

Giving Glory to God in Christ **John 3:22-30**

Our text tonight is John chapter 3, verses 31 to 36. John chapter 3, from verse 31 through to the end of the chapter. Before the reading we'll pray. Please join me in prayer.

Our Father in heaven, we pray that you would now bless the reading of your word to us. We pray that we would be given ears that hear, eyes that see, and hearts that understand and obey. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

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

If someone was ever to ask you how is it that they are to think of Jesus, or what is it that they are to believe about Jesus, well, tonight's passage would be a good place to take them. There's not really anywhere to hide with a passage like we have before us tonight. It doesn't leave any options to you. Either you accept what the Scripture says about Jesus, you accept what is said here about the Son of God, or you don't.

This passage reduces a person to one of two situations, or one of two places. Either they are obedient to God's revelation, or they are disobedient. It just doesn't leave you any other options. Either you accept what is said, or you don't. You know, the old-fashioned fluff about Jesus being a great teacher, a wonderful moralist, the one who shows us a better way—it's just not enough, in the light of what's said to us in John chapter 3, verse 31 to 36. In some ways, this is a summary statement. It is summarizing what we have heard for the first three chapters.

Think, for example, here in verse 31: "He who comes from above is above all." And then you cast your mind to John chapter 1 and verse 1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." And then to John chapter 1, verse 18: "No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known."

That's pointing you back to verse 1. John set up kind of a loop of revelation there, saying, "You want to know who was the God at the Father's side? Go back to verse 1: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God.'" He's the God who was at the Father's side, and the Word was God. So it kind of comes to us as a summary statement of all that we've heard.

Look for example at the last verse of our passage, verse 36 of John chapter 3. "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him." And those who've been here as we've worked our way through John chapter 3, what we saw, or what I hope we saw was that mankind apart from God is in a state of perishing. Mankind apart from God is actually under the judgment of God.

John the apostle, the author of our gospel, does not give us the picture of people being saved from a state of neutrality. John's picture of salvation is that people are saved from the state of damnation. People are saved from being under a condition already under the judgment and the wrath of God. People are saved from being already under God's righteous anger. In John's gospel, people are being saved from God. People are being saved by God from God. God is saving people from His ultimate and righteous—I'll use a theological term—eschatological judgment. Eschatological—it basically means the things to come.

There is a judgment that is happening right now. All the world is under the judgment of God. Everyone is born a sinner, and being born in sin, you are under the judgment of God. You don't even get the right to say "That's not fair." It's not allowed. You're born of sinners, therefore, you can be nothing more than the sinners who brought you into this world. It goes back to the very first sinner and his wife, Adam and Eve. They were sinners. They gave birth to sinners. They were our representatives. And so you can almost argue that you were given sin as a gift. You got sin as a gift. It's a poisonous gift, the gift of death, that came through the first Adam.

But God does set something in contrast to that, the gift of life—the gift of life through Jesus Christ, the gift of righteousness in Christ. God imputes to people whatever it is that their covenant or federal head has gained for them. The covenant or federal head of humanity in the flesh is Adam, that first created man, that first one who was set in the Garden and given dominion over creation. He sinned. And so God imputes his sin to all of his offspring.

But there was another one who came, called the second Adam, or the last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, and He is righteous. He sinned not at all. He was the Son of God. He overcame the world, He overcame Satan, He overcame temptation, He overcame wickedness. He was righteous and He defeated wickedness. Being righteous and defeating wickedness, He defeated death. And yet He was a man. He was a true man, born of Mary.

Always remember: Jesus, truly man, truly divine. It's important that He be truly man, because He has to become our federal head. He has to become our new covenant father, so to speak. Just as Adam the first was a covenant head, a covenant father, well, the Lord Jesus Christ is called the last Adam, and He is now our covenant head. And as covenant head, the blessings which are His are now passed on to His posterity, His family. And we're His family.

