

9/12/21 - John 8:12-30 - "Blinded by the Light"

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[0 : 00] Let's talk about the Gospel of John. The Gospel of John has been sort of written in a manner that's thematically separated. You have different sections and trunks of the book that you can see that obviously John is, I'm a fan of manual transmissions.

My new car that after I got in a wreck is a manual transmission. I'm loving it. I love shifting gears and John shifts these gears throughout this Gospel.

And while it's an entire Gospel account, he has different sections that are sort of separate from the other. And so these sections have served us with a tactful time to sort of pause before he shifts the gear as we've just gone through a section of seeing Jesus' ministry to then jump into an epistle, like 1 Thessalonians, to see the ministry of Jesus applied.

And so we've been doing this of preaching the whole counsel of God. So if there's any questions of why we've taken the occasion, that God's Word has been at work within our lives.

It has been tremendously. So that's why we're spreading this out. But we will be going through part 3, 4, and 5 all the way leading up to Easter, the Passion Sunday, next spring.

[1 : 21] And so we have to understand the context as we get back into the Gospel of John 2. Peter hit on it last week as well. I'm going to hit on it again because we all need repetition, reminders of what we're doing.

So the context is powerful as we enter into John 8. Because up until this point, John has been exposing the truth about who Jesus is and why he came.

And the only adequate response to the two is having faith in him. Who Jesus is, why he came, responding in faith in him.

And so John does this from way back at the prologue of this book. In John chapter 1 verse 1 leading up to John the Baptist preparing the way.

All the way to Jesus calling his disciples. Then into chapter 2 with the wedding at Cana. Revealing who Jesus is, why he came.

[2 : 25] Leading to this conversation with Nicodemus. Leading to his conversation with the Samaritan woman. Leading to the healing of the official son. Leading to the healing of the invalid at the poolside on the Sabbath.

And then to the grand display of the feeding of the 5,000. Jesus displays continuously through each and every interaction who Jesus is. Why he came.

And to believe in him. And his big I am statement. I am the bread of life. And we get into the feast of tabernacles. I refer to it as the feast of booths.

As it's often used interchangeably. Because this is a significant festival. And we'll talk about that a little bit. Of who Jesus is. And why he came.

He capitalizes on this festival. To illustrate that point. But. We see something. Happen.

[3 : 22] I've titled the sermon today. Blinded by the light. Blinded by the light. Now. I don't think I need copyright privileges.

I'm not stealing this from Manfred Mann's Earth Band. But the synth is pretty killer in that song.

Blinded by the light. I don't know. Maybe you're not a 70s music fan. I am.

And that's a good song. Yeah. I mean that's a good remix. Yeah. Yeah. I like the original. So anyhow.

The title of the sermon is. Blinded by the light. And. We're going to see a shift. Today. I just filled you with a bunch of.

Knowledge of where we were. Let's look at John 8. There is a shift. Remember I was talking about the gear shifts. In the gospel of John. This shift happens in chapter 8.

[4 : 19] And it's a shift of intensity. This is a shift. That begins. At the end of the feast of booths. The feast of tabernacles.

When the Pharisees. Who were once. Cynical observers from a distance. Who were sort of standing from a distance. That were just kind of taking note.

Of everything Jesus was saying. Everything Jesus was doing. But the shift of intensity. Shifts. In a radical resistance. Because for the first time.

In this gospel. The Pharisees square up with Jesus. Face to face. And enter into a. Personal debate with him. Face to face.

For the first time. And this radical intensity. And this tension. Is going to be felt. All the way into chapter 10. Okay. And so.

[5 : 15] Who Jesus is. Why he came. And the only adequate response. To the two. Is having faith. With him. In him. So let's dive into this.

This chapter 8 right now. We're going to feel. And sense the rise of intensity. In this gospel narrative. I'm going to break this up. Into two sections. Today. And we're going to see.

The person of Jesus Christ. And the proclamation. Of Jesus Christ. First the person. Of Jesus Christ. Then the proclamation. Of Jesus Christ.

Let me pray. Before we. Begin our. Our study. And. Ask for. God's help. Pray. Father.

We are. Thankful. For a time. To gather around your word. A day. That you have set apart. Of all the days. Of the week. And father. That we can. Come together.

[6 : 10] We can assemble. We can. Assemble. And. Come under your word. To be edified. By. The preaching. The singing. By. The ordinances.

