

# Did God Really Say?

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[ 0 : 00 ] Father, you know us so perfectly, and still you love us. You know, Father, how we can hear a passage of Scripture that perfectly describes us, but we don't think it describes us at all. We think it describes other people.

And Father, you know how much that can be a characteristic of each one of us. So we ask, Father, that the Holy Spirit would move with might and power and deep conviction, deep in the very center of who we are, at the level of our conscience, at the level of our mind, and the level of our affections, and our memories, and our dreams.

And that, Father, you would bring your Word home to us in a very deep way. And Father, as your Word is brought home to us in a deep way, Father, grip us with the Gospel at the same time, that we might understand how marvelous it is, what Jesus is, who he is, and what he accomplished for us.

And all these things we ask in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Amen. Please be seated. It's really good to see so many of you here, relatively speaking, in terms of such terrible, terrible weather.

I don't know about you, but some of you know that I'm sort of a regular runner. If I was close to the canal today, I would go for a run today, because in some ways, in a perverse sense, it gives you this great sense of accomplishment to actually have gone out and done something like a run on a day like today.

[ 1 : 27 ] Anyway, to the sermon and topic at hand. I have always been good at math. And it was always all the way through from grade one right up until I finished high school.

And then when I was in university for my first degree, I took a lot of courses in statistics, and I was always just good at math. My younger brother, who was about five grades below me, he was terrible at math.

And occasionally, when my brother started school, my parents would try to get me to help my brother with his math homework. And I was, I mean, I was probably a terrible big brother.

I'm sure my younger brother has been in therapy for years because of our childhood. But I just couldn't help him, because I would look at the math question, and it would just be obvious to me. Like, I don't know, for those of you who are good at math, you know what it's like for some simple things. You just look at the question, and it's just obvious. Like, how could you not just get it? And I probably said that to him, how could you not just get it?

[ 2 : 39 ] And so I was just terrible at it. And I'm saying that not as a way of boasting at all, far from that. There are just some things in our lives that we are good at, that we get instantly.

I cannot draw to save my life. Like, probably the Sunday school, once they get to about grade one, they can draw better than me. I have a hard time drawing a stick figure.

And I know just about any time in a service I mention that, at least one person comes up to me and says, if you just took the right lessons, you'd be able to draw. And maybe someday I'll do that. But I just think I'm missing whatever that is that I could just pick up artwork.

There's just some things within us that we either get or we don't get. But all of us have had the experience of having a conversation with somebody to try to prove to them something being true or something being right.

And our arguments are compelling. The facts are obvious. And we leave the conversation or the series of conversations believing that the other person just doesn't get it.

[ 3 : 43 ] In fact, we'd almost say that what's going on with them is that they just refuse to accept it. But they've stopped listening. That they've closed their ears. They've set their jaw.

They've set their body, their being just against even listening to reason or facts or argument. And all of us have had conversations like that.

Because it's a very, very common thing to have a conversation with somebody who just doesn't seem to get it. And it's a different thing than getting math, obviously, or getting art, obviously.

In fact, it's a very, very common problem. It's talked about occasionally in our society. The problem of echo chambers. The problem of just listening to your tribe. Of refusing to be open to insight or knowledge.

It's a very, very common phenomenon talked about in our culture. And believe it or not, the gospel text which we looked at today has some very profound things to say about this phenomenon. So it would be a great help to me if you open your Bibles.

[ 4 : 42 ] Those of you who don't have Bibles with you, the words to the text will be up on the screen. But, you know, it's a wonderful thing to bring your own Bible with you. And some of you like to write in your Bible or underline.

It's just a good thing to be able to find it in your own text. But we're going to look at this conversation. And Jesus actually has, and the text has, very profound things to say about this phenomenon.

So you heard earlier, this is how it's going in the Gospel of John. You know, John is one of Jesus' disciples. His most intimate disciples. He writes this biography of Jesus.

And he sort of gives chapter one as a big picture and historical introduction to who Jesus is. John decides he's not going to talk about all of Jesus' miracles. He's going to pick seven significant ones and sort of dig deep into them and what they mean and what they sort of point about who Jesus is. And then there's this transition chapter with the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. And then we're going to get into the private lessons between Jesus and his disciples, the trial, the crucifixion, and the resurrection.

[ 5 : 48 ] And so this chapter, this bit that we're reading right now is in a sense that the end of Jesus' public ministry, at least is the way that John tells the story.

And it takes place then maybe a day or so before the upper room, a couple of days before Jesus is going to die on the cross. And here's how it goes, verse 31.

