spirit
of God baptizes Christians into Christ’s death, according to *1Corinthians 12:13*.

- Believers’ water baptism must be observed by all who have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Read *Acts 10:44-48, Matthew 28:19-20*. Water baptism is the act of immersing someone in water to depict the above mentioned spiritual truth or doctrine for the following purposes:

  1. It is a public testimony of the new convert's identification with the Lord Jesus Christ through His death, burial, and resurrection, according to *Romans 6:1-6*. As the believer is immersed under the water, it pictures the believer joining Christ in His death and burial. When the believer is raised up out of the water, it pictures the believer joining Christ in resurrection and glory. In other words, what is true of the believer spiritually is played out physically with water baptism.

  2. It identifies the believer with the church, according to *1Corinthians 12:13*.

  Besides the above, water baptism gets a person wet. It does not save the person or wash away sins. Individuals get baptized because they are saved and not in order to be saved. Therefore only believers should be baptized.

  The Greek word for “baptism” (βάπτισμα) means immersion or submersion. The biblical method for baptism is complete immersion. Since baptism is a picture of the death, burial, and resurrection, the proper way to bury someone is to completely cover the person. No one in the Bible was ever sprinkled. Read *Acts 8:26-39, John 3:23, Matthew 3:16*. 
The Book of John

If you are saved and have not been baptized, then you need to do so because God commands it. Read Matthew 28:19-20. If your baptism is not biblical, then you need to make it right. If your baptism was from a church of unlike faith, then you should also be re-baptized because of purpose #2 above.

Baptism is the first act of obedience in service to the Lord. It marks the beginning of a believer’s public ministry. Jesus set the example by submitting to baptism before He began His public ministry. Read Matthew 3:13-17. Baptism is not essential for salvation, but is essential for spiritual growth. Before individuals can be taught to follow Jesus Christ, they must be willing to submit to the first act of obedience. Make no mistake, if an individual refuses to obey the Lord in this first point, that individual will not obey in future points and cannot be a disciple of Jesus Christ. The Bible is not a restaurant menu where a person chooses what to obey.

Summary

God is love. John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” May all readers experience the love of God and the spiritual birth by accepting the gift of God, which is eternal life through Jesus Christ. May God grant all readers the faith to believe Jesus Christ’s testimony and the wisdom to receive Him as Lord and Savior for the pardoning of sins.
Historical Synopsis

Following His visit to Samaria and Galilee, Jesus returned to Jerusalem to celebrate a Jewish feast, which is believed to be the Passover feast. There He found many weak, sick, blind, and lame people lying under the five porches of the pool named Bethesda by the sheep gate. Nothing was able to heal their infirmities. There laid a certain man who had been impotent for 38 years. They all watched and waited for the troubling of the pool water. Apparently an angel went down into the pool at a certain season and stirred the water and would cure the first person who stepped in thereafter.

Jesus noticed the impotent man and offered to cure him. The man was immediately made whole by Jesus’ word. After 38 years, he could get up, carry his bed, and walk again. The miracle was performed on a Sabbath day.

Since no one was supposed to carry a burden on the Sabbath day, the man carrying his bed in public was promptly flagged by the Jews for violating the Sabbath. The Jews reacted with rage and enmity when they learned that Jesus violated their tradition by healing the man. The Jews wanted to kill Jesus, especially when He also claimed that God was His Father. Jesus reproved the Jews and asserted Himself as God the Son by the testimony of the Father, John the Baptist, His works, and the scriptures.
This chapter can be outlined as such:

I. Jesus cured a man who had been impotent for 38 years – *John 5:1-16*

II. Jews sought to kill Jesus for violating the Sabbath and making Himself equal to God – *John 5:17-47*
Key Spiritual Lessons

The healing of an impotent man and the persecution of Jesus by religious unbelievers carry the important message that sinners who receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are passed from death unto life, while religious unbelievers remain dead in trespasses and sins.

The need for washing in the pool of Bethesda for the healing of incurable diseases foreshadows the need for washing in Jesus’ blood for the cleansing and healing of the incurable sin disease.

Following are the key spiritual lessons:

I. The cure for spiritual infirmities – John 5:1-9
II. The craziness and peril of having God without the Son – John 5:10-30
III. The certainty that Jesus was sent of God – John 5:31-47

The Cure for Spiritual Infirmities

[Verses 1-4] Following the events in chapter 4, Jesus went up to Jerusalem to observe a Jewish feast. At the temple by the sheep gate was a pool with five porches and a great multitude of people with incurable infirmities lying under the porches. Some were blind while others were lame, crippled, and withered. They all hoped for a miracle healing by watching and waiting for the troubling of the pool water by an angel and being the first to step into the pool.

There is potent truth in this short story. Of notable interest are the people with incurable diseases, the five porches, the angel, and the method of healing.
In the Bible, diseases such as leprosy, blindness, and disabilities picture sin. The multitude of people with diseases under the five porches of the pool represents all the sinners in this world. Everyone is born with the incurable sin disease. Sin is a hereditary spiritual disease that destroys life spiritually and physically. Sin brings about ungodliness in people. Read 2Timothy 3:2-5, Romans 7:14-20. Sin also plagues people with physical illnesses. After healing the impotent man, Jesus said to him, “Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee,” implying that his disease was a punishment for sin.

There was much pain, suffering, and unhappiness under the five porches. The number five in the Bible is the number of death. God paints a picture that shows a great multitude of sinners suffering through the days of their life under the cover of death. Indeed, “the wages of sin is death.” Without intervention from the angel of the Lord (Jesus Christ), sinners have no hope of salvation. They are on a one-way path to death and hell.

The name of the pool was Bethesda, which means “house of mercy.” Sinners must come out of the five porches (cover of death) and by faith step into the pool for salvation. We have established in previous chapters that water represents the word of God, and Jesus Christ is the Word. Salvation is by grace through faith according to scriptures. 1Peter 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. The “gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ” only and no one can change this. I once heard a lady say, “I received Jesus in my own way.” She had an imaginary plan of salvation. Read Matthew 7:13-14.

Observe the healing technique in verse 4, which foreshadows salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. It was a sign to the Jews that Jesus Christ was the Messiah, but unfortunately they didn’t get it.
Chapter 5 - Healer

1. “An angel went down at a certain season”—The angel was the angel of the Lord, who was Jesus Christ. The season began about 2,000 years ago when the Word came down from heaven and was made flesh in the person of Jesus Christ.

2. “Troubled the water”—The troubling of the water is the troubling of Jesus Christ when He went to the cross.

3. “Whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had”—After Jesus Christ was crucified, whosoever by faith steps into the pool (believes in Him) is immediately made whole from the sin disease. What about the requirement of being the first? Romans 8:23 says the people who receive Christ as Savior are the “firstfruits of the Spirit.”

Notice that a great multitude of impotent folks were under the five porches, but only one was healed. This is to show that a relatively small percentage of sinners will be saved. (Prophetically, this is a sign to the Jews that the majority of them will be dead in sins and only a remnant will be miraculously saved at the second appearance of Jesus Christ.) Step into Jesus’ pool and be saved while the season of salvation remains open. Don’t get left behind. Sadly the Bible says, “Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

The healing of the impotent man took place at the sheep gate. Yes, Jesus is shopping for sheep. Will you be His sheep?

[Verses 5-9] Jesus noticed the impotent man lying down and knew that he had suffered from an incurable infirmity for 38 years. He asked the man, “Wilt thou be made whole?” The impotent man replied that the reason he still had the infirmity was not for lack of trying, but lack of a good friend to carry him into the pool when the
water was troubled. Jesus commanded the man to rise, take up his bed, and walk, and immediately the man was made whole. The healing took place on the Sabbath.

The impotent man lying down under the porches demonstrates the spiritual condition of sinners. All are beaten down and held captive by sin and death. But Jesus wants to heal and liberate every soul. He is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” Just as He took notice of the impotent man, He also sees and reaches out to all sinners. John 1:9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

“Wilt thou be made whole?” is an individual offer. The decision is personal. One does not inherit salvation from parents or relatives. Everyone needs to personally consider God’s offer. Figuratively speaking, I was under the porches for 30 years before I accepted Jesus Christ as God and Savior for the pardoning of my sins. What about you? Hopefully you are not still under the porches.