By. By our fellowship. With one another. This is good. For our souls. And this is a glimpse. Of heaven. Father. Let us not undermine that. Let us never neglect.

To do this. And father. We ask for your blessing. Right now. To make the words. That I speak. Clear. This is dependent.

Upon the work. Of your holy spirit. Alone. And so we ask you. For help today. We praise in Jesus name. Amen. Amen.

Amen. The first section. Is titled. The person. Of Jesus Christ. Light. And truth.

[7 : 03] The person. Of Jesus Christ. Light. And truth. And this is. Starting in verse 12. As Rick read. It says again.

Jesus spoke to them. Saying. I am the light. Of the world. Whoever. Follows. Me. Will not. Walk. In darkness. But will have. The light. Of.

Life. Just as. Which was. Introduced. In the prologue. Of this. Gospel. Account. Jesus. Himself. Affirms. Here. What was spoken.

About. Earlier. In John. 1. 4. It says. In him. Was life. And the life. Was the light. Of men. The light. Shines. In the darkness.

And the darkness. Has not. Overcome. It. Jesus. Makes. An emphatic. Statement. Here. A statement. That stands.

[7 : 57] Out. A statement. That ripples. Throughout. The. The history. Of. Of. God's. Progressive. Revelation. Through. The gospel. Of John.

It ripples. Throughout. This is. A rooted. I am. Statement. Here. Am I. Ego. I me. From. From. Exodus.

Three. With. God. Revealing. Himself. To. Moses. From. The burning. Bush. He says. I am. Ego. E me. Of. I am. I exist.

I am. The great. I am. I am. I am. The light. Of. The world. And. This. First. Indicates. Two things. That are true. That the person.

Of. Jesus Christ. Is light. And. Because. Of this. It leads. People. Out. Of. The darkness. Who follow him. This says.

[8 : 51] Something. About. Our condition. Apart. From. Jesus Christ. This says. Something. That. We are. Found. In. Darkness. And. Jesus. Is.

The light. Who leads. Us. Out. Of. Darkness. That. There's. No. Starting. In. The light. There's. Starting. In. Darkness. And. What are we. Talking. About. Here. It's. Talking. About.

Sin. The problem. Of. Sin. That stems. Back. To the garden. Of. Eden. And. The fall. It goes. Without. Saying. In. This passage. But. Our first. In. In.

This. Life. Is. Walking. In. Darkness. Being. Lost. And. It's. Not. Until. Somebody. Flips. The light. On. That. You. Can.

Actually. See. You. Know. You. Can. You. Can. Admit. All. You. Want. Walking. Around. A. House. That's. Completely. Pitch. Black. Dark. And. Say. Oh. I. Know. Where. Everything. Is. And. You're. Knocking. Around. Things.

[9:42] You're. Tripping. The.

Reflection. Of. Our. Condition. That. Our. Souls. Are. In. Before. We. Come. Into. A. Relationship. With. Jesus. Christ. And. The. Source. Of. Our. Unbelief.

We. Love. Darkness. We. Love. Darkness. Before. Christ. We. Don't. Love. The. Light. This. Is. Reinforced. In. John. Three. If. You. Can.

Recall. In. John. Three. Nineteen. The. Light. Has. Come. Into. The. World. And. People. Loved. The. Darkness. Rather. Than. The. Light. Because. Their. Works. Were.

Evil. This. Shows. Us. Our. Sinful. Condition. Church. Before. Jesus. Christ. Apart. From. Jesus. Christ. It. Shows. Us. Our. Guilt. Our.

[10:34] Shame. Our. Natural. Inclination. Is. To. Reject. God. The. Sin. Of. Unbelief. Is. The. Root. Of. Many. Sins. Indeed. And.

It. Is. The. Unpardonable. Sin. Of. Unbelief. Now. The. Circumstances. Surrounding. Such. A. Statement.

That. Indicates. Our. Lostness. But. Also. Our. Foundness. In. Christ. The. Situations. That. Aren't. Explicitly. Said. In.

This. Gospel. Here. Takes. A. Little. Bit. Of. Research. Is. Located. And. The. Time. Of. This. The. Time. And. The. Location. Are. A.

Hundred. Percent. Significant. In. This. Passage. Actually. Give. This. This. Message. This. I. Am. Statement. A. Real. Kick. And. So. Consider. The. Time. Remember.

