

# Pisteuon - He Who Believes

*John Chapter 3*

*Puritan Reformed Church - Pastor David Reece*

*Lord's Day November 5th, Anno Domini 2023*

**Scripture Reading - Genesis 9**

**Acceptable Sacrifice of Praise - Ps 25**

- 1) **Erecting & Entering the Tabernacle** - God with us, The Logos Tabernacled Among Men & Faith in Christ as the Doorway of Entry into the Tabernacle **(1:1-28)**
  - a) Prologue - 1:1-18
  - b) Prelude to Jesus' public ministry (1:19-51)
    - i) The Testimony of John the Baptist Pointing to Jesus (1:19-28)
- 2) **The Brazen Altar for Sacrifices** (Exodus 27:1-8) - Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world - Christ our Substitute **(1:29-51)**
  - i) John the Baptist's public witness concerning Jesus (1:29-34)
  - ii) Jesus gains his first disciples (1:35-42)
  - iii) Jesus gains two more disciples, Philip and Nathanael (1:43-51)
- 3) **The Brazen Laver of Water** - Cleansing & Spiritual Renewal by Christ **(John 2-3)**
  - a) **Sign 1:** Turning Water in ceremonial cleansing pots into Wine (John 2:1-11)
    - i) Jesus clears the temple (2:12-17)
    - ii) Jesus replaces the temple (2:18-22)
    - iii) Inadequate faith (2:23-25)
    - iv) Jesus and Nicodemus (3:1-21)
    - v) John the Baptist's continuing witness concerning Jesus (3:22-36)

**Purpose Statement - John 20:30-31** - "30 And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name."

## TEXT OF JOHN

### III. The Brazen Laver of Water - Cleansing & Spiritual Renewal by Christ (John 2-3)

#### a) Sign 1: Turning Water in ceremonial cleansing pots into Wine (John 2:1-11)

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#### iv) Jesus and Nicodemus (3:1-21)

**14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up** [put on display], **15 that** [hina - in order that] **whoever believes** [pas ho pisteuon] **in Him should not perish but have eternal** [everlasting - aionion] **life. 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes** [pas ho pisteuon] **in Him should not perish but have everlasting** [aionion] **life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved** [would be saved].

- 1) We have already spoken of the Serpent.
- 2) All who believe in Christ shall not perish.
- 3) All who believe in Christ shall have everlasting life.
- 4) Because God so loved the world (in contrast to just the one Jewish nation) that God gave His only begotten Son.
  - a) The begottenness of the Son
    - i) Virgin Birth?
    - ii) Resurrection?
    - iii) Eternal Begottenness of the Son as the Second Person of the Trinity (the economic trinity, the covenantal unity)
- 5) He gave His only begotten Son in order that all of the nations, the world, not just ethnic Israel, would be saved.
  - a) Love and Hate are mutually exclusive.
    - i) Ecclesiastes 3:8 - A time to love, And a time to hate; A time of war, And a time of peace.
    - ii) Amos 5:15 - Hate evil, love good; Establish justice in the gate. It may be that the Lord God of hosts Will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.
    - iii) Luke 16:13 - No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.
    - iv) Ps 47:5, 97:10; Prov 1:22, 8:26, 9:8, 12:1, 13:24

b) God does not love every individual.

i) Ro 9:13 - As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated."

ii) Ro 9:14-24 - 14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! 15 For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion." 16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. 17 For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth." 18 Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

19 You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?" 20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?" 21 Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

22 What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, 24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

iii) Psalm 5:5 - The boastful shall not stand in Your sight; You hate all workers of iniquity.

iv) Psalm 11:5 - The Lord tests the righteous, But the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates.

c) Love (favor) is the desire for the good (wellbeing) of the object.

i) Luke 6:27-28 - But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.

ii) Proverbs 19:8 - He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; He who keeps understanding will find good.

- d) God does all He desires. If He wants something He gets it.
  - i) Ps 115:3 - But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases.
  - ii) Ps 135:6 - Whatever the Lord pleases He does, In heaven and in earth, In the seas and in all deep places.
  - iii) Job 23:13 - But He is unique, and who can make Him change? And whatever His soul desires, that He does.
- 6) God loves all of the Elect. Jesus accomplishes redemption so that all the elect will be saved.
  - a) Limited Atonement
- 7) Just above we were taught that belief comes by the work of the Spirit.
  - a) Irresistible Grace
- 8) V. 17 - God did not send His Son to condemn the world (condemnation was already the baseline - the earthly things that need to be known are clear from the law that man is in a state of original sin (Guilt, Corruption of Nature, Total Depravity, Constant Transgression) and the need for the gift of Spiritual life.
- 9) Rather - God the Son was sent in order to save the world

**18 “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21 But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”**

- 10) Condemnation is the current condition - believers are not condemned - they have been pardoned
- 11) Unbelievers remain in a condition of condemnation rather than pardon.
- 12) Key Categories
  - a) The Elect - Those whom God has predestined to be vessels of mercy to display his graciousness without failing to be just.
    - i) Already dead - God loves them
      - (1) Regenerate & Glorified awaiting the resurrection.
    - ii) Alive today - God loves them
      - (1) Some are already Regenerate and thus believing right now.
      - (2) Some are not yet Regenerate and are thus not believing right now.
    - iii) Not yet conceived - God Loves them