Now is the judgment of this world. Now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself. Jesus said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

And we'll just sort of pause here for a second before we go any further. You know, it's very, very funny. When you just sort of look at that phrase, and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.

And it's not immediately obvious to me and to you maybe from just reading that, that it's referring to his crucifixion. If you read the whole gospel from beginning to end, you get a bit of an indication of it because the same phrase is used in John chapter 3.

[ 6 : 58 ] And the same phrase is used in John chapter 8. And the obvious thing is, as you're going to see in a moment, with the crowd's reaction to Jesus' statement, is that the crowd, like Jesus, they understood that Jesus was referring to the fact that he was going to die on the cross.

And so Jesus, he says this thing that, it's a bit of a troubling thing that, and when I am lifted up from the earth, when I am crucified, that he will draw all people to himself.

That's a very, very, very big claim. And the rest of this text is sort of going to unpack it. And at first, it looks like Jesus is talking about something that almost makes it look as if God draws some people to himself and not others.

He closes some minds and not others. It's that rather than actually providing light or insight into the issue as to why sometimes people refuse to believe the truth, in fact, it looks as if Jesus is taking a wrong turn.

And he's making it unhelpful. But as we dig further into it, we see that Jesus is actually really opening up to us at a very deep and profound level this whole issue of the conscience and the mind and the affections and our ability to grasp the truth.

[ 8 : 13 ] And he begins in this unlikely manner by saying, I'm going to die on the cross. And when I die on the cross and what I accomplish for the human race on the cross, I'm going to then draw people to myself from every single people group that's on the planet and that will ever be on the planet.

Me dying on a cross and I, through that, and through my person will draw people to me. One of the things that it means, like if I was to tell you the story of my conversion, I would tell you how it is I saw something when I was walking down Elgin Street and that began to make me curious and I started to seek out Jesus and to try to figure out who he really was and what it meant for me. But what Jesus is saying here is that it actually, that I'm misunderstanding the process. That it's not about the fact that Jesus is sort of somewhere just there hiding and I seek him. What Jesus is saying is that before I sought him, he sought me. And before I started to feel drawn to him, he was drawing me to himself.

And that's what he's saying. And that he's drawing me to himself to make me right with God, to make me right with the creator of the universe.

[ 9 : 45 ] And by making me right with the creator of the universe to begin to make me right with the created order in terms of what it means to live full and free as a son, in my case, a son of light, for some of you, a daughter of light in God's creation.

And when Jesus says that the world is being judged, it's being judged because he understands that he's not fully human but he's also fully God. And he understands that when he is, he is about to be, I mean, he understands that already the religious, intellectual, and cultural leaders of the day and soon to be the power leaders and the power brokers of the entire world, that they are going to conspire together to receive him, not to receive him but to put him to death.

And so Jesus understands that whether it's through spirituality, whether it's through religion, whether it's through philosophy, whether it's through politics, whether it's through just a concern with culture, whether it's through a concern for the common life of the city, that all of these different trends and all of these different paths and all of these different ways, they will take you many places but where they will never take you to is the cross.

The death of Jesus upon the cross reveals that they all fail. All of them fail. And at the same time, he makes a very, very bold thing which we won't go into very much because the rest of the text doesn't talk about it very much.

But Jesus understands that his death upon the cross and his resurrection is a defeat, a fatal defeat of the devil who is present and active in the world.

[ 11 : 34 ] And that as a result of the death of Jesus upon the cross and his resurrection, it means that Satan has received a grievous blow and that his doom is certain.

Just one more thing. Back in June, I went for some training in Montreal. And some of you might have seen or been to yourself St. Joseph's Oratory, a beautiful, huge Roman Catholic building on the side of a mountain.

And if you go inside St. Joseph's Oratory, you can go to different places where you can light a candle. And as you know, Montreal is a very, very, very, very, very, very secular city.

And if you go to the oratory, it gets a huge number of tourists from all over the place, from all sorts of different faiths or lack of faiths or lack of perspectives. But if you want to go, and in a sense it's an act of prayer, you can go and light a candle.

And the candles are organized around certain themes or certain issues. It might be for success or whatever. But there's some candle sections which most of the candle sections don't have that many candles lit.

[ 12 : 50 ] But if you go to a candle section and you see virtually every candle lit and you go and you look over it, you'll see that the section where the candles are all lit in the secular city of Montreal are all the ones around deliverance from demons.