The impotent man’s personal best effort at racing to the pool did not gain him the much-needed healing. Having been so often disappointed, he began to despair and blamed it on the lack of a good friend. The lesson here is that human effort doesn’t cut it. Thank God, salvation is not based on human effort. Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: (9) Not of works, lest any man should boast. And if you need a good friend to carry you into the pool, Jesus is man’s best friend. Read John 15:13. He will carry you into His pool of salvation.

It was a strange thing to command a man who had long been disabled to rise, take up his bed, and walk. But Jesus’ word was powerful and effective when met with faith. The impotent man could have laughed at Jesus, but instead he believed and obeyed His word and was immediately made whole. You too will be made
whole in an instant if you believe Jesus by faith and obey His words. All your past, present, and future sins are blotted out. The forgiveness is immediate and complete. You are declared righteous before God and your name is written in the Book of Life. Read 1Thessalonians 2:13, Romans 10:9-10, Romans 5:18-19.

The Craziness and Peril of Having God without the Son

[Verses 10-13] In those days, a Jew carrying a burden around the temple on the Sabbath wouldn’t get very far before being flagged down by those in authority, like the Pharisees. True enough, the Jews said to the man whom Jesus healed, “It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.” But the man argued that he was simply obeying the order of the person who healed him. When the Jews inquired about the healer, the man couldn’t tell who He was because he didn’t get a chance to know Him before Jesus slipped away from the crowd that had gathered.

Such are newly born again believers in Jesus Christ. Although immature in the knowledge of Christ, they are fully aware of the transformation in their lives, which should also be noticeable to others. The man was impotent for 38 years, and now he was walking. Has there been a noticeable change in your life since you accepted Christ as Savior? If not, perhaps the Holy Spirit of God never made it into your life, and all you have is a religious experience.

Believers must not be afraid or ashamed to openly testify of Christ and must no longer observe old religious laws and traditions. The man could have refused to carry his bed because of the Sabbath, but chose rather to obey Jesus’ command. Believers should however expect persecution from religious unbelievers, as the man was challenged by the Jews.
[Verses 14-15] Jesus found the man in the temple, perhaps while he was thanking God for the great mercy bestowed on him, and warned him, “Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.” The man departed from the temple and told the Jews that it was Jesus who made him whole.

Continuing on with the thought that there must be a noticeable change in a person’s life after believing in Jesus Christ, believers must repent from the sins that beset them prior to meeting Jesus. For example, after forgiving the adulterous woman in chapter 8, Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.” What was your sin? If you were an alcoholic, a drug addict, or an idol worshipper, sin no more. You get the idea. This is not to say believers will never sin because it is impossible to live perfectly in the flesh. However, believers are to do the following things:

1. “Behold, thou art made whole”—Believers are to behold the new man who is regenerated by the Spirit of God and is passed from death to life. How much better and happier the new man is compared to the old man. It makes no sense to return to the old sin.

2. Bear in mind that God could send a worse disease or a sorer affliction if a believer returns to the old sin. Why? *Proverbs 3:12 For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.*

3. Bear in mind that the flesh yearns to sin and can cause the believer to backslide from God after conversion. Hence the warning from Jesus.

4. Bear witness of Jesus, as the man told the Jews that Jesus made him whole.
[Verses 15-18] The Jews were zealous of God and rested in the Law of Moses and their traditions, but did not consider Jesus to be the Messiah. Rather, they policed and persecuted people who violated tradition. They reacted with rage and enmity when they learned that Jesus had violated the Sabbath. They wanted to kill Him according to the Old Testament law—Numbers 15:32-36. But when Jesus defended Himself by saying, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work,” it sent them over the edge because Jesus not only violated the Sabbath, He claimed God was His Father.

The Apostle Paul had this to say about the Jews: “Romans 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. (2) For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. (3) For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”

The same can be said for the followers of all the world’s religions. (True Christianity is not about religion, but a relationship with the Almighty God through His Son Jesus Christ.) These religious people want access to God without going through the Son. Many believe that all religions lead to the same God. They establish and improvise their own system of righteousness. Unfortunately it leads people to hell.

The truth is, there is only one way to Almighty God the Father. The way is through His Son, Jesus Christ. 1John 5:12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. The reason this is unclear to natural people is because the god of this world, Satan, blinds their minds from believing the gospel of Christ. 2Corinthians 4:3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: (4) In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.
What follows next is Jesus’ explanation of His relationship with the Father, from which we learn of the peril of having God without the Son.

1. The Son is fully integrated with the Father and cannot be decoupled from the Father. It is a Father-and-Son company.
   - Verse 19 says, “Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.” Jesus is the Son to whom the Father reveals the plan of His works and by whom He does all things. The Son imitates the Father according to what He sees. (Similarly, Moses built the tabernacle according to the pattern shown him by God in the mount. Read Hebrews 8:5.) This means the Son is with the Father, is privy to the whole plan of His works, is totally in sync with Him, and does nothing in opposition to Him. Read Proverbs 8:22-31. The Son implements the Father’s design and is the one who gets things done. Remember John 1:3? “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”
   - Verse 20 says, “For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.” The Father loves the Son and has declared, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.” It is folly to try to separate Jesus Christ from the Father.
   - [Verses 20-21] Because the Father loves the Son, He holds nothing back and reveals everything that He does to Him. The Father has greater works in store that will cause the Jews to marvel. One such work is
the resurrection of the dead. For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, it is the Son’s prerogative to give life to whom He will, according to His righteous judgment. [Verses 22-23] This is because the Father committed all judgment to the Son so that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.

2. The Son determines who gets life and death. Rejection of the Son is rejection of life. Read John 3:36.

- Verses 24-26 talk about the promise of eternal life to sinners who hear Jesus’ word (the gospel) and believe on the Father. Read Isaiah 55:3. According to verse 26, the Father has purposed that life should be in the Son. 1John 5:11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.
- Verses 27-30 talk about the promise of judgment to the dead who rejected the Son. [Verse 27] The Son has the authority and sovereignty to judge the dead who rejected Him. [Verse 28] There is an appointed hour in which all who are in their graves will hear the voice of the Son of God. [Verse 29] They will be resurrected. Every soul will return to its body and appear before the Judge, who is the Son. Read Hebrews 9:27. This is the Great White Throne judgment for those who died in their sins—“They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” Read Revelation 20:11-15. (The Great White Throne judgment is not for believers. Believers participate in the Judgment Seat of Christ. See Chapter 8 for the comparison of the two judgments.) At the Great White Throne, none will
get life because “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” All will die the second death, but not before they confess Jesus as Lord to the glory of God. Read Romans 3:10-12, 23, Psalms 14:3, Psalms 53:3, Philippians 2:10-11. [Verse 30] Jesus’ judgment is just and the sentence he passes is right. He judges according to what He hears from the Father. Jesus does not seek to gratify his own will, but the will of the Father.

The Certainty that Jesus was Sent of God

Jesus produced five witnesses that testified He was sent by (or from) God.

1. The witness of John the Baptist
   [Verses 31-35] John was still alive at the time, though in prison. His testimony of Jesus was authentic and true, and he bore witness of the truth. The Jews believed John to be a prophet and looked upon him as a holy man of great integrity. John was not the Light, but he was a burning and a shining light. The Jews were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

2. The witness of works
   [Verse 36] Jesus had a greater witness than the witness of John the Baptist. Jesus accomplished the works that the Father gave Him. Works such as the preaching of the gospel, the fulfilling of the law, and His death on the cross bore witness that the Father had sent Him. Read John 10:25, 37-38, John 3:2, John 14:11, Isaiah 61:1-2, Luke 4:16-21.
3. The witness of the Father

[Verses 37-38] It was the Father’s pleasure to bear witness of Jesus with an audible voice from heaven at His baptism. The Father did it again at Jesus’ transfiguration on the mount. Read Matthew 3:17, Matthew 17:1-5. These witnesses alone would have been enough, but unfortunately the Jews were ignorant of God and were not acquainted with such extraordinary revelations, even though they professed to know Him—“Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.” What a slap on the face! The Jews were committed with the oracles of God. They had the Old Testament, yet they couldn’t recognize the Messiah. The word of God was not in them. It was in their hands, heads, eyes, and ears, but not in their hearts.