[11:27] We're. Jumping. Into. The. Context. We. Just. Went. From. The. Feeding. Of. The. Five. Thousands. It.

Would. Be. A. Week. Long. Celebration. It. Would. Probably. Look. Smell. Like. The. Canfield. Fair. You. Smell. The. Burnt. Offerings. You. You. Just. Hear. The. People. Gathered. It.

Was. In. Jerusalem. This. Was. Like. Christmas. Time. I. Mean. This. Is. This. Is. The. The. Feast. I. Would. Love. To. Be. Present. During. This. Feast. And. At. The. End. Of. This. Feast.

Was. The. Water. Libation. Ceremony. The. Great. Day. The. Last. Day. Of. The. Feast. That. We. Talked. About. Where. The. High. Priest. Would. Take. The. Water. Pour. It. Over. The. Offering. And. Then. That's.

When. Jesus. Stood. Up. Saying. If. Anyone. Thirst. Let. Come. Is.

[12:29] Setting. The. Sun. Is. Setting. The. Night. Is. About. To. Fall. And. What. Happens. At. The. At. When. The. Sun. Sets. At. The. Feast. Of. Booths. Is.

That. They. Light. Four. Giant. Torches. In. The. Court. Of. Women. And. This. Is. Also. Known. As. The. The. Treasury. And.

I. Don't. Know. If. You. Been. To. Hawaii. I. Haven't. Been. Able. To. Make. It. To. Hawaii. Yet. Hopefully. Someday. But. It. Would. Probably. Look. Something. Like. Fire.

Dancing. There. Be. People. Dancing. There. Be. Music. There. Be. Be. Be. Celebration. All. Throughout. The. Night. All. Of. This. All. Of. This. It's. Not. Just. A. Senseless. Party.

This. This. Was. The.

[13:22] Significance. Of. Lighting. These. Torches. The. Dancing. The. Celebration. That. Is. The. Time. Church. Now. Consider. The. Location. The. Temple's.

Court. Of. Women. In. The. Treasury. Now. This. Is. The. Court. That's. Just. Past. The. Court. Of. The. Gentiles. Past. The. Giant. 60. Foot.

Gate. Called. Beautiful. In. The. Temple. You. Go. Through. That. And. What. You. Have. Is. The. Court. Of. Women. The. And. Within. This. Court. There's. Multiple. Receptacles. That.

Are. Used. For. An. Offering. A. Voluntary. Offering. From. The. Jewish. People. When. They. Go. In. They. Drop. Their. Offering. And. Actually. Remember. The. Story. Of. Jesus. Talking.

About. The. Widow. Who. Dropped. The. Two. Coins. In. The. Offering. And. The. Pharisees. And. Everything. Like. That. This. Is. The. Location. Of. That. Very. Offering. Where. The. Widow. Was. And.

[14:16] I. Want. You. To. Understand. That. When. These. Receptacles. Are. There. This. Is. For. The. Suffering. Community. To. Go. Into. Past. The.

The. Court. The. Needs. This.

Is. The. Time. This. Is. The. Location. Jesus. Reveals. His. Powerful. Identity. In. The. Statement. I. Am.

The. Light. Of. The. World. In. Other. Words. I. Am. The. One. Guiding. God's. People. Through. The. Wilderness. He.

Says. It. At. This. Time. Now. As. My. Eight. Year. Old. Would. Say. This. Created. Quite. A. Squabble. My. Eight. Year. Old. Over. The. Past. Several. Weeks.

[15:11] Has. Been. Into. Australian. Cartoons. I. Guess. Everyone. Has. Their. Thing. It. It. It. Interesting. The. Vocabulary. Is. Good. It. A. Wholesome.

Show. It. Teaches. Them. Morals. And. Everything. So. He. Would. Call. This. Quite. A. Squabble. Whenever. My. Wife. And. I. Are. Talking. About. Intense. Topics. And. Things. Like. That. He. Comes. In. He. Is. Like. Are. You. Squabbling.

You. Know. And. We're. Just. Like. No. We're. We're. Not. Squabbling. And. Just. His. Vocabulary. has. Inherited. Adopted. A. Lot. Of. Australian. Accents. So. Have. Some. Fun. Pun.

Intended. Among. The. Religious. Leaders. The. Pharisees. And. They. Began. To. Enter. Into. A. Legal. Challenge. Dialogue. At.