In Scripture He's called our older brother, the first-born of many brothers. He's called, in Isaiah chapter 6, Everlasting Father, or Eternal Father. Don't confuse that one with Father, Son, Holy Spirit—it's not a Trinitarian term. He's called Father because He represents us as our father in covenantal negotiations. He's our everlasting Father, and He gets to allot to His people an inheritance. We're called the firstborn. Scripture says we're the firstborn, or the first fruits. That means we get a good inheritance. But the natural state of humanity, apart from the intervention of God, is to be under the judgment of God. It's as simple as that.

As we work our way through the text, what this text is telling us to do is look to Jesus, look to Jesus, look to Jesus. He is glorious, He is holy, He is good, He is all that you need. He is the answer to all our wants and desires and longings. He alone is the way to God. This passage is actually one of the most demanding passages in terms of the exclusivity of salvation. You can't be saved any other way, but in, through, and by Jesus Christ.

So let's work our way through it, starting at verse 31. "He who comes from above is above all. He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven is above all."

Now there's a bit of a to-and-fro kind of debate here in terms of the commentators and in terms of theological discussions. Some wonder, Has John the Baptist finished speaking? Chapter 3, verse 30: "He must increase, but I must decrease." Are these the last words of John the Baptist? Or is this John the Baptist continuing to speak? Is this actually an extended teaching from John the Baptist? Others wonder, Is this last bit from verses 31 to 36 of chapter 3, is this the Apostle John's commentary on all that has been taught so far?

Personally, I tend to think that this is John the Baptist still teaching—the final teaching of John the Baptist—speaking of the contrast between himself and Jesus. It makes sense if you think about it. "He who comes from above is above all." He's speaking of Jesus.

Remember last week, we looked at the fact that John's ministry was in decline. Why? Because the ministry of Jesus was growing. The ministry of Jesus is now becoming the ministry upon which the spotlight falls. So John was, if you like, surrendering his status. He was surrendering all that he was for the sake of the ministry of Christ.

So it makes sense to think that John the Baptist is still speaking of that same subject. "He who comes from above is above all." He's pointing to Jesus. "He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way." He's speaking of himself. "He who comes from heaven is above all." So John is saying, "Look, I was the forerunner. I was the one who was to announce that the Saviour has come, and I have announced it. I'm of the earth. I have spoken to you in an earthly way, and I've pointed to Jesus. Jesus is the one from heaven. He is the one who is above all. You must go and follow Christ."

Let's keep reading, verse 32: "He bears witness to what he has seen and heard, yet no one receives his testimony." Now there I want you to understand something. John is saying, "There's a difference between me and Jesus." He's saying, "There's a difference between myself and Jesus. When Jesus speaks, Jesus is speaking of first-hand knowledge that He has as the Son of God. He has come from heaven. When Jesus speaks to us of heavenly things, He's speaking of things which He knows. But when I, John the Baptist, speak, I am speaking by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit."

He's not saying he's not speaking the truth, but what he's pointing to is the fact that those things which we are hearing from Jesus, we are hearing first-hand from God. It's not secondary. This is eye-witness testimony. When Jesus speaks of heavenly things, Jesus is speaking of the things of which He is intimately familiar.

And so you get John really building up the Lord Jesus Christ. You've got to think to yourself, If the words that come from Jesus are the very words from heaven, the very words of heaven, the very words themselves of God, what situation does that put us in as people? What situation does that put us in as mere human beings? Either you hear the words of Jesus with obedience and faith, in which case you are at peace with God; or, if you don't, you are a rebel.

You see, John is setting Jesus up as the great litmus test. Jesus is the great test. He's the one who tests the character and the quality of humanity. The very words that Jesus speaks are words that divide. Remember back in the book of Genesis, Genesis chapter 1, when God's creating, He did a lot of dividing. He divided the heavens from the earth; He divided the waters from the land; He divided the light from the darkness. Well now that dividing continues, but the division is done by the very Word of God spoken by Jesus.

Jesus speaks God's words, and how do you know a person is born of God? How do you know a person is truly a worshiper of God? How do they receive the words that come from Jesus? How do they receive those words? Do they receive them with reverence and obedience and godly fear and love? Do they see the words of Jesus as being something precious, something wonderful?

