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**B1018 – May 2, 2010 – "Who Do You Say That I Am"**

We've had two to three years of OT background; now we want to turn to the life of Christ. This is the fourth section of the biblical framework. One of the things I want to emphasize as we go into the fourth section is a bit of a different methodology we'll be following. Just to review the method we've been using, it's a three-fold approach.

First, we have looked at a sequence of events, what we call the key events in Scripture. They are key simply because if you look where speeches are made, the great addresses are given in the Bible, and you write down Joshua's speeches, Stephen's speech, Paul's address at Athens, write down the events these guys mention and you come up with this list. It's not an arbitrary list; it's one you can build yourself if you go through the way these men spoke of history, what they emphasized.

Second, we've been linking doctrine to these events. The linkage we're making was made by the NT authors. So, for example, when the NT talks about the doctrines of election, justification and faith, you'll see that it's introduced in the same context as the OT. In Gal 3 when Paul wants to talk about justification he takes us back to Abraham. When Paul wants to talk about faith he goes back to Abraham. When Paul wants to talk about election in Rom 9 he turns to Abraham. That's why we associate the doctrines of justification, election and faith with the Call of Abraham. It's not arbitrary, it's the way the Holy Spirit has organized history. History is pedagogical. So when you get hung up about election it helps to go back in your minds eye and visualize Abraham, this pagan man, fumbling around in Ur worshipping idols. He wasn't looking for God, God came looking for him. That's election, that's calling. And you can do this with every OT event and its doctrine; it's

brought over in the mind of the NT authors to keep our theology highly visualized.

The third element has been to defend the historicity of these events. This is the apologetic dimension. And this is the dimension that keeps you razor sharp on biblical ideas in contrast to pagan ideas. We've emphasized that the biblical events are not some myths that men created, they're not sweet little Sunday school stories that belong with Santa Claus or something. These events, in fact, are a much better history than anything you study in school, they are the most important events in any history and they are recorded perfectly by God Himself who is their author and eyewitness observer, which is why they're not taught in school. The fact of the matter is that these events are carefully excised from the curriculum because they reveal God as the Lord of history. In paganism man is the lord of history. So there's a conflict. But in fact, biblical history is the framework within which every other detail of history must be interpreted. If the biblical framework of history is rejected then the true meaning of every other detail of history will be rejected by cleverly reinterpreting history to confirm the pagan framework of history. So these are fundamental.

We handled the OT in three working sections. First, the Buried Truths of Origins covers Gen 1-11, we talked about Creation and the doctrines of God, man and nature, the Creator-creature distinction and the divine institutions. We went through the Fall where we handled sin, suffering and evil in the world and how we cope with that, the various strategies of coping with the fallout of the Fall. Then we saw the Global Flood of Noah and the doctrine of judgment/salvation, the fact that God does judge in history, man is held responsible by God and men are running from that responsibility into the victim mentality, always I'm a victim, never my fault. Finally the Noachic Covenant, we learned a lot about stability in the environment, why we have constants in math and science. All this plays into how to interpret present data. The civilization that rose out of the fountain of Noah and his three sons then paganized very rapidly. And we studied that paganization and how God dealt with that problem in the second set of historic events and doctrines.

He dealt with it by disrupting. So the Disruptive Truths begin with the Call of Abraham. This is where talk of the Kingdom begins. We said that God is building His Kingdom, and the Kingdom of God has certain elements; it

centers on a specific taken out of Egypt at the Exodus, it's governed by a Law given at Mt Sinai, it revolves around a specific land or real estate defined by the Conquest, it's government is shaped around the specific kingly of David. We know what we're talking about when we talk about the Kingdom of God. We're not just talking about an inner private psychological experience; we're talking about a public, historic, geopolitical thing.

Finally we talked about Disciplinary Truths starting with Solomon. The fact is that the King has a certain character and He insists that His character be the standard in His Kingdom. So when that standard is not met there's discipline. And that sets up the tension in the OT of how we are ever going to meet the standard. Obviously we can't do it on our own; the OT Jew failed and failed and failed and so the need for a new heart for the King to be satisfied so His kingdom can come.