- (1) Not conscious, not yet minds, exist only as plans in the mind of God. they have legal connection and metaphysical connection to those already dead and those now alive.
- b) The Reprobate - Those whom God has predestined to be vessels of wrath to display His just hatred of evil.
  - i) Already dead - God hates them
    - (1) Unregenerate. In torment.
  - ii) Alive today - God hates them
    - (1) Unregenerate. Walking the earth.
  - iii) Not yet conceived - God hates them
    - (1) Not conscious, not yet minds, exist only as plans in the mind of God. They have legal connection and metaphysical connection to those already dead and those now alive.
- 13) Justification is in time. It is not eternal. Justification is not Election. Do not collapse the distinction.
- 14) V. 19 - this is the condemnation - the guilty finding is on the basis of the root sin of not believing and thus not valuing (loving) the light. The love of darkness is the hatred of the light. The love of the light is the hatred of the darkness.
  - a) The basis - Adam's sin, corrupt nature, particular sins
- 15) Antithesis - The light hates the darkness and the darkness hates the light.
- 16) The light is hated because it marks the distinction of things known. Evil deeds are clearly seen because of the light. You can expect people to hate the light. You can also expect God to overcome them with the light.
  - a) God will push away the haters of the light. (forced retreat of the darkness)
  - b) God will draw those whom he causes to be converted to rally to the light. (concentration)
- 17) V. 20 - without conversion this is what will always happen - Gen 3
  - a) Self Justification - fight with falsehood to disfigure what the light shows
  - b) Coverup - fight with hiding things that the light would expose - hypocrisy
  - c) Blame Shift - fight with running from responsibility - Circumstances, Man, God
- 18) V. 21 - Jesus, the righteous angels, Adam before the Fall, Converted men because of the righteousness of Christ and the progressive work of sanctification.

Q70: What is justification?

A70: Justification is an act of God's free grace unto sinners, in which he pardoneth all their sins, accepteth and accounteth their persons righteous in his sight; not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but only for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ, by God imputed to them, and received by faith alone.

Q71: How is justification an act of God's free grace?

A71: Although Christ, by his obedience and death, did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God's justice in the behalf of them that are justified; yet inasmuch as God accepteth the satisfaction from a surety, which he might have demanded of them, and did provide this surety, his own only Son, imputing his righteousness to them, and requiring nothing of them for their justification but faith, which also is his gift, their justification is to them of free grace.

**Formal Cause** of Justification - the form or plan or blueprint or category that defines a thing - - the formal cause by which Justification is brought to man.

SCRIPTURE ALONE

**Effectual Cause** of Justification - the powerful thing that brings the justification effectually.

GRACE ALONE

**Instrumental Cause** of Justification - the connector, the tool, the second cause, the contract acceptance method. An instrumental cause is a "second cause", a cause that is in a chain of causation wherein one cause in the chain is subordinated to another, and in this case it is the legally binding cause.

FAITH ALONE

The Meritorious Cause - the legal basis, the grounds, the reason the judgment is just.

CHRIST ALONE

The Ultimate Cause - the goal, the reason for which the plan is carried out, the last thing to be accomplished (the ultimate thing).

GOD'S GLORY ALONE

Q72: What is justifying faith?

A72: Justifying faith is a saving grace, wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and word of God, whereby he, being convinced of his sin and misery, and of the disability in himself and all other creatures to recover him out of his lost condition, not only assenteth to the truth of **the promise of the gospel**, but receiveth and resteth upon Christ and his righteousness, **therein held forth**, for pardon of sin, and for the accepting and accounting of his person righteous in the sight of God for salvation.

At least 12 propositions (really more as we will see). List them.

1 - sin - OS, CoN, AT

2 - misery - Unhappiness causes by unbelief and sin

3 - disability of self

4 - disability of creatures

5 - the promise of the Gospel is true

6 - receive Christ - believe what the Scriptures teach about Christ

7 - rest upon Christ - believe there is nothing else that you need to do because Christ did it all

8 - receive the righteousness of Christ - believe that what the Scriptures teach about Christ's righteousness imputed to the elect is true and applies to you

9 - rest upon the righteousness of Christ - believe there is nothing more to do

10 - for pardon

11 - for the accepting of his person as righteous by God

12 - for the accounting of his person as righteous by God

Q73: How doth faith justify a sinner in the sight of God?

A73: Faith justifies a sinner in the sight of God, not because of those other graces which do always accompany it, or of good works that are the fruits of it, nor as if the grace of faith, or any act thereof, were imputed to him for his justification; but **only as it is an instrument by which he receiveth and applies Christ and his righteousness.**

Not the Basis of justification:

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What is imputed?

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What is not imputed?

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What cause of Justification is Faith?

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How is redemption accomplished?

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How is redemption applied?

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## v) John the Baptist's continuing witness concerning Jesus (3:22–36)

**22 After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He remained with them and baptized. 23 Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized. 24 For John had not yet been thrown into prison.**

- 1) Two places where ministry was simultaneously occurring
- 2) Last OT Prophet before Christ
- 3) Christ as the bridge between Ot & NT
- 4) Much water proves credo submersion baptism?

**25 Then there arose a dispute between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purification. 26 And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified—behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him!"**

- 5) Dispute about purification

**27 John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven. 28 You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent before Him.' 29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice.**

- 6) Illumination & Gifting
- 7) V. 29 - 10th commandment

**Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. 30 He must increase, but I must decrease. 31 He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth.**

- 8) Joy
- 9) Increase / decrease
- 10) 3:13 No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.
- 11) Speaking of earthly things vs heavenly things

**He who comes from heaven is above all. 32 And what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. 33 He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true. 34 For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure. 35 The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. 36 He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”**

12) Authority of Christ

13) Testimony about the one giving testimony

14) 2nd/3rd witness saying that Jesus is a prophet - John the Baptizer, Nicodemus, & John the Apostle

15) God’s messenger, God’s Words, God’s liberality of the Spirit to Christ (without measure)

16) Love for and giving all things

17) V. 36 - Justification By Faith Alone & Unconditional Election & Reprobation