This. Time. That. Reads. Similar. To. A. Formal. Debate. Between. Jesus. And. The. Pharisees. And. The. Pharisees. Chime. In. With. The. One. Thing. That. They. Know. Best. Right. The.

[16:17] Law. Who. Do. You. Think. You. Are. Jesus. You. The. Light. Of. The. World. You. You. The. One. That. Testifies. Your. Your. Testimony. Alone. Because. You. Don't. Have. A. Witness. Is.

False. This. Comes. Out. Of. Deuteronomy. 17. This. According. To. The. Law. And. Jesus. Responds. In. Verse. 14. He. Defends. His. I. Am.

Statement. In. This. Even.

If. I. Bear. Witness. About. Myself. My. Testimony. Is. True. For. I. Know. Where. I. Came. From. And. Where. I. Am. Going. But. You. Do.

Not. Know. Where. I. Come. From. Or. Where. I. Am. Going. You. Judge. According. To. The. Flesh. I. Judge. No. One. Yet. Even.

[17:11] If. I. Even. If. I. Do. Judge. My. Judgment. Is. True. For. It. Is. Not. I. Alone. Who. Judge. But. But. I. And. The. Father. Who.

Sent. Me. In. Your. Law. It. Is. Written. That. The. Testimony. Of. Two. People. Is. True. I. Am. The. One. Who. Bears. Witness. About. Myself. And. The. Father. Who. Sent.

Me. Bears. Witness. About. Me. Jesus. Just. Entered. The. Pharisees.

Into. A. Glimpse. Of. Heaven. Heaven. Is. A. Place. Where. Truth. Exists. It. Is. A. Place.

Where. Sin. Does. Not. Exist. A. Perfect. Way. And. This. Is. The. Eternal. Place. Of. Jesus. Is.

[18:02] Origin. Where. He. Eternally. Existed. With. God. The. Father. Just. As. John. One. One. Says. In. The. Beginning. Was. The. Word.

And. The. Word. Was. With. God. And. The. Word. Was. God. He. Was. In. The. Beginning. With. God. He. Enters. Us. Into. The. The.

Truth. The. Purity. Of. Heaven. And. He. Says. Even. If. I. Bear. Witness. About. Myself. Is. True. Because. I. Came. From. Heaven. That's. My. Origin. I.

Don't. Even. Know. How. To. Lie. I. Can't. Lie. And. The. Fact. That. They. Continually. Challenges. Identity. Makes. It. Clear. Their. Identity. Or. Their. Judgment.

Is. Severely. Flawed. It. Really. Makes. A. Clear. Indication. To.

[18:57] Another. Conclusion. Who. Who's. Your. Father. Who's. This. Who's. This. Guy. They're. Probably. Having. Earthly. Mindedness. As. They. do. Probably. Thinking. Joseph. At. This. Point. And.

Inquire. About. His. Father. And. Jesus. Makes. A. Statement. That. Says. That. Unites. Him. With. God. The. Father. And. This. Is. Significant. And. We're. Going. To. Pause.

After. This. Verse. He. Essentially. Says. If. You. Know. Me. You. Know. The. Father. To. Be. If. You. Want. To.

Be. Known. By. The. Father. You. Have. To. Be. Known. By. Me. Referring. To. His. Union. With. God. And. Church. Field. Valley. This. Is. Where.

Universalism. Finds. A. Narrow. Door. In. A. Nature. It.

[19:50] Is. A. Narrow. Door. Think. About. It. There. Is. No. Faith. In. God. Apart. From. Jesus. Christ. There. Is. No. Faith. In. God. Apart. From. Jesus. Christ. Because. Faith. In. Christ. Is. Faith. In. God. This.

Is. A. Narrow. Door. And. This. Has. Huge. Implications. Into. Other. Religions. Universalism. Being. One. Of. Them. Judaism.

Being. Another. Islam. Being. Another. All. Who. Claim. They. Know. God. But. They. Don't. Know. They. Don't. Worship. The. Same. God. Because. They. Don't. Worship. Jesus. Christ. He. Is. God. Jesus. Is. Making. That. Clear. In. This. Statement. If. Anyone. Challenges. Us. In. Our. Make.

[20:48] That. Union. Clear. This. Divides. This. Is. The. Sword. That. Of. The. Word. Of. God. That. Slices. It. Separates.