And so into history steps the Lord Jesus Christ. Now we're talking about the entrance of the King. The King comes to the place that has been prepared, categorically speaking. Now we're going to study four events the King confronts us with. The events are just as historic as the OT events. In the history of the King here are the four events: #1, His birth, #2, His life, #3 His death and #4 His resurrection. Those are the four things we're going to deal with. They cover from Matt 1-Acts 1, that's the section of Scripture we'll be handling. We're going to look at doctrines associated with those four events just like we did in the OT. The difference, however, is going to be a slight new twist. This time we're going to look at Jesus' life for what it revealed about the people who were confronted with Jesus. What did it say about men's hearts? Before we were looking at the truths God was communicating through the event. God's still doing that but here God is also revealing truths about the hearts of men by their response to Jesus.

I want to start by turning to Mark 8. We're going to deal with the response to the King. That's why the title of this section is **Confrontation with the King**, because the Lord Jesus Christ is the purest form of revelation of God man has ever seen. That's Heb 1:1-2, God has now revealed Himself in the most perfect way in Jesus Christ. The contention is that the revelation of God through Jesus Christ is the Father's final word to the human race. From the close of the NT canon on there are no more added truths. When Christ gets done and He rises from the dead, there are no more truths in the sense that

man needs to know more in order to be prepared for something else. Man has everything he needs to be prepared, now the issue is what men are doing with the revelation Christ has given. So it becomes critical in this section that we're not just looking at these events, but we're also looking at how men respond to these events.

We're also going to deal with the doctrines that come out of these events. We're going to deal with the issue of the hypostatic union, the dual natures of Christ, how people down through church history have handled this, how they've mutilated it, they've perverted it, why the guys that are ringing your doorbells are just repeating the same old heresies of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century. The Jehovah's Witnesses are nothing more than the latter day Arians. You'll see when you get back into church history that what we call the cults are nothing more than people who are historically ignorant of the stuff that has gone on. There's nothing new, same old ideas, and the answer to it is the same answer the Church gave in 200-300AD. It's the same old heresy with the same old answer. But it has to do with a perverted response to the truths of the birth of Christ.

When we get into the atonement, the death of Christ, we have all kinds of liberal responses to why did Jesus die on the cross, and they're all insufficient explanations of why Jesus died on the cross. There's a reason and a motive behind those and that is they're trying to avert confrontation with the King. They want to turn aside; they do not want to see what He really did on the cross. For those who accept what He did on the cross we'll face the extent of the atonement issue, that's a debate inside the camp of believers.

I want to start with Mark 8. At this point in the Gospels we're mid way through Jesus' ministry. If you chart all four Gospels in time you come up with something like this. They begin not with the birth of Jesus but with the birth of John the Baptist. John grows up and introduces Jesus as the Christ. Nobody who has been here should have a problem with that, because you all know if John the Baptist is a prophet, what was one of the functions of a prophet in the OT? He anointed the king; he was there to announce the king. So there's no mystery, the four Gospels just start the same way as the OT, there's nothing new about this. This is the OT motif that the prophet comes first and then the king. Satan knows that. Who comes first in his scheme,

false prophet, and who does he introduce? The antichrist. So even Satan follows the same protocol. John the Baptist introduces Jesus Christ.

Then you go through the Gospels and Christ begins to teach the masses. He begins to grow in popularity and there's a response to Him. Then at the mid-point there's a negative reaction, there's a vicious, concerted attack on the person of Jesus. It's very interesting to observe. It's also interesting to observe that once He's rejected He changes the way He teaches. It's at this point when He begins to use parables. He begins to teach in code. He begins to back away and He begins to minister to His disciples. Usually the first half of the Gospels are directed to the public and the second half is directed to the private group of people that have responded correctly to Jesus. Now they and they alone will be blessed with truth insights. These insights will not be given out to the public; this is casting pearls before swine, so the truths in the second half of the Gospels are reserved for those who have believed; those who have welcomed the King. Then there's the death of Christ and the resurrection.