I know people who love books—I love books myself—people who love books, and they love poetry. And you hear them recite poetry, and it's sort of dripping from their lips. You can hear the love that they have for the literature that they're reading. How do they respond to the words of Jesus? How do you respond to the words of Jesus? How do I respond to the words of Jesus? They're more precious than the greatest human poetry. They're the very words of God. They're coming from above.

Verse 33: "Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true." Whoever receives His testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true. So there's a universal statement, or an outright statement of fact. Those who receive their testimony set their seal to this, that God is true. What does it mean to set your seal? Well, in ancient time, if there was a document, let's say a document that needed to be signed by a counsel to make it law, or to enact it, everyone would put their wax seal on that document, that they attest to the truth of the document, that they attest to the suitability of the document. So John is saying, Those who receive the words of Jesus, those people are setting a seal to the truth that comes from God, or they're setting a seal to the truth that God is true, even.

Where does that leave someone, then, who does not receive the words of Jesus? What is someone who does not receive the words of Jesus saying about God? They're calling God a liar. They're calling Jesus a liar. They're in rebellion. You see, the people who don't love God, hate God. That's the way John sees it. It's black and white. It's that simple. Either they love God, they say that God is true, and His words are true, or they don't. He doesn't put anyone in the middle. It's all really very simple, as far as John is concerned. Either someone is born from above, they hear the word with faith, or they're not. No alternates. Someone is either called of God, or they are not. They set their seal to this, that God is true.

Here's the thing. If the words of Jesus are the very words of God, and if receiving the words of Jesus is the way that you set your seal to the fact that God is true, can there then be any other way to God? Can there then be other way to testify to the goodness of God? Can there be any other way to come to God? We already know the answer. The answer's, "No." The answer's, "No, of course not." If this is true, then Jesus is at the center of all things, and Jesus is the single most important person that can be known. And your attitude to Jesus, not just your mental attitude but your attitude towards Jesus in terms of your relationship with Jesus, is the defining feature of your life, whether you know it or not. There's an old saying, Everyone's got a relationship with Jesus, it's just that some don't have a good relationship. I like that. It's true.

All of humanity has a relationship with God through Christ, whether they know it or not. The ones who don't know it, they are in a bad relationship with God. Everybody is relating to God every day of their life. Why? Because God is speaking. God has spoken, God continues to speak, God is speaking. Everywhere they look, there's preaching. As I've said to you before, that's one of the reasons that atheists are angry—because all of creation keeps preaching to them, “Made by God.” “I made this,” says God. “And God made me,” says creation. And they don't like to hear preaching. They don't want to hear the truth. They want to be able to pretend that they can sin as they please without any consequence.

Let's keep reading. We're in verse 34: “For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure.” Now this is John speaking of Jesus, the one whom God has sent. “For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure.” Once again, it all comes down to your relationship with God, through the words of God—through the Word of God. In this case, it's “words”—He whom God has sent utters the words of God, for He gives the Spirit without measure.

Who's been given the Spirit without measure? The Lord Jesus Christ. There's never been a more Spirit-filled man that walked the earth. He's the one upon whom the Spirit descended as a dove. He's the one upon whom the Spirit rested and remained, according to John the Baptist's testimony. Everything that Jesus did, He did as a man by faith through the power of the Holy Spirit, He being the Son of God, He being the Righteous One. He has received the Spirit without measure. Notice the passage is Trinitarian. The Father loves the Son and has sent forth the Son. The Father has given the Spirit without measure. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, working together for the redemption of the people of God.

My friends, if people are not Trinitarian, if they do not believe in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, they're not Christian. It doesn't matter how good or how nice or how religious they are, how often they supposedly say their prayers. They're not Christian if they are not Trinitarian. We believe in one God who subsists as three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Those three persons are co-equal, co-eternal, co-divine.

What's the difference between the Father and the Son? One's the Father, one's the Son. That's the difference. What's the difference between the Spirit, the Father, and the Son? Well, the Spirit is not the Father, and the Spirit is not the Son. But the Spirit is God, fully God, wholly God, truly God, as is the Son, as is the Father.