And. It. Was. Intended. To. The. Gospel. Is. A. Defining. Reality. And. This. Is. Due. To. The. Reality. Of. The. Trinitarian. Relationship. Between. That. God's. Word. Reveals. To. Us. About. Who. God. The. Father. Is. Who. The. Son. Is. And. Who. The. Holy. Spirit. Is. And. They. Are. Three. In. One. Three. Persons. Of. One. Divine. Unified. Essence. And. To. Disregard. One. Of. Them. Is. To. Dismiss. The. Whole. Completely. This.

Is. An. Issue. Of. Salvation. If. Somebody. Says. They. Know. God. And. They're. Going. This.

[21:41] Is. An. Issue. Of. Salvation. And. There. Is. No. Hope. In. God. Apart. From. Jesus. Christ. A. Very. Narrow. Road. Now. If. You're. Looking. To. Be. A. Part. Of. A. Church. That. Gets. The. Most. Popular.

Church. Award. From. The. Community. Don't. Preach. This. Message. Right. We. This. Will. Not. Get. Us. The. Most. Popular. Church. Award. It. Will. Not. Our. Reward. Lays. In. Heaven. And. We. Are. Faithful. To. God's. Word. And. God's. Truth. And. Specifically. The. Words. Of. Christ. In. This. Bible. Boy.

I. Can. Tell. I. Haven't. Preached. In. A. While. So. Let's. Paint. A. Picture. Think. Can. You. Sense. The. Irony.

In. This. Passage. Thus. Far. Can. You. Sense. The. Irony. In. This. Here. We. Have. Over. To. The. Left. Jesus. Over. To. The. Right. We.

[22:38] Have. The. Pharisees. Regardless. Of. Their. Debate. Why. Are. They. There. Right. In. Front. Of. Each. Other. Because. They're. Both.

At. The. Feast. Of. Booths. Which. Is. Celebrating. God. Commemorating. God's. Deliverance. To. His. People.

But. Not. All. Of. Them. Have. The. Full. Grasp. Of. What. It. Means. To. Actually. Be. Delivered. At. This. Point. In. Time. There. Is. Irony. In. That.

Both. Are. Honoring. God. With. Their. Actions. Jesus. Their. Their. Father. And. The. Pharisees. The. God. Of. Moses. Right. But. The. Pharisees. Are.

Despising. God's. Continuous. Revelation. The. One. Who. The. Wilderness. Pointed. To. The. One. Who. The. Pillar. Of. Cloud. And. The. Fire. Pointed. To. The. Significance. Of. All.

[23:31] Of. That. They're. Disregarding. The. New. Exodus. Of. God's. People. That. Was. Promised. Throughout. Scripture. People. Love. The.

Darkness. Rather. Than. The. Light. Because. Their. Works. Were. Evil. The. Pharisees. Were. Asking. Good. Questions. They. Really. Were. Good.

Questions. However. They. Were. Asking. Not. To. Receive. An. Answer. They. Were. Asking. These. Questions. In. Order. To. Condem. To. Put. Some. Ammo. In. The. Revolver.

In. Order. Take. Jesus. Out. Blinded. By. The. Over.

My. Break. We. Were. Letting. Our. Kids. Run. Around. The. House. At. Nighttime. It's. Been. Fantastic. Weather. You. know. Nights. That. Are. Like. Sixties. Seventies. Man. Those. Are. Perfect.

[24:25] And. So. Allowing. Our. Kids. To. Go. Outside. We. Give. Them. A. Little. Challenge. I'm. Like. Grab. Grab. My. Flashlight. Kids. And. This. Is. A. Powerful. Flashlight. Mind. You. It's.

One. Of. Those. Those. Clickbait. Things. That. You. See. On. The. Internet. That. You. Just. See. This. Entire. Neighborhood. Illuminate. And. I. I. Was. I. Was. Sold. On. It. So. You. I. Clicked. It. I. Ordered. It. It. It.

It. It. It. It. Seems. It. It. durable. It. Clash. It. It.

You. Levi. Being. Crafty. He. Comes in. And. Saying. I. Found. Another. Moths. So. We. Just. Cha-ching. Cha-ching. Cha-ching. All. For. These. Moths. We. I. We. Like. A. Little. Bit. More. Diversity.

In. Your. Findings. Levi. So. I. Give. Them. A. Flashlight. And. If. Any. grandparents in the room, or maybe personal experience, what's the first thing you tell your kids when you give them a flashlight? Don't shine it in your eyes, right? Especially the flashlight from the clickbait advertisement on the internet, right?