4. The witness of the scriptures

[Verse 39] The Jews had a corrupt expectation and false hope that they should inherit eternal life because they had father Abraham, Moses, and the Old Testament law on their side. Read Matthew 3:7-12. Jesus challenged them to search the scriptures, not just casual reading or hearing the scriptures expounded in synagogues on the Sabbath day, but to search as someone searches for hidden treasures, and to study to rightly divide the word of truth. Read Proverbs 2:1-9, 2Timothy 2:15. They would find that the scriptures testify of and point to Him. By design the Old Testament law is a schoolmaster that points people to Christ. Read Galatians 3:24. [Verse 40] Even so, the Jews would not come to Jesus to obtain life because they were prejudiced, corrupt, perverse, stubborn, and willfully blind.
(Verse 41) In asserting His equality with the Father by producing the witnesses to the Jews, Jesus wasn’t intending to receive honor and applause from them, but to vindicate Himself and glorify His Father.)

(Verse 42) The Jews, by rejecting and attempting to kill the Son, demonstrated they did not have the love of God in them. According to 1John 4:9, “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.” They pretended to love God and thought they proved it by their zeal for the law, the temple, and the Sabbath.

(Verse 43) The Jews were so ignorant of God’s truth that they not only rejected the Son who came in the Father’s name, they would embrace someone who would come in his own name. This prophetically points to the antichrist. (Verse 44) Jesus sharply reproved their foolishness. They would believe on those who honored themselves, but would not seek after the one who was sent and honored by God. Read John 8:54-55. They were self-absorbed, as were the Scribes and Pharisees. They were ambitious of honor and respect from one another, doing things to be seen of men to gain their applause, and chose the uppermost rooms at feasts and chief places in the synagogues and delighted in the pompous title of Rabbi.

(Verses 45-47) Despite the Jews’ rejection, Jesus did not accuse them to the Father. John 3:17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. Unlike the Jews
who constantly looked for faults and violations of the commandment, Jesus came not to accuse, but to advocate. Read 1John 2:1-2. Jesus didn’t need to accuse them because the Law of Moses that they trusted, rested in, and boasted of, accused them. This was because Moses wrote of Jesus. For example, the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham, the offering of Isaac, Shiloh, the serpent on the pole, the Prophet, and the ceremonies of the law were figures of Jesus, who was to come. Read Genesis 3:15, Genesis 13:15, Genesis 17:8, Genesis 22:18, Galatians 3:16, Genesis 22:1-14, Genesis 49:10, Numbers 21:4-9, Deuteronomy 18:15, Hebrew 9:1-12. Therefore if they truly believed Moses, they would have believed in Jesus. This made them liars and sinners. The Law of Moses would bring charges against them, for they sinned against the law. (Sin is the transgression of the law.) The law in which they trusted for life would rise up in judgment and would be a witness against them. Read Romans 7:7-11.

Every religion has a set of laws, ordinances, statutes, and commandments for its believers. There are also punitive elements for its believers who fail to meet or observe its laws. But Jesus Christ is full of grace and truth, according to John 1:14, 17. If you trust in religion, you are under its law. Chances are you have not been able to fulfill everything that your religion expects of you, which makes you a law breaker. You are guilty under the very religion that you cling to. Why would you want to be under a law and not grace through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ?
5. Your witness

Consider Acts 1:8, “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” You need to witness Christ. Your Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria are the towns and cities around you. You are also commanded to testify of Jesus to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Summary

Verse 24 gives the best advice for curing the sin disease and avoiding condemnation: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” No one in his right mind would prefer death over life. But the path to life is obscure to many people because their minds are blinded by the devil whose motivations are to steal, kill, and destroy souls. There is an ongoing spiritual battle between light and darkness and between good and evil. May God shine the light of the glorious gospel of Christ on all readers that they might be healed of the sin disease.
The Book of John: A Bible Study & Commentary for Young Believers in Jesus Christ

by Richmond Sheer (Author)

★★★★★ • 4 customer reviews

See all 2 formats and editions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kindle</th>
<th>$0.60 kindleunlimited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subscribers read for free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$4.99 to buy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9 Used from $16.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 New from $15.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paperback</td>
<td>$19.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Read the Gospel of John,” is the advice often given to young believers in Jesus Christ. Richmond Sheer, a former Buddhist, received the same advice many years ago. In this book, he sets out to show the rich, three-dimensional nature of the Gospel of John, covering the historical, inspirational, and prophetic angles in each chapter, which are frequently revealed in pictures, types, and numbers.

He includes illustrations throughout to summarize truth in a simple, inviting way—something visual learners do not have with other commentaries. The book is also filled with verse cross-references, allowing the reader to dig deeper on any topic at any time.

The layout of each chapter serves as an example to the reader of how to systematically outline and study a book of the Bible. Get ready for a lively look at the Book of John.

After a full day of work in Jerusalem, Jesus retreated to the Mount of Olives, a short distance eastward of Jerusalem. He returned early the next morning to the temple to teach, and the whole town showed up. He was interrupted by the scribes and Pharisees, who architected a snare against Him. They captured an adulterous woman and presented her to Jesus for sentencing. They had reasons to accuse Him whichever way He judged. They also primed Him with the Law of Moses, that such a sinner should be stoned to death. Jesus ignored them at first, but when they pressed Him, supposedly to checkmate Him, He responded by saying, “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.” The scribes and Pharisees were convicted by their conscience, because they too were sinners. They left Jesus one by one, beginning with the highest rank to the lowest. Thereafter, the adulteress accepted Jesus as Lord. He sent her away with no condemnation and told her to sin no more.

Seeing their party go down in flames, the Pharisees who remained in the crowd continued to engage Jesus. They disputed His testimony, demanding that He show His Father and identify Himself. They entrenched themselves in the law and tradition by claiming liberty and righteousness in Abraham their father.

This chapter can be outlined as such:
Chapter 8 - Forgive

I. Pharisees laid a trap for Jesus using an adulterous woman as bait – John 8:1-11

II. Pharisees debated Jesus and were found to be liars – John 8:12-59
Key Spiritual Lessons

This chapter contrasts a sinner who was prosecuted by her own religion, but obtained mercy, forgiveness of sin, and eternal life from Jesus Christ, with religious unbelievers who died in their sins.

This chapter also exposes people who claim to know God, but really are the spiritual children of the devil.

Following are the key spiritual lessons:

I. Sinners get eternal life through saving faith in Jesus
   – John 8:1-11

II. Sincere religious unbelievers die in sins by rejecting Jesus – John 8:12-59

Sinners Get Eternal Life through Saving Faith in Jesus

[Verse 1] While in Jerusalem, Jesus, as His manner was, taught in the temple by day and retreated to the Mount of Olives at night, most likely in the town of Bethany.

[Verse 2] When Jesus arrived at the temple early in the morning, a multitude of people were ready to hear Him.

For me, I find it good to fellowship with God early in the morning, before the hustle and bustle of the day kicks in, and before I find myself in the boxing ring with the flesh and the devil. Psalms 5:3 My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up. Read Psalms 63.

[Verses 3-5] The scribes and Pharisees interrupted Jesus’ teaching session by presenting a woman taken in adultery, and
setting her in the midst of the company to be seen by all the people. They respectfully addressed Jesus as “Master” before laying their trap. They said, “This woman was taken in adultery, in the very act” and wanted to know if Jesus would agree with the Law of Moses, in that such an offender should be stoned to death. Leviticus 20:10 says, “And the man that committeth adultery with another man’s wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.”

Verse 6 clearly states that the motive of the scribes and Pharisees was to accuse Jesus. If Jesus condemned the adulteress and ordered her death according to the Law of Moses, they could accuse Him for infringing upon the judicial power and privilege of the Roman governor, or accuse Him of inconsistency, because He fellowshipped with sinners. But if He cleared the adulteress, they could accuse Him for trying to destroy the Law of Moses and label Him as an enemy of the law. But Jesus stooped down and wrote something on the ground with His finger and ignored the accusers.

[Verses 7-8] When they pressed upon Him, Jesus stood up and said, “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.” Then Jesus stooped down again and continued to write on the ground.