Everything you say about the Father, except for the fact that the Father is the Father, you can say of the Son and you can say of the Spirit. Everything. God—the one and only living God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, revealing Himself to us through the words of Scripture, through the words of Jesus.

So our response to those words become so incredibly important. Do we submit? That's the question. Do we submit? We'll see in a moment that John sets up a synonymous relationship between two words—the word “believe” and the word “obey.” To believe is to obey. Those who do not obey the words do not believe the words. It's that simple. You can't be a believer without being one who obeys the words of God. It's not possible.

“He gives the Spirit without measure.” Verse 35: “The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand.” We often pray to Jesus, don’t we? We praise Jesus in our songs. We pray to Jesus. We’re not wrong in that. When Jesus taught us to pray, “Our Father, who art in heaven,” I don’t think He was setting down the one and the only possible formula of Christian prayer, for Jesus Himself is God in heaven. Jesus Himself is God our Saviour. Jesus Himself shares in all the eternal attributes of the Godhead.

So all things have been given into the hand of the Son. All things. There’s nothing that has not been given into His hand. All people have been given over to the Lord Jesus Christ—all, believer and unbeliever alike. All are under His authority. Turn very quickly for a moment to John chapter 17, just looking at the first two verses. This is often called the High Priestly prayer of Jesus:

“¹ When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, ² since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.’”

Notice this—Jesus has been given authority over all flesh. In the context of what’s being said, that means all of humanity. “You have given him authority over all of humanity.” But notice something. He gives eternal life only to those whom God has given Him, for the purpose of eternal life. “You’ve given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.” It’s not the same two groups of people. The “all” who receive eternal life are drawn from the “all” who are the flesh who have been given to Jesus. He’s drawn a smaller group from out of a larger group. He’s giving eternal life to all whom the Father has given Him. “³ And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” We’ll stop, otherwise I’ll end up preaching from John chapter 17, and we’re still in John chapter 3 tonight.

The Word of God is the dividing line of all humanity. You want to know, Is a person truly in a saving relationship with God through Christ? Ask the question, How do they relate to the Word of God? Do they submit? Do they obey? Do they reverence the Word of God? Are they afraid to misuse the Word of God, to twist and to wrest the Word of God? Or do they truly love God? If they love God, they must love His word. If all things have been given into the hand of the Son, how else do you get to God but through the hand of the Son? As I said, this passage really puts the spotlight on the exclusivity of the claims of the Lord Jesus Christ. He’s not passing on second-hand testimony. When Jesus speaks, God speaks. The words of Jesus are the very words of God.

Verse 36: “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.” There’s that synonymous statement—“Whoever *believes* in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not *obey* the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.” Notice the relationship between the words “believes” and the “obey.” If you believe, you do obey; if you do not obey, you don’t believe.

We’re saved by faith. We’re saved by faith, but that faith in itself is obedience empowered by God. That faith in itself is a gift of God, enabling a man, a woman, a boy, or a girl to be obedient through faith, to practice the obedience that is faith. “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.”

Jesus, as I have said, is the litmus test. He's the measuring stick. He's the plumb line. What's your relationship to God? Well, what's your relationship to Jesus? What's your relationship to the words of Jesus? Do you believe? Do you obey? Do you reverence? Do you worship? That's the question. Do you love God in Christ? There's no other. There is no other.

Think of it. If Jesus is who He says He is, what would be, then, the unforgivable sin? To refuse to accept the testimony of Jesus. To refuse to accept the words of Jesus. The Holy Spirit witnesses to the words of Jesus. "When He comes, He shall convict the world of sin," said Jesus. He witnesses to the testimony of Jesus.

The unforgivable sin must be to refuse to submit to the claims of Jesus Christ. He's the King. He's the Lord of lords. We can say He is God the eternal Son of God. He is our salvation, our redemption, as Paul says, righteousness, wisdom. He is all these things to us, from God, because He reveals to us God. Do you want to know God? Get to know Jesus. There is no other way.