This rejection half way through the Gospels is the beginning of the road to the crucifixion. Up to the mid-point you could say it was theoretically possible for Him to gain the crown. But at the mid-point in the ministry it becomes increasingly obvious the King is not going to be accepted on the King's terms. The people demand a King do certain things *for* them, and they don't see Jesus doing those things *for* them. Jesus isn't the King they want so they reject Him. Then begins His counter arguments. It's at this point that Mark 8 happens. In the Gospel of Mark we're right about that mid-point.

Let's start at Mark 8:1 and skim down through this point in the Gospel. We're not going to do a Bible study on this section; we're just skimming it to get the background. He's witnessing here, and He's talking about feeding; people have come, they're hungry, the disciples said in verse 4, "And His disciples answered Him, "Where will anyone be able *to find enough* bread here in *this* desolate place to satisfy these people?" <sup>5</sup>And He was asking them, "How many loaves do you have?" And they said, "Seven." <sup>6</sup>And He directed the people to sit down on the ground; and taking the seven loaves, He gave thanks and broke them, and started giving them to His disciples to serve to them, and they served them to the people. <sup>7</sup>They also had a few small fish; and after He had blessed them, He ordered these to be served as well. <sup>8</sup>And

they ate and were satisfied; and they picked up seven large baskets full of what was left over of the broken pieces. <sup>9</sup>About four thousand were *there*; and He sent them away.”

Notice, there’s a little fine point in the text here. This is one of the neat things when you look at some of the details of this, in verse 6, “He gave thanks and broke them,” and then it says after He broke them He started “giving them to His disciples,” meaning that He was giving them to His disciples over a prolonged period of time. He “began to” give them. It doesn’t say He gave them to the disciples, He started the process. The miracle was that they’d come back for more and He’d keep giving them more, keep giving them more, keep giving them more. This little verb tense shows you a little bit about the miracle. That’s one of the neat things when you get into the text and you can really see it. Some of these events are just mind blowing when you really get into the details of the text.

We want to proceed on to what happened. Mark 8:10, “And immediately He entered the boat with His disciples and came to the district of Dalmanutha. <sup>11</sup>The Pharisees came out and began to argue...” now here’s the negative group. These people, the Pharisees were a combination of theologian and lawyer. It’s not an insult to the legal profession today to say, because there are many fine people in the legal profession, but as a profession, the profession of law in the sense of practicing, practicing court law, has become very very parallel in our time to the thinking of the Pharisees. The emphasis in argumentation in law today is technique; it spins on a technique where we get all wrapped up around some fine point of the law. And when you back off from the whole thing you say, wait a minute, where is the common sense ethic of the whole thing?

One of the classic instances that shows the Pharisaical way of thinking and the parallel today is that incident when Jesus was in the field on the Sabbath day with His disciples, and He was flicking the grain, and they were eating it. What did the Pharisees say? You’ve violated section 9.378 of the sabbatical law. Back off a minute and think of the stupidity of that statement. Who is it that they’re accusing of breaking the sabbatical law? The guy who wrote it. Think about that. Here these Pharisees have all the legal argumentation down to the third decimal point and they’re using it against the guy that gave them the law. This gets back to something that’s very important. When you

interpret law you must interpret it according to a principle, and the principle is what was the intent of the one who wrote the law, not what you think the intent was, or not how you think you're going to apply it to a modern case. The issue is: what was the intent of the author of that particular law.