There are a number of speculations as to what Jesus wrote. According to Leviticus 20:10 and Deuteronomy 22:22, both the adulterer and adulteress should be put to death. Since the woman was caught in the very act, where was the man? That man could have been one of the accusers since they devised the snare. Jesus might have written his name on the ground, among other things.

[Verses 9-11] The accusers were convicted by their conscience when they heard Jesus’ words. Oh the power of the Word! One by one they left Jesus, beginning with the highest rank to the lowest. When they were all gone, Jesus asked the woman, “Where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?”
The woman said, “No man, Lord.” And Jesus replied, “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.”

It was a bad day for the adulteress. Her party time was over when she was caught in the very act with ample witnesses for a conviction. Being shamed was the least of her problems, because she would have died that day under the Law of Moses. Thankfully, she was brought to Jesus. Her worst day turned into the best day of her life. Jesus released her with no condemnation when she received Him as Lord.

How wonderful is this! Sinners who receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are clear of condemnation. Read Romans 8:1-4. The religious leaders who arrested the adulteress could not convict her. The law had no dominion over her. Read Romans 7:1-6. John 8:36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. (I was a rotten sinner, but now I am right with God in Jesus Christ. My sins are wiped away and I no longer carry the burden, and my conscience is clear.)

The following lessons may be gleaned from this story:

- Don’t be foolish and prideful thinking you can conceal sin, such as adultery. The Bible says, “Be sure your sin will find you out.” It is like trying to hide rust or the wind. Your sins will come to light sooner or later. Did you know that the devil reports your sins to God and accuses you before Him night and day? Read 1Timothy 5:24, Revelation 12:9-10. You would be wise to confess them to the Lord Jesus and repent.

- There is no mercy or forgiveness in the law. With the law is the knowledge and realization of sin. The law discovers sins and prosecutes sinners. Sinners have no excuse, as all will be found guilty and will die under the law. The adulteress faced certain death for her sin.
Ezekiel 18:4 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die. Read Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23.

- God’s righteousness is only obtained by faith, as it is impossible to obtain it by the works of the law. Religions that teach works-based salvation or a mix of faith and works only lead people to hell. Romans 9:30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. (31) But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. (32) Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; (33) As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

- Grace is better than the law because sin has dominion over people who are under the law. The indwelling sin in every human takes occasion by the prohibitions in the law of God. It stirs up all manner of evil desires and deceives the person into committing sin, which then kills the person. Read James 1:15. For example, the law says, “Thou shalt not covet,” but the indwelling sin that reigns over individuals drives them to covet, and subsequently kills them. Read Romans 7:7-13. Nobody can ever fulfill the law and obtain God’s righteousness. Romans 5:20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: (21) That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.
• The Lord Jesus Christ is a sinner’s only hope for salvation. The adulteress would have been stoned to death had she not met Jesus that day. She came to the realization that Jesus was her only hope and received Him as Lord. Jesus let her go free without condemnation. Oh that all unbelievers would come to the same realization and accept Jesus as their sole Lord and Savior by faith. John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Sincere Religious Unbelievers Die in Sins by Rejecting Jesus

Jesus engaged the Pharisees, beginning with Nicodemus, in chapter 3. All was well until He healed the impotent man on the Sabbath day in chapter 5, which was viewed as a major violation of the Jewish law by the scribes and Pharisees, so much so that they wanted to kill Him. Their attempt to arrest Jesus failed in the foregoing chapter. Here, they devised a snare for Jesus by attempting to put Him in a no-win situation.

You can expect similar treatment from the religious unbelievers of the world. Everything is fine until you point out that their beloved traditions or beliefs are not according to the truth of God. Then the true colors of their spiritual DNA and lineage show. Imagine telling Hindus that bathing at the Sangam (the confluence of the Ganges, the Yamuna and the Saraswati rivers) during the Kumbh Mela festival does not by any means rid them of sins. Imagine telling Buddhists or Taoists that they are as blind, dumb, and dead as their man-made idols. Read Psalms 115:4-8. Imagine
telling the Muslims that they are the descendants of Ishmael, whose mother was a bondwoman, but God established His covenant with Isaac, who was the son of the freewoman. Imagine telling Catholics that infant baptism does nothing for babies except get them wet and make them cry. These are all true according to the word of God, but unbelievers will despise and persecute you for telling them the truth, just as they persecuted Jesus.

I can attest to the above. I grew up in a Taoist family, and my sister was the first to receive Jesus Christ as Savior. My brothers and I tried in vain to stop her from attending church and to convince her to deny Jesus. I was furious when she led my mother to the Lord. From that time on, I was determined to persecute Christians, because Christianity violated my tradition and divided my family. Praise the Lord for His mercy, goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering that a rotten sinner like me could be forgiven and see the light of life.

**Religious unbelievers attack Jesus’ testimony**

[Verse 12] Having delivered the adulteress from her accusers, Jesus proclaimed, “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

Jesus is the spiritual light and life, not only for the Jews, but for Gentiles also. By this proclamation, Jesus foretold that Jews and Gentiles would be one people, one body, and one church in Him. Read Ephesians 2:11-22.

The world is in darkness. It is void of spiritual light and life and is under the power of evil. Those who follow Jesus will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

[Verse 13] The Pharisees didn’t like the proclamation and tried to discredit Jesus by accusing Him of self-representation and
attacking His record. They said, “Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.” (By the way, the devil also likes to attack God’s record. He said to Eve, “Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?”)

The Pharisees’ accusation was unjust, because they purposely overlooked the witnesses that Jesus produced in chapter 5, namely the witness of John the Baptist, the witness of His miracles, the witness of the Father, and the witness of scriptures. Besides, Jesus told them in John 7:28 that He didn’t represent Himself, but the Father sent Him. Jesus fired back at the Pharisees as follows:

1. [Verse 14] You are incompetent judges because you don’t know me—“Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.” The Jews were wrong about His origin (John 7:27, 40-43, 52) and couldn’t figure out where He would go when He spoke of going away (John 7:33, 36).

2. [Verses 15-16] Your judgment of me is flawed, because you judge according to appearance—“Ye judge after the flesh.” The Jews judged Jesus after the flesh or outward appearance and not according to truth. They saw a base and mean person. Therefore He could not possibly be the light of the world. But Jesus’ judgment of them was true and according to the law, because He had two witnesses—Himself and the Father.

3. [Verses 17-18] Even your law says my testimony is true—“It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.” The Law of Moses that they boasted of required two or three witnesses to establish a matter. Therefore Jesus and the Father, who was with Him
(verse 29), were enough to establish His testimony. Read *Deuteronomy* 19:15, *Deuteronomy* 17:6, *Numbers* 35:30, *1John* 5:6-9.

Likewise, unbelievers don’t know Jesus and are incompetent judges of His testimonies, yet they like to question the authenticity and the authority of the Bible. One of their favorite objections is that the Bible was authored by men. Read *2Peter* 1:19. Another favorite is the misapplication of scriptures in order to justify their sins and shut up Christians. For example, they like to misapply *Matthew* 7:1 and say Christians are not supposed to judge. But what does the Bible say concerning judging? Read *Deuteronomy* 1:16, *Proverbs* 31:9, *John* 7:24.

Christians are to judge righteous judgment. The word of God is the standard of right and wrong. Without it, “every way of a man is right in his own eyes.” Read *Proverbs* 12:15, *Proverbs* 21:2, *Judges* 17:6. Is the word of God the standard of righteousness in your life and your household?

**Religious unbelievers will die in their sins**

[Verse 19] With one black eye, the Pharisees asked Jesus to show them the Father, who He claimed to be His witness. Since they were initially wrong on Jesus’ origin by supposing He was the son of Joseph, their error widened. It was absurd for them to ask “Where is thy Father?” because Jesus and the Father were one. Jesus was the express image of the Father and the brightness of His glory. Read *Hebrews* 1:1-3. If they truly had known the Father, they would have known Jesus. Therefore their question proved they did not know Jesus or the Father.

[Verse 20] The dialogue took place in the treasury of the temple, which was a heavily used communal place where the Pharisees made the most noise to draw attention to their giving.
Read Matthew 6:1-5. In other words, Jesus was in the open, but “no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.”