How can there be any other way if God has sent forth His Son? How can there be any other way to God, other than the way that God has opened up through His Son? It's nonsense to even think of the possibility. It's nonsense to suggest that all the religions of the world are the same, just giving the same basic message with a few different details.

Scripture says that Jesus is the Son of God—eternally pre-existent, truly divine, truly human. It says that when Jesus speaks to us of God, He's speaking from first-hand knowledge and experience, not second-hand stuff, not vain imaginations, but the very words of God, coming to us straight from heaven. And this is the Son of God in whom we have our salvation.

There are a few thoughts that I want us to draw from here. I really want to pick up now, just back at verse 34: "For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure." You see, the amazing thing is that God gave the Holy Spirit to His Son without measure. The Lord Jesus Christ as our covenant head was raised into the kingship over all of humanity, and the Father and the Son are now sending the Holy Spirit out to their church, out to their people.

Now no one's receiving the Holy Spirit without measure today. No one is the Son of God today. Jesus doesn't walk the earth, He's not reincarnated in any human being today. There's another reason we're not receiving the Spirit without measure. We're not the eternal sons of God, and we're not perfectly righteous, and we're not born by a virgin birth. But still, that same Spirit is given to the people of God.

Turn to Ephesians chapter 4, verse 7. "But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift." That's in the context of speaking about the Holy Spirit. Let's start reading from verse 1: "I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,³ eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.⁴ There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism,⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.⁷ But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift."

There are no apostles upon this earth today. There might be people who call themselves apostles, but the apostles were the twelve appointed by Jesus. There are no apostles on this earth today. What there are, are Christians who have been given the gift of the Spirit according to grace, each one given a portion, or a measure, according to the gift of Christ. This is incredibly important. This is the blessing that the church walks in. We walk in fellowship with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit because we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. And as the Holy Spirit is one with God, we are actually in full fellowship with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

You see, the three persons of the Godhead, being one God, if you're indwelt by the Spirit, you can say, in a manner of speaking, that you are indwelt by the Father and the Son, though only the Spirit is here with us now. Only the Holy Spirit indwells us now. The Spirit's God-ness, the Spirit's divinity, brings us into fellowship with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We've been brought into a Trinitarian relationship with God, and that's why I said to you earlier, a person who does not have faith in God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Holy Trinity—that person is not a Christian, regardless of how religious they are, regardless of what or who they say they are.

You must believe in God as God has chosen to reveal Himself. Why? For God is truth. To disbelieve in God as God has chosen to reveal Himself is to call God a liar. You can't call God a liar and be in a good, saving relationship with that God whom you are calling a liar. You must submit to the truth. I'm not saying your understanding must be perfect. Who *could* understand that, in a way? Who could understand that? Who could claim as a human being that they have full understanding of the Trinity, of the Godhead—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and their perfect relationship, their one-ness and their three-ness?

We know these things, for they're revealed to us in Scripture. We submit to these things, each according to our own understanding. But who could say that they know the very depths of God, I mean, God Himself? And yet, we know what we are given to know, and we love our God.

How would we know these things, how would we love our God? Well, just turn back quickly to John chapter 17, and let's pick up a few points along the way. John chapter 17, verse 8. Now this is the High Priestly prayer of Jesus. "For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me."

Notice the basis of our relationship with God, of which Jesus Himself is speaking. "I have given them the words that you gave me," that's those words from heaven that are being spoken of in our passage in John chapter 3. We've been given those words, "and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me."

So this believing with faith, this believing with obedience, is believing the words of Jesus, that He came from God the Father, and the only difference between God the Son and God the Father is that one is the Father and that one is the Son. And that's it.

Then the Son became incarnate and added flesh to divinity. Yet, His divine nature is unchanged. He is still God the Son, throughout all of eternity. And we've received His words, and in receiving those words, we receive Him.

Stay in John chapter 17, and go to verse 17: “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.” Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. What changes a human life? What changes a human heart? What sets a person apart from the world? The Word of God. What changes the nature of a human being? The Word of God, that word from Jesus that we have received with faith sanctifies us, sets us apart, makes us holy. It gives us a status in the presence of God. That status is the status of a righteous servant whom God loves as one of His very own sons.

Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. “As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.” That’s verse 18 of John 17. Now I’ve got two Bibles open in front of me to do this, but hear what Jesus said again in verse 34 of John chapter 3. Just let me read it: “For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure.” John the Baptist speaking of Jesus—sent by God the Father bearing the Spirit without measure.

Now look again at John chapter 17, verses 17 and 18: “Sanctify them in the truth,” Jesus speaking, “your word is truth.”¹⁸ As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.” Sent us forth with what, then? Well, Jesus was sent forth with the power of the Holy Spirit, with the very words of God. And what does a Christian, empowered by the Holy Spirit speak? From Scripture. It’s not the Word of God because we say it. It’s not the Word of God because we imagine it, or we heard a voice in the night, or we claim we’ve had a vision or a dream, or whatever.

When I start the service here, how do I like to start it? What do I like to say to you? “Hear the word of the Lord.” What’s the next thing that comes from my mouth? It’s a passage of what? Scripture. You don’t know where I might start the service from, but we start with the words, “Hear the word of the Lord,” and then we read the Scripture. Why? Because it’s the Word of God. That’s where you want to start—you want to start in the Word of God. Where do you want to stay? In the Word of God. What do you want to be taught? The Word of God. What do you want to sing? The Word of God. What do you want to pray? The Word of God. Why? Because the Word of God is the Spirit-given, Spirit-empowered word.

I can’t do a thing for you. I can’t change a thing about you. I have nothing. I’m a nobody. I’m just a person like you. I can’t do a thing, in and of myself. But my friends, the Word of God has its power because it’s breathed out by the Spirit of God. The Word of God is a sanctifying word, because it’s truth from God. The Word of God is transforming word, because it returns to God having accomplished its purpose. As it says in Isaiah chapter 55, it will not return other than accomplishing its purpose. It will not fail.

So I want us to start in the Word of God and I want us to stay in the Word of God, and I want to finish with the Word of God. I hope that’s what you want, because it’s the Word of God! People who love God want to speak God’s Word, and because they want to speak God’s Word, they want to know God’s Word, they want to bury themselves in the Scripture.

I don’t want to hear some other fool’s supposed revelation, all right? This Bible, you see, you can’t add things in there. It’s not made to be expanded. Why? Because it’s a complete, finished, final revelation. The canon—not the cannon like a gun, with a double-“n”, cannons, you know, that shoot cannon balls. The canon—c-a-n-o-n—the rule. The rule. The righteous rule, or the straight line. This is it, the Word of God.

If God is speaking through people in the world today, we need to get some blank pages. Why? So that we can take it down. If people are speaking Scripture today, we need to be adding to the Bible. The book shouldn't be this thin, it should be this thick. No. It's finished. This is it. This is the complete Word of God. Those who have been sanctified in the truth have acknowledged that the word is truth, and live in obedience to that word, and are sent out into the world with the power of the Holy Spirit—the very presence and power of God!

My friends, we don't have to do anything other than reveal to the world the things that God has revealed to us. You don't have to be some kind of special genius to share God's Word, because God's Word is here, and it's in words, and it's readable, and it's understandable, and it's easy. Speak the words of God. Speak from the Word of God. That's all we need. That's all we need to live on as Christians, that's all we need to preach the gospel, that's all we need to call the elect—the very words of God.

Let's look at another thing in John chapter 17. Verse 20: "I do not ask for these only," that's His disciples, "but also for those who will believe in me through their word." I do not ask only for my disciples but for all who receive the word of the disciples. Why? Because His disciples, being apostles, empowered by the Holy Spirit, are also speaking the Word of God about God. So Jesus prays not only for the disciples, but for all who hear the truth preached and who receive the word with faith and obedience, who receive the word as what it is—the very words of God.

Verse 22 of John chapter 17: "The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one." "The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one." That is stunning. That is stunning, utterly stunning. The glory that was given to Jesus has been given to those who receive the word preached by the disciples that they heard from Jesus. What was the glory that was given to Jesus? That He would speak the words of God—that He would call people to salvation, that He would lead a pleasing life in the sight of God the Father.