[25 : 34] Right? Don't use it as a telescope. You're not going to see. What do we tell our kids when they look up at the sky and they're like, wow, look how big the sun is. Don't look at the sun. It has the power to blind you just as the flashlight. It's a consuming fire in the sky. You get too close. And boy, isn't that true about what's taking place in this passage? Jesus Christ says that he is the light of the world. And if you receive that with its intended function of how that light is to shine, it has the power to blind you. It also has the power of illuminating your life to the need of the good news of Jesus Christ. In this truth today, do you sense that in your life, where you're at, that you are much more blinded by this reality of who Jesus is? Or is he illuminating your life? And this illumination in our lives is an ongoing illumination. We will never arrive on this side of history.

And we are constant works in progress, some more than others like myself. It is true that we were all wandering in darkness.

And this passage insinuates, however, Christ is the light that this entire gospel points to, this entire book points to. Jesus Christ is the light of the law, the fulfillment of the law.

And the law in which we delight in day and night. Jesus is the light that's shining for, for God's salvation to the world. This is all through Ezekiel. Jesus Christ is the light to the Gentiles and the, the light to the ends of the earth as Isaiah 49 speaks about. Jesus Christ is the light in the end times and the light will shine brightly in Revelation 21. Jesus Christ is the promise of Zechariah 14 of being the continual light of which the, the streams of living water will flow from Jerusalem. Jesus Christ is the very presence and protection for the people of Israel being a pillar of fire. And guess what? Jesus Christ is the light that this feast of booths symbolized.

I am here. I am here. He says, though people loved the darkness. Jesus beckons those in darkness to come. And the context, like I was saying, really gives this text a punch.

[28 : 42] And this is why, because where is the location that all of this dialogue is taking place? Verse 20 says, the treasury, right? The treasury is a place where the suffering, hurting, bankrupt community would come to receive provision. Church, wake up today. This is where the hurting community would come to receive provision. And here are the Pharisees completely ignorant and unaware of their own need for Jesus Christ. And the greatest gift of God was standing before them and he, they attacked him. Friends, Jesus Christ is the light of the world. And how you respond to that will either bring you great hope or great despair. Are you? Are you hurting in life? Are you suffering in this life? Are you wandering completely lost in sin?

John 8 makes it clear that it's often the people who act like they have it all together are often the ones who are most lost. The Pharisees didn't even recognize their own need for Christ. They were lost. But salvation is to those who see the illuminating power of Jesus Christ shine in their life and say, God, I've been trying my way. I've been just cruising through this life in darkness, bumping in, falling down. I want to see. Give me your light. Give me your light. And the light of Christ that has the power to blind our self-righteousness also has the power to illuminate our failures, bringing us to a need of repentance, a need of faith. And Jesus says, come. Is Jesus calling you out of darkness today? Right now? And to enter into his marvelous light. It is by your faith alone in him being the source of receiving the light of his salvation. So come by faith if you do not know him. This is the person of Jesus Christ. Light and truth.

Let's look at the second section of Jesus Christ. The proclamation of Jesus Christ. Just saw the person of Jesus Christ. The proclamation of Jesus Christ. Hope in life and death.

And Jesus continues with the Pharisees. Completely unaware of their need. He says, so he said to them again, all who were gathered, he says to them again, I am going away and you will seek me and you will die in your sin. Where I am going. You cannot come. Verse 22. This statement kerfuffled the Pharisees a bit.

Well, where are you going, Jesus? Are you going to kill yourself? I mean, doesn't that seem a little bit irrational for somebody to jump to that conclusion? Like walking out of your house, going to the grocery store telling your wife or your husband, hey, I'm going out. What are you going to do? Kill

yourself?

[32 : 33] Right? Doesn't that seem a little irrational? Well, we should see something in this passage. That the Pharisees have something on their mind that would make them to jump to such an extreme out the gate. I mean, I think a decent person would say, well, if you're going home, I know where you live.