[Verses 21-24] Jesus warned the Jews again, as He did in chapter 7, that they would seek Him after He returned to the Father, but they would die in sins, because where He was going they had no access. (One can only come to the Father by Jesus Christ. Read John 14:6.) The Jews couldn’t figure out the place referenced by Jesus back in chapter 7. They still couldn’t determine it here because of their incorrect working assumption. They assumed Jesus was the son of Joseph instead of God the Son. So, they wondered if Jesus was going to commit suicide when He said, “Whither I go, ye cannot come.” But Jesus clarified that He was talking about heaven—that He was from above and not of this world. In contrast, the Jews were earthly beings from this world, and by not believing in Him as their Messiah, they would have no access to heaven and would thus die in their sins.

The little phrase “whence I come” in verse 14 is so important, because failure to grasp it gets people into a lot of trouble, with hell as a consequence. If you, like the Jews, can’t figure out Jesus’ origin, you may also reject Him as Savior. Your Savior had better be the incarnate Word from heaven, who was God from heaven and not from the earth, otherwise you too will have no access to heaven and will die in your sins. Think about the world’s religions and their saviors—Buddha, Dalai Lama, Mohammad, Confucius, Mary, religious and political leaders, various human saints and gods, and animals—they all originated from the earth and are unable to grant you access to heaven, much less forgive your sins. Remember John 3:31a, “He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly.” Anyone who trusts in them will die in their sins, be eternally separated from God, and never see the light of life. The world religions refuse to accept Jesus Christ as God the Son from heaven because it makes their gods second class. They put Him in the same category as the rest of
the so-called saviors. What happens when people put Jesus in the same category as other gods? Read a funny story about it in 1Samuel 5.

**Religious unbelievers have pending judgment**

[Verses 25-29] In the preceding verses, Jesus called the Pharisees incompetent judges for not knowing Him and threatened them with eternal separation from God for not believing in Him. The Pharisees reacted with “Who art thou?” It was not a friendly question. It was more like “Who do you think you are?,” or as in verse 53, “Whom makest thou thyself?” Jesus brilliantly responded as follows:

1. [Verse 25] I am the Truth—“Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.” Jesus was who He said He was in the beginning of the discourse—the light and life of the world. Nothing had changed. Read Hebrews 13:8.

2. [Verses 26-27] I am your Judge—“I have many things to say and to judge of you.” Jesus had many things to say against the Pharisees and to charge them with, but He deferred judgment in obedience to the Father. As it was written in John 5:19b, “The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do.” In other words, if Jesus did not have the relationship that He claimed He had with the Father, He would have acted alone and would have judged them on the spot. However, the judgment was deferred because Jesus worked in concert with the Father as He said, “But he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.” This doesn’t mean the Jews are off the hook, because John 5:22 says, “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.”
3. [Verses 28-29] I am the Messiah—“When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he.” Jesus gave them a sign for when they would know that He was the true Messiah. The Jews would be convinced when they crucified Him on the cross, as the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness. The Jews would also know that Jesus did not act alone, but was in full cooperation with the Father, and that Jesus and the Father were one. The Father was with Jesus even as He spoke.

Jesus is the Truth, the Judge, and the Messiah. Unbelievers have pending judgment because they reject Jesus as the Savior. Jesus will reckon with them at the Great White Throne judgment, as no sinner will go unpunished. Philippians 2:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; (11) And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

As a believer, you also have a pending judgment, but at the Judgment Seat of Christ. You will stand before the Lord Jesus and give an account of your life beginning from the time you received Him as your Lord and Savior.

The Judgment Seat of Christ is a judgment of reward for your service to the Lord. He expects you to be spiritually fruitful as you will see in chapter 15. What do you have to show? The Apostle Paul has this to say in 2Corinthians 5:10, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. (11) Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.” Be forewarned, the “terror of the Lord” is written to Christians and should motivate you to serve Jesus and persuade others to join you. Be sure to invest for

If you are not willing to serve Christ and your Christianity is all about you, what makes you think you’ll be comfortable in heaven with God who died for your sins, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away? Think about it, wouldn’t self-serving, worldly focused, me-monster Christians be more comfortable with the god of this world (the devil) than with the God of heaven? After all, they are focused on getting more of the world. They attend church only when they can find time. Bible reading, study, devotion, and fellowship—who needs that? The work of ministry—that’s for pastors and missionaries. How awkward it will be for these me-monsters when they show up in heaven and the Lord of heaven is practically a stranger to them?

If you are one of these Christians who abuse the grace of God, the Judgment Seat of Christ will be a very terrifying, dreadful, shameful, and regretful time for you. Don’t think that you are somehow special and deserving of service, comfort, blessings, and happiness, while your brothers and sisters in Christ are being slaughtered for their faith.

If you are born again, your life on earth is the boot camp that prepares you for life in heaven. Jesus bought you with a price and you are not your own. He is your Lord and Master. You exist to serve Him and to bring Him glory. Do not meet the King of Kings and Lord of Lords empty handed. Read *2Corinthians 5:10-11, 1Corinthians 3, 1Corinthians 6:19-20.*

Below is a comparison of the Great White Throne judgment and the Judgment Seat of Christ.

The Great White Throne judgment:

- Happens at the end of the millennium, approximately 1,000 years after the rapture of the church.
The Book of John

- Is for unbelievers only.
- Is a judgment of condemnation. All who are judged in this judgment are sinners and will be cast into the lake of fire. Read Revelation 20:11-15.

The Judgment Seat of Christ:

- Happens right after the rapture of the church just before Christ’s second coming to earth.
- Is for believers only.
- Is a judgment of reward for obedience and service to the Lord. (Believers’ sins are judged at Calvary when they accepted Jesus as Lord. Believers should never fear going to hell.) Believers will be judged for the effort, motive, and quality of service as opposed to results. Read 2Corinthians 5:10, 1Corinthians 3:13-15, 6-7, Matthew 16:24-27.

Religious unbelievers may repent and believe in Jesus

[Verses 30-32] Many Jews believed on Jesus that day after hearing His speech. Jesus told them that they would surely be His disciples if they would abide in His word. Then they would know the truth and would be set free from ignorance and errors and from the bondage of the law and religion.

Notice the phrase “believed on him” in verses 30 and 31? This means to believe on a firm foundation, one based on the word of God.

Thank God for people who repent and accept Jesus Christ as their sole Lord and Savior. The best next step is to abide in the word of God. Notice that Jesus did not ask the new believers to do this or that, other than to continue or abide in His word. You will learn more about what it means to abide in His word in chapter 15. For now, don’t stray away from His words. Get in the Bible daily, read it,
study it, and research it as if you are searching for hidden treasures. Read *Proverbs 2, 2Timothy 2:15*. Then and only then will you know the truth, and the truth you know will deliver you from falsehoods. For example, you can spot counterfeit money by really knowing the real money. The truth will deliver you from the bondage that many religions put on their believers and from the traps of the devil and the world. According to verse 44, the devil does not abide in truth and is full of lies. The way you can spot falsehoods is by knowing the truth of God.

The Bible is your owner’s manual for a successful life. It needs to be your absolute, infallible guide, like a lamp unto your feet and a light unto your path. It tells you about God and His kingdom, His will and plan for your life, how you can please Him, how to live a happy and successful life, what qualities to look for in a spouse, and how to raise children, among other things. Like Job, you need to esteem the word of God more than your necessary food. Read *Psalms 119:105, Job 23:12*. Sadly, many believers are going through the motions without knowing the truth. Make time and room for the word of God. The phrase, “*my word hath no place in you*” in verse 37 is so sad. Don’t let this be true of you.

**Religious unbelievers live in false hope**

[Verses 33-47] The unbelieving Jews, who overheard Jesus talking with His new believers about being set free, challenged the notion. They proudly claimed to be the descendants of Abraham who were never in bondage to any man.

Unfortunately, only their claim of being Abraham’s descendants was true. These Jews were incredible liars. They would lie about the most obvious things. The Roman government was in charge of them and they paid tribute to Caesar. Yet they had the audacity to say that they never were in bondage to any man. What about when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed them and hauled them off
to Babylon for 70 years? Or the time Tiglathpileser, the king of Assyria, carried them captive to Assyria? Even Moses reminded them of their time in Egypt, calling it the house of bondage.

Jesus masterfully took the Pharisees apart by calling out their sin in order to reveal their true spiritual father. Jesus presented four proof points to convince the Pharisees that they were the spiritual children of the devil and not of God.