My friends, unbelievable as it is, crazy thought that it seems to be, here's the thing: Glory rests upon Christ's body, His church. He has given glory to His church. What can that glory be? Well, it's not looks. Remember, there was nothing about Jesus that would make the world love Him. Indeed, His face was marred beyond recognition. He didn't appear in the world as Superman, you know, He wasn't Mr. Atlas or Mr. Universe. He wasn't built like a heavyweight boxer. He wasn't eight-and-a-half foot tall. I'm not saying He was a feeble little man. If He worked in a carpenter's workshop in that day and age, He had to be able to work.

But this glory that He was given was not of this world, was it? It was not of this world. If you saw Him in the distance—you know, the movies that show this figure walking around, glowing in light, it doesn't say that in Scripture. It doesn't say that Jesus was like that. It doesn't say He glowed in the dark. In the gospel of John, when they sent soldiers to arrest Jesus and they came back empty-handed, and they said, "Where is He," what was the soldiers' reply? "No one has ever spoken the way He speaks." No one has ever spoken the way He speaks. That's what the soldiers saw, those who were sent to arrest Him. They saw and heard a man speaking words from God. The glory that rested upon Jesus, at least a part of that glory, was that He spoke words from heaven. He spoke God's truth. He spoke God's word.

And glory has been given to the church, the same glory that was given to Christ. Therefore, what is it that the church is supposed to do? What is it that's glorious about the church? It's not our looks, and it's not our cars. It's not any of those things, is it? We get to speak the Word of God. We get to speak the Word of God, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Every time the truth is spoken from Scripture, by the power of the Holy Spirit, that word accomplishes God's purpose for it. It's actually not important whether or not we can see with our own eyes what it's doing. It's not important. God tells us that when His word is spoken, things happen. Hearts are changed. He's a heart-changing God, remember. He's either hardening or He's giving life. He's either killing or He's resurrecting, through His Word—the same Word that softens the heart and grants to it life, the same Word that calls someone into salvation. The person who rejects that very same Word is being hardened by that Word. Their heart is being calloused over by that Word, because they're rebelling against the light, and God in judgment pushes them further into rebellion. He is God, the Sovereign God. He is God, to be worshiped and feared.

But we His people, we who are under His Word, we who are in Christ, we worship, we fear, and we love Him, for He is good. We worship Him. There should be no one you can think of that you could possibly love more than God, in Christ. He should be the very foundation of your life—the one you love most deeply, most passionately, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your strength, the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour God, the Son of God, speaking His words.

I come back to simply closing with this point. John leaves no one in neutral ground. People are either in darkness or they're in light. They're either heading for the darkness, or they're coming closer to the light. They're either dead or they're alive. They're either under judgment or they're receiving forgiveness.

Where do you stand? I'm telling you now, you don't stand in no-man's land. Are you in Christ? Have you faith in the Son of God? Do you obey the Son? Don't tell me you believe in Him. I hardly ever ask that question anymore, because so many people will tell you they believe in Jesus, and then they continue to live like devils. Do you obey Him? Notice once again, John chapter 3, verse 36: "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him." Do you obey Him? Do you receive His Word as truth? Are you living in submission to His Word, in submission to Him?

My friends, it really is simple to come into a relationship with the living God. It really is. A child's prayer is enough. Beg forgiveness in Christ. It's as simple as that. Beg forgiveness in Christ and repent of your sins. Faith and repentance. A child can believe. A child can be born again, as can an old man, an old lady, a young man, a young woman. Beg forgiveness in Christ and receive that forgiveness by faith. If you hear this Word, if you acknowledge that this Word is truth, you need to settle with God in Christ, by seeking forgiveness for your sins. Let's close.

Our Father in heaven, we do indeed thank you and praise you that you have revealed yourself to us in the person of Jesus Christ your Son. We thank you and praise you that He has brought to us the words of life, and that we have these words in Scripture by the power of the Holy Spirit. I pray, Father, that you would indeed be doing your work by your Word among us even now, and that people would be being called into your kingdom. I pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.