You know, are you leaving the feast? I can follow you. They assume that he's going to kill himself. Isn't that odd? You know, it would have been fitting for Jesus to just simply say, actually, Pharisees, I'm not going to kill myself. You're going to actually do it for me. Right? In the scope of redemptive history and what Jesus predicts in this passage. And Jesus, in verse 23, he makes a great distinction. And right here, you sense the cyclical nature of John's writing. John writes in a very repetitive, cyclical nature. And it seems like he's saying the same thing, like three different ways, sometimes four different ways. And you're just like, okay, interesting. You really feel it in the epistles of John. But Jesus makes it clear in John's cyclical writing style that light and darkness mix like oil and vinegar, that Jesus is from above in verse 23. They are from below. Jesus is not of this world. The Pharisees are of this world. And what you have here is a distinction that is crystal clear. Truth and falsehood. You have dark and you have light and you have darkness. You have hope and you have despair. And the Bible indicates here only two ways that you can die. In belief or unbelief. And he also makes it clear that as far as this debate has gone thus far, the Pharisees are going to die in their sins. And only belief in Christ can save you. Look in verse 24. I told you, Jesus says, you would die in your sins. For unless you believe that I am, ego, I me, I am he, you will die in your sins. You see, those who die in faith, Christians, church, saints, those who die in belief, die in faith, enter into the place that God has prepared for the church before the foundations of the world. But those who die in unbelief. This is dying void of any faith. This is unconverted, remaining in sin. [35 : 31] This is the worst calamity that could ever come upon any human being is to die in unbelief. And we'll get into that more next week when we talk about faith and Abraham and all these things that the Pharisees try to pull out. Let's pause. Church, do you hear the words of Jesus Christ right now?

Friends who are not part of a faith system, that are not part of a church, that are just kind of coming in and checking out what this message of the Bible is all about. I welcome you. And I am, I will not be reserved on the truth of the matter.

Do you hear the words of God's word to us, his revelation to us? You don't have to die in your sins. You don't have to die in your sins. The word of God is before us today, just as the word of God was before the Pharisees then. And he's saying, do not die in your sins.

You cannot work yourself out of your sin. You cannot atone for the penalty of your sin. But Christ can take your sin from you, the penalty from you. And when you die, you die clothed in righteousness.

[36 : 55] You have death garments prepared for you, which is the righteousness of Christ. Amen? Amen? This is a promise. And if you don't know Jesus Christ, you don't have to die in your sin.

Don't go any further past verse 24. Jesus is indicating that we don't have to die in our sin, that our sin can be dealt with. And Jesus Christ continues to say that I am dealing with your sin continuously in your life. And the Pharisees come back with a rebuttal in this debate narrative. Who are you? He says, who I've been saying from the beginning, right? Like, hello? Truly a blinding light. He is the ego I me, the great I am. And this is a true judgment in verse 25 and 26, a true testimony.

And the Pharisees, verse 27, are still confused, still blinded by this. And in verse 28, Jesus makes one thing crystal clear. And borrowing some language from Daniel 7, he says in predicting his death, so Jesus said to them in verse 28, when you have lifted up the son of man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the father has taught me. When you lift me upon the cross, Jesus says, you want my grand witness?

If the father isn't good enough for you, guess what? You will be witness of when you lift up the son of man, you will be witness that I am he, Jesus Christ being lifted up in his crucifixion. And if he's lifted up in his crucifixion, he's also lifted up in great exaltation. And you will be witness, you will be front row Pharisees in that. And what will they witness? What will they witness at this time?

[39 : 05] The truth of the gospel. That all his words were true. This is the receipt of a transaction that has been approved. That's some of the most tense time waiting for that credit card. Sometimes the process at Christmas time, you're waiting for the thing to stop spinning until you see that approved right on the screen. That was the transaction approved. Jesus, Jesus has paid the

penalty for sin and we are forgiven. His words were true and you will be witness. And verse 29 says that the one who sent him is with him and that full humanity dies. Because why? John 3 16, for God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son, that those who believe in him will not die, will not perish, but have eternal life. This is the promise that they will witness the truth of the gospel.

In verse 30, many believed. This leaves this narrative on such a high note, right? If we just separate this from the next part, we'd probably think like, man, they probably broke out in revival and it was more dancing and singing and everything. Man, this is such a high note. And many believed in him. But we'll leave the rest of the tension for next week because I'll just clue you in. There is a storm coming and it's not very pretty. As we close today, I want us to consider two moments in our lives. They say that there's historical moments, historical moments, moments in our history that are kind of chronologically laid out, just like this happened, then this happened, then this happened, then this happened.