1. The Pharisees were liars.
   [Verses 34-36] Concerning their boast of freedom, Jesus said, “Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.” These Pharisees just lied by claiming they were never in bondage to any man, which made them sinners and bond-servants of sin. They were not free, regardless of their tie to Abraham. As sinful servants, they would be kicked out of the house of God because they had no blood relationship with the owner of the house. The Son, however, remained in the house forever because of His relationship to the Father. Therefore, the freedom granted by the Son was the true freedom instead of the one obtained through Abraham. Read Romans 6:16-23, Genesis 21:10, Galatians 4:21-31, Proverbs 10:30, Psalms 27:4.

2. The Pharisees were murderers.
   [Verses 37-38] Concerning their boast of pedigree as Abraham’s seed, Jesus acknowledged that they were indeed the seed of Abraham according to the flesh. However, the fact that they sought to kill Him proved that His word had no place in them. (Verse 47 describes it: “He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.”) While physically they were the seed of Abraham, spiritually they were the seed of the devil, because children imitate
their father. The devil was a murderer from the beginning. Jesus made a distinction between His Father and their father.

[Verses 39-41] The Pharisees quickly affirmed that Abraham was their father to make themselves look great. But Jesus shot them down by saying, “If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham.” For one, Abraham believed God by faith, and it was counted unto him for righteousness, but the Pharisees rested in the Law of Moses. Read Genesis 15:6, Romans 4:3, Galatians 3:6. The children of Abraham were the children of promise according to the righteousness of faith and not of the law – Romans 4:11-13. Therefore, the Pharisees were disqualified. Furthermore, their disbelieving and murderous hearts were in direct opposition to Abraham’s, who was famous for his humanity and piety. So, neither their faith nor works resembled Abraham’s.

3. The Pharisees resembled the devil, who was a murderer and liar.
[Verses 41-44] The idiom “like father, like son” aptly applies here. The way Jesus put it was, “Ye do the deeds of your father,” reiterating the distinction of the fathers from verse 38. The Pharisees sensed that Jesus was talking about a spiritual father, so they switched gears and claimed that God was their spiritual Father by saying, “We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.” To this Jesus replied, “If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.” Not only did their faith and works not match Abraham’s, their love also did not match God’s. Seeing they couldn’t understand His doctrines on liberty and bondage or the two spiritual families, Jesus plainly told them that they were the devil’s children and they would
fulfill his lusts or desires, which was evident by their lies and desire to kill Him. For the devil was a murderer from the beginning, and the author and father of lies. The devil lied to and deceived Eve into eating the forbidden fruit. Adam’s first-born son, Cain, murdered his brother Abel, because Cain was the seed of the devil. Read 1John 3:12. (As you mature in the Lord, you should study the topic of “seed.” Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. So much more happened in the Garden of Eden that day beyond simply eating the forbidden fruit. The details are beyond the scope of this book.)

4. The Pharisees would not believe in truth. [Verses 45-47] The Pharisees would not believe in Jesus, even though they failed in every attempt to discredit His doctrine and to convict Him of sin. The root cause was simply this: “He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.”

There are two spiritual fathers—God and the devil. They both are wildly interested in people and they battle for souls. The common saying in the unbelieving world is, “We are all God’s children.” This is a lie because John 8:44 is very clear about the two spiritual fathers. Read 1Peter 2:9-10. The explanation below clarifies this misconception.

Devil’s family:

• Verse 44 speaks of a group of people whose spiritual father is the devil: “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”


Chapter 8 - Forgiven

- The devil is the spiritual father of everyone who enters into this world through physical birth. Every child has the devil’s spiritual DNA. It is easily observed that children are bent to do the lusts of the devil—lie, disobey, steal, hate, kill, etc.

- Adoption by Jesus Christ is the only way out of the devil’s family. Read Ephesians 1:3-6.

God’s family:

- As individuals enter into the devil’s family by birth, they also enter into God’s family by birth. However, this birth is not physical, but spiritual, an event known as being “born again.” A natural person must be born again, because the first birth by flesh and blood is defective due to sin. Read Genesis 5:3, Romans 5:12. The Bible says in John 3:3b, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,” and in 1Corinthians 15:50a, “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.”

- Believers are God’s children by virtue of the new birth. They are now new creatures, according to 2Corinthians 5:17, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (18) And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.”

- Being in God's family separates believers from the devil's family. Their bodies are now the temple of the Holy Ghost. As such, believers must be careful not to
defile the body. Read 1Corinthians 3:16-17, 1Corinthians 6:18-20.

- Believers still carry the old nature even after they are born again. The old nature remains sinful in Adam's image. The new nature is spiritual, perfect in God's image. Both natures are present constantly. The one that is fed the most is most in control. Read Colossians 3:5-10, 2Corinthians 4:14-18.

How can you tell if a person is a believer or a wolf in sheep's clothing—a man of God or a false prophet? Jesus said, “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” If the person continually exhibits the traits of the devil, he probably is a child of the devil. Like they say, the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree.

The unbelieving world will jump all over you for judging, but Jesus said, “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.” Perhaps the greatest tell-tale sign is given in verse 47. It is when individuals refuse to hear God’s words or counsel, and the Bible is not their final authority. It is typical for such individuals to profess Jesus, but advance their own unbiblical thoughts and doctrines. They blur the line between good and evil and between Christianity and other religions. Read 1John 2:18-20, Romans 9:6.

**Religious unbelievers dishonor Jesus**

[Verses 48-50] Having been called the children of the devil, the Pharisees fought back, scornfully calling Jesus a devil-possessed Samaritan. The Jews had a very ill opinion of the Samaritans and would call someone a Samaritan in order to debase the person. Calling Jesus a devil-possessed Samaritan was a new low and downright reviling. But it is said of Jesus, according to 1Peter 2:23, “When he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he
threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.” He calmly denied having a devil, but again showed that they were the ones without God.

- “I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me”—Everything that Jesus did was to the honor and glory of the Father. He said in verse 28, “I do always those things that please him.” When the Jews dishonored Him, they violated John 5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: (23) That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

- “And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth”—The Pharisees’ reproach and abuse did not disturb Jesus, because He was not after their applause. He made it clear, however, that God would secure His glory and would judge them for their contempt and rejection of Him.

[Verses 51-53] Despite being reviled, Jesus still extended the scepter of grace to the Jews and offered the gift of immortality. If they would receive and observe His words, they would not experience the second or eternal death, which is everlasting separation from God. The Jews scorned this gracious offering. They continued to err on Jesus’ identity. They esteemed Him lower than Abraham and the prophets. In their minds, if Abraham and the prophets, who were great men and greatly favored by God, were dead, who was this fellow to save men from death? Therefore He must be diabolical. They scornfully asked, “Whom makest thou thyself?”

[Verses 54-55] Jesus tried for the last time to convince the Jews that they were not of God. He answered their question by
saying He didn’t need to make Himself honorable, because He received His honor from God the Father, who the Jews professed to be their God, but in reality they did not know Him. Yet Jesus assured them that He knew the Father. For Him to say that He didn’t know the Father would make Him a liar like them. By calling them liars, Jesus referred them back to their spiritual father, the devil.

[Verses 56-59] Finally, Jesus revealed to them that He was greater than Abraham. He told them that Abraham desired greatly to see His day, and he saw it and was glad. The Jews thought that was an absurd statement, because He was not yet 50 years old. How could He have possibly seen Abraham, who had been dead for ages? But Jesus asserted that He existed before Abraham, thus positioning Himself as the eternal God. The Jews wanted to stone Him for blasphemy, but Jesus hid Himself and left the temple.

Summary

I find two things so amazing in this chapter: the longsuffering, merciful nature of Jesus and the hardness and impenitent heart of unbelievers. Unbelievers like to argue with Jesus’ doctrines, because like the Jews, they are wrong about His identity. They also like to cast Jesus as evil, because they love darkness rather than light, for their deeds are evil. They label good evil and evil good. Oh that they would realize that they are the spiritual children of the devil and that Jesus is God the Son, who would forgive their sins and deliver them from certain death.
9 – Sent One

Historical Synopsis

This chapter gives a beautiful story of the miraculous healing of a beggar man who was born blind. The condition was not a result of his sin or the sins of his parents, but it was an opportunity for Jesus to work a miracle of God and to prove that He was the Sent One. Jesus made clay of spit to anoint the eyes of the blind beggar and sent him to wash in the pool of Siloam. The man obeyed Jesus’ instruction and his faith became sight, literally. The healing took place on the Sabbath day, which stirred up the Pharisees against Jesus causing a division among them regarding His identity.