Here Jesus was, by allowing His disciples to flick grain, arguing the fact that whatever He has said about not working on the Sabbath day, that wasn't work. So by authorizing a behavior on the part of His disciples, He was exegeting the sabbatical legislation right there. The depth of the perversion is shown by the fact that the Pharisees have a very legally clean logic that appears to conflict with Jesus. That's the sort of thing you encounter in the pages of the NT. That's the sort of thing that's being hammered out today. This is why in my opinion one of the most profound discussions that we have had in this country for the last 20-30 years was something that most people just passed over, and that was when Ronald Reagan nominated Bork for the Supreme Court, the Bork hearings. The Senate judiciary committee just pounced on Bork, Biden from Delaware and Kennedy from Massachusetts just went after Bork. I always have to laugh at that, here's Kennedy, a C student in law school, telling a professor of law how to interpret the law. That was a joke. The point was that here Professor Bork was sitting there, taking all this flack for his position on the law. These guys were furious that Reagan had dared to nominate this person, Bork. What were they saying? They were saying that if Bork got to be Supreme Court Justice he would undo the key court decisions that the Supreme Court had done, including 1964 the civil rights issue. They were thereby painting Bork as a white supremacist, a guy that was against the black race, etc. That's ridiculous.

Here's the issue: this is what they were afraid of - Bork believed that a judge cannot make legislation surreptitiously. Bork argued that all he could do as a judge was operate within the constraints of the law that he has been given by the authors of the law. In the Supreme Court what is the law that the Supreme Court deals with? It's the United States Constitution. Therefore, Bork argued, if I can't deduce a principle that fits this case out of the corpus of the Constitution I can't judge on it, I throw the case out, and I'm not going to pass judgment if it's not covered by the Constitution, it's not part of this court. What infuriated them was that he criticized the reasoning underlying *Roe v Wade* of 1973, and they were sure that he would overturn that decision, that Supreme Court decision was based on what is called sociological law, it

had nothing to do with law or medicine, it was just what people thought would help certain people in society. It wasn't based on anything the Constitution said.

So Bork was what they call a strict interpreter of the Constitution. The other guys were loose interpreters of the Constitution. They knew very well if you let Bork get into the courts, that's what he's going to do. What's he going to do? He's going to start shredding the crappy decisions that had been built up on the basis of arbitrary, sociological law. He's going to systematically dismantle the liberal agenda. And if that happens we've got our whole house we've built on the basis of sociological law and what happens to the whole house we've built up? It topples, it's revolutionary. That's why 45 minutes after the nomination Ted Kennedy was on the Senate floor going at his throat. They were smart men. Biden and Kennedy aren't stupid, they realized the implications of Bork. Bork was a profound threat, a *profound threat* to this because he stood for a correction to the abuses of the Constitution.

At this point the Pharisees are doing the same thing. Here they are, they are to be society's experts, and these are the Jewish experts of what the Torah really meant. And when they argue with Jesus, verse 11, who are they arguing with? Keep that in mind. You've got to visualize this confrontation, because we're going to get to a verse and to get the impact of that verse you've got to see what's happened, you've got to see the gall here. Here these guys with their PhD's in Law, their degrees in theology, they were experts on the Torah, they were experts on the Mishnah, they knew the Talmud, they know the text of the OT, most of these guys memorized the OT—put us to shame.

Verse 11, they "began to argue with Him, seeking from Him a sign from heaven, to test Him." <sup>12</sup>"Sighing deeply in His spirit," Jesus is pretty disgusted at this point, what are these creeps thinking now, "Why does this generation seek for a sign? Truly I say to you, no sign shall be given to this generation." This is one of those passages of the NT where you can see something about Jesus' personality. There's something else we'll note when we get into His life. It's been observed by scholars who have had enough sense to really pay attention to the kind of personality the Lord Jesus Christ had. For all the pictures you get of the meek and mild person, He was

extremely self-confident, to the point that if He wasn't who He claimed to be, He is one of the most arrogant people who has ever walked this planet. He had the audacity to say because I said it, it's true. Who of us would dare claim that we are the self-authenticating authority? But Jesus argued that He was self-authenticating, that because I say it, it is true.