Those are historical moments. Consider, though, historic moments. Just last yesterday, we observed 20 years since 9-11 happened. We all probably know exactly where we were when our eyes were glued upon that TV screen. Historic moments. These are not chronological. They are chronological, but that's not all their significance. These are time shifting. These are history reshaping moments, historic moments.

And in this life, we find ourselves, obviously, when you're born, you get a birth certificate. When you die, you get a death certificate. These are historic moments. They give you a participation certificate for coming to the game, right? And so these are historic life and death.

However, in our lives, with the unfolding of graduations, of birthdays, all these historical moments, we have our historic moments of life and death, but we have one that our certificate is not found on earth.

[42 : 15] And that historic moment is the moment that we place our faith in Jesus Christ, the moment that your name enters the Lamb's Book of Life, a historic moment indeed.

And this is because of a historic moment of Jesus' greatest sacrifice for us. This is death to life. This is new birth. And it is a moment when the light of Christ shines forth in our lives because Jesus Christ is the light of the world. And to receive Jesus Christ is to receive the light of the world. And maybe this is the first time you've heard the gospel. Maybe this is the first time you've ever heard Jesus presented in such a way.

Could it be that the light of Christ is actually shining in your life right now? Not blinding, but illuminating your need of him.

[43 : 20] You see, the message of John 8 thus far is that Jesus Christ is the light of the world. And the message is concerning your faith in him so that you may not die in the sins that you live in.

That you were brought into this world with of original sin. And the irony of the gospel is that until we understand that we are guilty, we are charged guilty of that sin, that we actually receive the opposite of what we deserve. We receive the grace of Jesus Christ.

This is the irony, the good news of the gospel. So I ask you to follow Jesus. I invite you to follow Jesus today. Enter forgiveness. Follow him.

This is giving your whole being to him. Your whole will to him. This is repenting of your sin of unbelief. To let go of the darkness that you once clung to.

Jesus Christ's arms are open wide and we know one thing for certain. Jesus Christ's arms will not be open forever. forever. Jesus Christ will come back and his robe will be stained in blood.

[44 : 30] He will come to judge. And at that point it will be too late. But maybe you're like me and you need a good kick in the butt once in a while.

Right? Real good kick. Steel Valley do not undermine what Jesus intended when he was speaking of him being the light of the world and what it means to follow him.

This word follow is significant. This following is very close proximity with Jesus Christ. this is taking on the attributes of Christ.

This is emulation of the grace that Christ gave to those around. This is grace. This is forgiveness. This is taking on all new identity, a new nature, a new status, reflecting, producing fruit that reflects that of Jesus.

Do not undermine what it means to follow Jesus Christ. And I'm preaching to myself this morning, okay? Has your following him become somewhat of a straggling that Jesus Christ has actually called you to be just a foot behind him?

[45 : 56] And we're kind of off in the distance just like pattering along, kicking the dirt in the ground. It's like, yeah, oh, I gotta catch up a little bit. Just straggling as you're following Jesus Christ.

Jesus is not calling stragglers. Jesus is not calling stragglers. He's calling followers.

Calling Jesus as a straggler a few miles back is not what he intended. Might you be distracted by the things of this world? That causes us to straggle once in a while.

Having just this fixation on money or social status or intellectual status or living in a lavish lifestyle. Not living a life of sacrifice.

Not living a life of communion with God. No devotion with him. Just kind of work and play. Work and play. Buy another boat. Go out on the lake. Work and play. Oh, God is so good, right?

[46 : 59] There's a term that Jesus used for this type of straggler and it's called lukewarm. This is not following Jesus Christ.

And it takes a passage like this to understand where have we found ourselves. The transaction for your sin that was placed upon Jesus Christ on the cross had such a great magnitude and effect.

And how many of us have been a Christian for any certain length of time and we have completely lost the wonder of the cross? Don't barely just make it into heaven and pull out that grace card.

God has great usefulness for his church, specifically us at Steel Valley Church. And he has a growth plan in mind for you.

He set an agenda. It's all according to his schedule. And we must remember that there are no half-hearted followers of Jesus Christ just as there is no half-atoned for sin that Christ bore on the cross.

[48 : 13] It's all or nothing. This is following Jesus Christ. And this is the light of the world. Whoever follows him will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.

So shine, Steel Valley Church. Shine like we've never shined before. Let Christ use you to usher in maybe the historic moment of faith of another.

Let's pray. Okay.