The Pharisees interviewed the man who received his sight, but refused to believe his account. They summoned his parents, who confirmed the man was indeed their son, but they were too afraid to give Jesus the glory, because the Pharisees had threatened to remove anyone out of the synagogue who confessed Jesus as Christ. The Pharisees continued to grill the man, and they reviled him after failing to persuade him to accuse Jesus as a sinner.

Thereafter, the man believed Jesus was God the Son. He called Him Lord and worshipped Him. Meanwhile, Jesus pronounced the disbelieving Pharisees as blind sinners.

This chapter can be outlined as such:
I. Man who was blind received sight by faith – 
   *John 9:1-12*

II. Men with sight were declared blind – *John 9:13-41*
Key Spiritual Lessons

This chapter brings to light a universal problem, which is spiritual blindness. The man who was born blind and received sight after washing in the pool of Siloam communicates a spiritual truth. That is, all are born spiritually blind by default, but will receive spiritual sight when they wash in the pool of Siloam, which represents Jesus Christ. The name Siloam means “Sent.” Jesus Christ is the Sent One.

Did you know everyone is born with two pairs of eyes? Everyone has a physical and a spiritual pair of eyes. The spiritual eyes are blind by default because of Adam’s transgression, and we are his descendants after his image and likeness. Until they are opened, we cannot see the Kingdom of God, comprehend the light of God, or receive the things of the Spirit of God. Read John 3:3-6, John 1:5, 1Corinthians 2:14. As such, we are beggars like the blind man when it comes to truth. It is sad when we are not able to understand what God wrote for us. What’s more, we remain in spiritual darkness and cannot see the pits and snares that lie in our way that ultimately lead to destruction. Read John 12:35.

Once the spiritual eyes are opened, the Bible becomes alive and supernatural as we are enabled to see and understand spiritual things. We will know the hope of His calling along with the hidden treasures and secrets of God. Read Psalms 25:14, Proverbs 3:32, Ephesians 1:18. We will also be able to see into the future through written prophecies.

Most people need no convincing that the spiritual realm exists, as they believe in ghosts, evil spirits, the devil, angels, and God. Even the Kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom that cannot be seen with physical eyes. Read Romans 14:17, Luke 17:20-21. Spiritual things can only be seen with spiritual eyes. John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit
is spirit. Take the wind for example. No one has seen it, but everyone knows it exists by its effects and power. The spiritual realm is real, lively, and powerful, even though the physical eyes cannot see it.

The core message of this chapter is: people who receive Jesus Christ receive spiritual sight, while those who reject Him remain spiritually blind.

For spiritual lessons, this chapter can be outlined as such:

I. The cure for spiritual blindness – John 9:1-7
II. The curiosity of unbelievers – John 9:8-34
III. The confession of the blind man – John 9:35-38
IV. The condemnation of unbelievers – John 9:39-41

The Cure for Spiritual Blindness

[Verses 1-3] Jesus saw a man who was born blind while on His journey. His disciples were curious to know if the blindness was the result of the man’s sin or his parents’. There was an expectation that the wages of sin, besides spiritual death, was also misery through affliction of the physical body by ailments and calamities. Read John 5:14, 1Corinthians 11:28-30. But Jesus answered, “Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.” In other words, God had reserved the man to teach the people about spiritual blindness and demonstrate His mercy, grace, and glory. Jesus cured blindness before, but He had never opened the eyes of a person who was born blind. It was the first of its kind.

[Verses 4-5] Right before Jesus performed the miracle, He made a couple of interesting statements: “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”
He didn’t mean that He couldn’t perform the miracle at night. To understand the meaning, one must recall *Genesis 1:1-5*. Day was the name of the Light of God that was manifested to counter the darkness that broke out in heaven. Night was the name of the darkness, which was spiritual wickedness in high places. Jesus was the Light that shined in darkness of whom John the Baptist testified.

Jesus meant that the window He had to complete the works that the Father had given Him was limited to the time that He was in the world. The Day or the Light left the world when Jesus returned to the Father after His resurrection from the dead.

How does this apply to us as believers? The Father has also given us a work to do—the ministry of reconciliation—that we should tell the world that God was in Christ and that sinners should be reconciled to God by the word of reconciliation, which He committed to us. We are ambassadors for Christ, and the window of opportunity to complete the work is limited to the amount of time we have in this world. Read 2Corinthians 5:17-21. Seize the opportunity to serve God while you are able. Remember, evil days will come and the years will draw nigh, meaning one of these days, we will no longer be able to serve Him. That day will come sooner than you think.

[Verses 6-7] Having presented Himself as the Sent One to the Jews, Jesus “*spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.*** Jesus told the man to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. He did as he was commanded and received sight for the first time in his life.

Giving sight to the blind man by using clay proved that Jesus was the God who formed Adam from the same material. Adam was formed from the dust of the ground. His name means “red” or “red dust.” Clay is formed by adding water (in this case, spit) to the dust of the ground. *Isaiah 64:8 But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we
are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.

The pool of Siloam represents Jesus Christ. When the natural man, who by nature is spiritually blind, receives Jesus by faith, his sins are washed away and his spiritual eyes are opened. Only Jesus can heal spiritual blindness—not through religion, denomination, religious service, or good works. Read Titus 3:4-5. The world’s system of religion and righteousness, represented by the religious Pharisees, is grossly incapable of curing spiritual blindness. It is troubling to see so many religious people remain spiritually blind because they only have religion without a personal relationship with the Christ of Christianity.

The healing of the blind man paints a beautiful salvation picture.

- [Verse 1] Jesus Christ is interested in everyone who is born spiritually blind. Titus 2:11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.

- [Verses 3-5] He is ready to perform the miracle.

- [Verse 7] All a person has to do is to wash in Jesus Christ according to His words. Revelation 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

Salvation really is that simple, but the unbelieving world wants to complicate and corrupt God’s way through philosophy and vain deceit after the traditions of men and the rudiments of the world. The Bible warns against such corruption in Colossians 2:8. 2Corinthians 11:3 says, “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent
beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”

Individuals can have their spiritual eyes opened by Jesus at any time. Read Romans 5:8. The Bible says in 2Corinthians 6:2b, “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

The Curiosity of Unbelievers

[Verses 8-12] The people who knew the blind beggar were awestruck by the miracle and wanted to know how he received his sight. The man told them how Jesus opened his eyes, and they wanted to meet Him.

New life is attractive. All newly born-again believers in Jesus Christ should draw the same curiosity from the people who know them. Salvation is a spiritual operation of the Holy Spirit of God. No one knows how it is done—“by what means he now seeth, we know not.” But the change should be sudden and obvious, to the extent that people who are familiar should marvel. In verse 8, the friends of the blind beggar said, “Is not this he that sat and begged?” You can apply this to your case. Is not this (your name) who used to (fill in the blank)?

You are God’s walking billboard. A successful billboard advertisement generates many inquiries. Likewise, people who know you should marvel at your transformation to the point that they inquire, “How were thine eyes opened?”

Before I believed in Jesus, I used to bar hop with my buddies. By the grace of God, I stopped that immediately after I got saved, and my drinking buddies wondered what was wrong with me. They ditched me when I told them I became a Christian. Soon after, I gave up smoking and drinking all together cold turkey.
The transformation in a new believer’s life creates a golden opportunity for witnessing Jesus. Don’t miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Read how the Apostle Paul witnessed Jesus in Acts 22 and 26. The format is simply:

- My manner of life before Jesus.
- How I met and received Jesus.
- What my life is now with Jesus.

[Verses 13-16] The beggar’s friends took him to the Pharisees to be examined. The religious Pharisees also were curious to know how the man received his sight. While the man gave the same testimony, it generated a very different response. His familiar friends responded with “Where is he” that they might know Jesus, but there was a division among the Pharisees over who Jesus was. Some immediately condemned Him as an ungodly sinner because He restored the blind man’s sight on the Sabbath day. Others struggled because no sinner could perform such a miracle.