So then He leaves them, and "Leaving them, He again embarked and went away to the other side. <sup>14</sup>And they had forgotten to take bread, and did not have more than one loaf in the boat with them. <sup>15</sup>And He was giving orders to them, saying, "Watch out! Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." Mark is thinking back on this, because he wasn't there when it was going on, he's probably getting this through Peter. In vv 11-12 the emphasis is on what the Pharisees are doing, a big challenge is going on, Jesus gets in a boat, and in verse 15 He keeps on talking about the argument. But then Mark slips verse 14 in, just to let us know that while this argument is going on, and Jesus is carrying on about the discussion, the guys forgot the food. So now we have juxtaposition, and a very serious theological argument going on with people who forgot the lunch. Watch how the two come together.

Verse 16, "And they began to discuss with one another the fact that they had no bread." Are they listening to the discussion? No, they're worried about who left the lunch behind. So now it becomes an issue in the boat. <sup>17</sup>"And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, 'Why do you [keep] discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet see or understand?' Now here's where Jesus, in the marvelous providence of God, takes a forgotten lunch and He's going to teach them a lesson with it just to show them that they're basically doing the same thing the Pharisees just got through doing. Look how He does it. He says "Why do you discuss the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet see or understand? Do you have a hardened heart?" Look at the verbs in those questions. What do you see, what parts of the body? You discuss, the mouth; you see, the eyes; you understand, the mind; do you have a hardened heart?

Then He quotes the OT text. Look what He's done. The fact that He's talking about seeing and understanding, and hardening of heart, Jesus is already thinking about an OT passage, and then He quotes it here. Who wrote the passage? Even if you didn't have a cross reference, a cheat sheet in the margin, you know that language, it's an OT prophet. What were the OT prophets all hot about when they said this? Here's where we have to start

using what we've learned about the OT so we can appreciate the Lord Jesus Christ and what He's doing here. When the prophets wrote, they were writing in the period of the Disciplinary Truths. What was going on in the kingdom in Israel when it was rotting spiritually? Were those people really interested in learning the word of God? Were the kings sitting there studying the Torah every day? They couldn't even find the Torah, it had been lost. When the word of God came fresh to them through prophets what did they do with it? They tore it to shreds and burned it. That was real stuff that went on in the OT and it was at that point that God said that's it, I've had it with you, I'm lowering the 5<sup>th</sup> degree of discipline, Exile. And when the OT prophets used this language, "having eyes you do not see" what they're saying is that you've rejected God's revelation, you're rebelling against God and consequently you're hearts are darkened, you're spiritually blind and so the word is going to be taught; they're going to hear it. But they can't hear it in the sense of understanding it. The word of God does not return void. It saves and it destroys. And this kind of preaching to people who are all hardened up in sin sets them for destruction and that's what the prophets were doing, they were preaching the word to damn people. And they went into Exile. That's the OT background.

Now come to the NT. What is Jesus now saying? By quoting that OT verse, what does this signal? You're sitting there, you listen to Him say this, you know enough about your OT to know that that's a citation at a point when the nation Israel was about to go under the 5<sup>th</sup> degree of discipline. What is the nation in Jesus' day in danger of if they reject Him? What happened to the Jews in AD70? Exiled. History repeats itself. So here Jesus Christ is operating completely in the OT frame of reference, nothing new here under the sun. This is exactly the same thing.

Verse 18, "Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember," but who's He applying it to in verses 18-19. Is He applying it to the Pharisees or is He applying it to the guys that forgot the lunch? He's applying it to the disciples who forgot the lunch. This is a warning. He says, don't you remember, v 19, when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many large baskets full of broken pieces you picked up?" They said to him, "Twelve." <sup>20</sup>And when I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of broken pieces did you pick up?" And they said to Him "Seven." By the way, verses 19-20 are put in the text so the

skeptics who say there were two different conflicting accounts of Jesus feeding... well Jesus didn't know there were two conflicting accounts, He did both of them on two separate occasions, but apparently some idiot who lives 2000 years later thinks he knows Jesus' life better than Jesus.

Verse 21, "And He was saying to them, 'Do you not yet understand?'" Notice how He applies the OT text to them. It shows how Jesus was so saturated with the Scriptures; He had such perfect understanding of it, that He could use an event like a forgotten lunch to teach a spiritual lesson. Look at what triggered this discourse in the boat. Some guys who forgot lunch. But look how the Lord could take that simple issue of lunch and relate it to the current situation of the nation Israel.

So He says, verse 21, "Don't you yet understand," don't you guys get it yet? What is He after? The same thing the OT prophets were, you're in a covenant with God and who is your provider in the covenant? Are you going to respond to Him? Don't you get it? This is a harsh rebuke. Verse 22, "...And they brought a blind man to Jesus and implored Him to touch him. <sup>23</sup>Taking the blind man by the hand, He brought him out of the village; and after spitting on his eyes, and laying His hands on him, He asked him, 'Do you see anything?' <sup>24</sup>And he looked up and said, 'I see men, for I am seeing them like trees, walking about.'" Verse 25, "Then again He laid His hands upon his eyes; and he looked intently and was restored, and began to see everything clearly. <sup>26</sup>And He sent him to his home, saying, 'Do not even enter the village.'"

Why do you suppose that event happened, in the providence of God, right after that other discussion that went on? What is it a picture of? What was the accusation in the boat? Can you guys not see? So he goes out and literally heals a literally blind person, these guys should... you know recognize that this guy gives sight. If they had caught the point they ought to have turned to the Lord and said open my eyes, can You open my spiritual eyes and my heart like You just opened this guy's eyes. He did it in stages too. It was a graphic illustration, so now in verses 27-28 he brings it to them. Now He challenges them. "And Jesus went out, along with His disciples, to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way" He picked up this conversation again, "He questioned His disciples, saying, 'Who do people say that I am?'"

And they give various opinions. You can have all the opinions, He was John, He was Elijah, one of the prophets.

Verse 29, "...But who do you say that I am?" Can you imagine this conversation? What is Jesus getting at, why does He come to this point? Because they've got to understand rightly who Jesus is or they can't be His disciples. It does no good to say I'm going to go out and love the world, I'm going to do this, I'm going to do that, I'm going to obey the Lord, blah, blah blah. Jesus doesn't start with all that. He says do you see who I am? Get a picture of who I am, and *then* we'll discuss all that other stuff. But you don't start with the other stuff; you start with Who is Jesus Christ? Think of the situation from the feeding of the 5,000 down to the lost lunch over to the Pharisees; what was the issue behind all that? If these guys had realized who Jesus was and now they're out of food, they're out on the water, they've got nothing to eat, but this is the guy who fed 5,000, He fed 4,000, this is easy, He can instantly set a table right here in the boat.

We've got the inventor of the fast-food market sitting in the boat with us. It was a failure to see and appreciate Who was with them. That's our problem, because we forget. Notice the word "remember," in v 18? Don't you remember? Now we see it, every once in a while we get in church and we see it, we hear it, and it clicks with us for two or three seconds, then we forget, and we fall back into the perception problem. That's one of the things we want to look at in the life of Christ. We want to see how insidious our flesh is, forgetting who Jesus Christ is. We've got to be reminded, and reminded, and reminded, and reminded. Do you know what does the reminding? The study of the word of God, not sweet stories, not all the hoopla, not programs on how to grow churches, it's the word of God. That's where you learn who Jesus is. It doesn't promise a lot of people will come; the church doesn't necessarily grow numerically when the word of God is taught. How many did Jesus wind up having? How many enthusiastic congregations were at the foot of the cross? Did you count how many people were there? A great testimony to His church growth movement wasn't it. The point is that the issue isn't church growth; the issue is who is Jesus Christ. All the other issues are peripheral to that. Peter goes on in verse 29 to answer "You are the Christ." So Peter's got it. But what does the test prove? Does it prove who Jesus is? No, it proves who Peter is. Peter is one of Jesus' disciples. Peter was responding positively to Jesus' person. So Peter scored a 100 on that test. A few verses later he scores a 0; that's our flesh, that's how fast we can go from

being so perfectly in line with the word of God to being so totally opposite the word of God.