[Verse 17] Unable to agree on who Jesus was, the Pharisees asked the man, “What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes.” They wanted to know his thoughts about Jesus. The man said Jesus was a prophet.

[Verses 18-23] The Pharisees refused to accept Jesus as the Prophet prophesied in Deuteronomy 18:15 and also refused to believe that the man had been blind. So, they summoned his parents and asked them, “Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?” The parents confirmed their son’s identity and infirmity, but they would not testify as to how and who opened his eyes. His parents were too afraid to glorify Jesus because the Pharisees had threatened to remove anyone who confessed Jesus as Christ out of the synagogue.

[Verses 24-25] This time, the Pharisees tried to coax the man into supporting their position that Jesus was a sinner. This also
failed as the man stood firm on his conviction and made a famous statement: “Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.”

The unbelieving world, even with its best theologians and professors who reject Jesus and are spiritually blind, will remain curious as to how lives are transformed when people believe in Jesus Christ. Instead of accepting Jesus by the testimonies of the works which He has begun in the lives of those who believe, they make up scientific explanations that sound good. For us who believe in Jesus Christ, we all can attest, “One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.” The eyes of our understanding are enlightened and we can see the Kingdom of God, comprehend His divine light, and rejoice in His salvation. The Bible that previously didn’t make sense, all of a sudden comes alive.

[Verses 26-30] The Pharisees then circled back to the beginning and asked the man again about what Jesus did to him and how his eyes were opened. By now, the man was rightfully frustrated. He replied, “I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again?” He also asked the Pharisees if they would be Jesus’ disciples if perhaps the miracle was real. The Pharisees reviled him and affirmed that they were Moses’ disciples, as Moses was a known entity, whereas they had no idea of Jesus’ origin. Then the man essentially replied to the Pharisees, “Why are you so hung up on His origin when His work testifies that He is of God?” The man made the following points:

- [Verse 31] If Jesus was a sinner as the Pharisees accused Him to be, then God would not hear Him, so then how did He do the miracle?

- [Verse 32] Never in the history of the world could any person give sight to one who was born blind—not any physician by any natural means or art, nor any prophet
in a miraculous way, nor even Moses himself. Jesus’ miracle was wonderful beyond human capabilities.

- [Verse 33] Jesus had to be of God, otherwise He could not have performed the miracle.

[Verse 34] The Pharisees, who were masters and doctors of theology, were baffled by a man who was blind, had never read the scriptures, had no education, and was only a beggar. Unable to refute the man’s reasoning, they insulted him by saying, “Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?,” and threw him out.

It is one thing to witness to familiar friends, but it is another thing to witness to anti-Jesus religious unbelievers like the Pharisees. Below are the traits of anti-Jesus religious unbelievers.

- [Verse 15] They are curious about the power of God.
- [Verse 16] They judge Jesus’ works according to their laws and traditions and speak evil of things they don’t understand. Read 2Peter 2:12, Jude 1:10.
- [Verse 17] They are curious about your thoughts of Jesus.
- [Verse 18] They will try to discredit your testimony to make you ineffective for God.
- [Verse 24] They will manipulate you into agreeing with their beliefs, which are prejudiced against Jesus.
- [Verse 28] Their hardened hearts and stance prevent them from knowing the truth.
- [Verses 30-34] They refuse to accept Jesus Christ as God the Son, regardless of any miracle or what you say or present. John 12:37 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him. Don’t waste your time on these people. Jesus didn’t.
The Confession of the Blind Man

[Verses 35-38] The incredible tender care Jesus has for those who stand for Him is revealed. When Jesus heard that the man was thrown out of the synagogue by the Pharisees, He appeared to him and asked if he believed on God the Son. The man was definitely interested and wanted to know where he could find Him. When Jesus revealed Himself to the man, he said, “Lord, I believe,” and worshipped Jesus.

Observe the following:

- The blind man was an army of one against the scornful rulers. His parents would not stand with him because they feared the Pharisees. But not him, because he experienced the miracle. If you are born again, you too have experienced the miracle of sight. Your spiritual eyes have been opened. Will you have the courage to stand for Jesus even when others ridicule you?

- Jesus allowed the man to fight the Pharisees alone to prove him and to let him demonstrate his faith and allegiance. The man had to choose between his old religion and truth. Will you hang on to your old religion, even if the beliefs contradict the word of God? You cannot have both.

- The man lost the battle when he was thrown out, or did he? He recognized Jesus as a prophet in verse 17, but Jesus ended up as God the Son and his Lord. Not a bad deal, but a real bad deal for the Pharisees who threw him out. Will you feel bad if your religious organization throws you out for standing for truth and disagreeing with them?
• Jesus was very much against the religious scribes and Pharisees, but He was gentle and cared for those who sought Him with a pure heart. If you sincerely desire to know the truth, then pray to Jesus and search the Bible daily as if you are searching for hidden treasures. You will know the truth. Read Job 28:12-28, Proverbs 2, Ezra 7:10, Acts 17:11.

The Condemnation of Unbelievers

[Verses 39-41] Jesus, having comforted the man who stood for truth, condemned the spiritually blind religious rulers who fancied themselves to have great light, knowledge, and understanding of divine things, and to be guides of the blind. Read Matthew 23 for how blind the Pharisees were.

Jesus proclaimed his design in coming into the world:

• “That they which see not might see”—referring to those in the realm of darkness who are spiritually blind, that they may be illuminated by the light of the glorious gospel of Christ.

• “That they which see might be made blind”—referring to all unbelievers, who are incapable of apprehending and receiving the truth because their minds are blinded by the devil. 2Corinthians 4:3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: (4) In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Imagine how dangerous it is for a blind man to drive a car. Such is the life of all unbelievers. They are spiritually blind to the
truth, but they think they see clearly and know where they are going. And they criticize and persecute the believers whose eyes are opened and who clearly see and understand. Like the blind driver, all unbelievers will meet destruction.

Prophecies

The prophecy in this chapter reveals that the Jews will reap the antichrist. To understand this prophecy, we must take a trip back in time to the days of the prophet Isaiah. In those days, Israel was split into two kingdoms—the Northern Kingdom of Israel with 10 tribes, and the Southern Kingdom of Judah with two tribes. The 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom of Israel were Asher, Dan, Gad, Issachar, Joseph (two tribes: Ephraim and Manasseh), Naphtali, Reuben, Simeon, and Zebulun. The two tribes of the Southern Kingdom of Judah were Judah and Benjamin.

God, through the prophet Isaiah, pronounced judgment on Judah as follows:

Isaiah 8:6 Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son; (7) Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks: (8) And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.

Recall that the pool of Siloam pictures Jesus Christ. The stream (the waters of Shiloah) that filled the pool was gentle. Jesus Christ came as the Lamb of God, meek and lowly, to Israel.
The Book of John

But Judah “refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly.” This is the prophecy of Israel’s refusal of Jesus Christ as their Messiah.

Judah rejoiced in Rezin, who was the king of Syria, and in Pekah (Remaliah’s son), who was the king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. This is the prophecy of Israel’s ties and relationships with unrighteous kings instead of with Jesus Christ. John 19:15b The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

God judged Judah by overwhelming them with a rapid torrent, “the waters of the river, strong and many,” which was the army of the king of Assyria. Prophetically, this is the antichrist, as the king of Assyria is a type of the antichrist. An extremely painful period known as the Great Tribulation awaits the Jews.

Summary

The Bible is a history book. It contains the most accurate history records as they are preserved by God. There definitely is value in learning from history. The Bible is also a book of prophecies. About a quarter of the Bible is prophetic. The Bible says, “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” You can know the future when you understand prophecies. Finally, the Bible is also a doctrinal book, which is God’s instructions for how to live a successful, fruitful, and happy life in the present. Unbelievers will not be able to profit beyond the historical value of the Bible because prophecies and doctrines can only be seen and understood by believers whose spiritual eyes are opened. All in all, the Bible is a magical book!

The Lord Jesus awaits to open spiritual eyes. “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” May all
readers wash their sins in the pool of the Sent One. May the eyes of their understanding be opened to behold the Kingdom of God.