Turn to John 3, now we want to get into the implications of this. What we're doing is just introducing an approach that we want to use on those four events: His birth, His life, His death and His resurrection. But I want to get you aimed right. In John 3, the famous Nicodemus discourse. If you look at verse 7, that phrase when Jesus turned to Nicodemus and he says, "Don't marvel that I said to you that you must be born again," that's a rebuke, that is a very strong criticism Jesus is leveling at Nicodemus. What is wrong with you Nicodemus, you should know this. Why are you so amazed at what I'm saying, you should understand this, this is the word of God I'm talking about here. Verse 8, "The wind blows where it wishes," etc. and what Jesus is trying to say is it's the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit that does these things. Nicodemus is kind of wandering around.

The conclusion is in verse 16, which we all know, but look what happens in verse 17, 18 and 19 that follow on to that verse. <sup>16</sup>"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup>"For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world," at His first coming, "but that the world might be saved through Him. <sup>18</sup>"He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already," past tense, "because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." How can that be? Why is a person judged already because they have not received Christ? <sup>19</sup>"This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup>"For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. <sup>21</sup>"But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."

The argument John uses (he does it in his first epistle and he does it several other places) is that if a light bulb turns on in a room, and you're still groping around, and I'm still groping around, is the problem with the light bulb or is the problem with the eyeballs of the people? The problem is with the eyeballs of the people still groping around. The problem isn't the light bulb. This is what we're trying to emphasize with the Life of Christ. The problem isn't that God's revelation isn't clear enough. If God only wrote a Bible today, you

know, He's supposed to write a new Bible every century to satisfy the contemporaries. The fact of the matter is that the revelation is absolutely clear. What people do with the revelation shows nothing about the revelation, it shows something about the people looking at the revelation.

Men are condemned, John says, by their response to Jesus, because Jesus is the light of the world. If you can't see that, the problem isn't with the light of the world, the problem is with you. This is 180 degrees opposite, you often hear this argument non-Christians make, and maybe people in your family have made it toward you if you're a believer: well, poor Bill, he's just a weak person, you know, weak people need a crutch so they believe in Jesus. You've all heard that kind of thing. Let's turn that around 180 and watch what it sounds like if we reverse it. Well, poor Joe, he doesn't believe in the Lord Jesus Christ because he's a sinner fleeing from the wrath of God and he wants to keep doing his evil but he wants to feel safe doing it. Of course you don't want to believe in Christ, He doesn't give you that sense of safety, he puts the fear of God into you and you don't want to be fearful, so you're manufacturing an imaginary world in which you can be safe, a playground safe for sinners. Two can play the psychology game.

And Jesus' point is that those who do not believe reveal who they really are, not who Jesus is. They give a commentary on themselves, not on Christ. That's the emphasis in the Gospels; we're going to try to follow that motif. Man's response to Christ is a commentary on man. We do not infer because 5.5 billion people disbelieve that somehow God did a sorry job revealing Himself. Rather, what we conclude when 5.5 billion people disbelieve is that 5.5 billion people have seriously shut their eyes to Jesus Christ. That's what we conclude.

Here's an example that I warned you about two years ago when we started this class. Be careful that you don't buy into a question. How many times did you beat your wife last week kind of thing. You can't answer it any other way than to condemn yourself because you bought into the question. We warned you about the world view and presuppositions. Now let's watch what happens here. We have a fact. The fact is that people love evil. Then people come along and say, God's existence just isn't clear to me. And you Christians have got to come up with some special arguments to prove to me God really exists. You've got to give me some intellectual content here; it's not enough to show

me the Scriptures. Whereas, if we think Biblically we'll say, well, of course you don't believe, you're a sinner, you're fleeing from the wrath of Him who is on the throne, you have a deep profound motive in your heart to create an imaginary world safe for sin. So of course you're going to act as if you don't know. So we have one event, two different interpretations of the event. Watch this, because this is what's going on in the classroom, this is what's going on with the media, it's a special spin put on the facts, its twisted facts. Why do they do that? Because they don't like to be confronted by the King. So they re-interpret the King. That's the game that's being played and that's the game we want to learn to discern throughout the life of Christ.

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