And we as Christians have to start to be more unashamed about talking about things like that. Because in fact, it's a very, very real problem for many, many, many people in our culture. That even as our culture on one level seems to become more secular, another level is becoming very, very spiritual and open to all sorts of spiritual forces.

And the message here of Jesus is that with his death and his resurrection, Satan has been defeated. He still has, in a sense, a rear guard action. It will not be until the second coming of Jesus that Satan is cast into the lake of fire forever and his role on the earth will come to a complete and utter end.

But his doom is certain and for those of us who are in Jesus, their power and their power over him or at least their resources of power over him in terms of going to our Heavenly Father are absolutely immense.

But Jesus, when I said that this is going to tell us, this text is going to give us some real insight around the whole problem of not being able to know the truth or at least thinking other people have problems of knowing the truth or closing their conscience or closing their mind.

[ 14 : 23 ] And yet Jesus seems to take us in a very odd direction that he is going to draw all people to himself. So we need to sort of see how it is that that's going to get unpacked a little bit. Well, let's look at verse 34.

So Jesus makes this comment that he is going to draw all people to himself after he's died upon the cross. And some of his hearers have a whole range of problems with that.

And one of the problems they have with it is that it can't be true because in fact it doesn't seem as if everybody's being drawn to Jesus. And they sort of push back at this whole idea.

Look at verse 34. So the crowd answered him. The crowd answered him. We have heard from the law, that is the Bible, the Old Testament, that the Christ remains forever.

How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is the Son of Man? See, they understand that Jesus is saying that the Son of Man is going to die. And they just have a big problem with that.

[ 15 : 26 ] And they're understanding the Bible. They're really saying, did God really say that the Christ is going to die on the cross? Did God really say that the Son of Man is going to draw all people to himself?

Did he really say these things and therefore do they apply to you? And is it going to really be true that he's going to die? Like, how on earth does this work? And he continues on in verse 36, verse 35.

So Jesus said to them, the light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.

While you have the light, believe in the light that you may become the sons or daughters of light.

Now, on one hand, when you read this text, it seems as if Jesus doesn't answer their question.

They've said, okay, Jesus, you've made this really big claim. We've heard you before. You say you're the Christ. You say you're the Son of Man. You say that Christ and the Son of Man, you know, whatever you mean by those, that you're going to die and somehow after you die on a cross, a shameful death, you're going to draw people to yourself.

[ 16 : 43 ] But we read the Bible and the Bible doesn't say anything. Does God really say that? And then you'd expect Jesus to answer, well, sure, you look at, you know, you look at Isaiah chapter 53 and you look at here and you look at here and you look at here.

But what Jesus says is he doesn't talk about that at all, does he? And he talks instead, look at it again, verse 35, the light is among you for a little while.

Walk longer, walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light that you may become the son or the daughter, depending on your sex, of light.

Well, you see, what's going on here is that Jesus is not answering their question, he's speaking to their condition. Because, you see, if you think about it, the reason that there were such huge crowds in Jerusalem is that because just outside of Jerusalem, Jesus, there was a man who had been dead in the grave for four days, and Jesus spoke to that dead man and raised him to life.

And if you think about it, earlier on in Jerusalem, Jesus took a man who had been born blind, and he made him to see. And if you think about it, that it was in Jerusalem, there was a very, very, very grumpy, ungrateful man who had been unable to walk for decades, and Jesus had made him to walk.

[ 18 : 21 ] And if you think about it, they would have also known about the fact that Jesus had taken one of Herod's official sons, and even though that son was a great distance away by a mere word of Jesus, everybody would have known that he had made that man come to life.

And everybody there would have known that Jesus had done a miracle where they'd taken a few loaves and fishes, and he was able to feed 5,000 men. And they might also have known about the fact that Jesus had taken water, and by a mere act of his will, had turned that water into wine.

And so, in a sense, what Jesus is saying is, listen, if you don't listen to that stuff, how is quoting the Bible going to actually deal with your condition? The problem isn't that you need another Bible study.

The problem is that you are completely and utterly giving yourself over to darkness rather than light and refusing to think and to recognize and to believe.

You see, Jesus goes after the situation because it had come to a time when further arguments aren't going to help. Further arguments aren't going to help.

[ 19 : 32 ] One of the, there's a fellow by the name of Michael Conley, and he writes Bosch novels. I think I'm pronouncing it correctly, B-O-S-C-H.

Some of the novels have been turned into a very popular series on Amazon Prime, but his novels are always New York Times bestsellers. And Michael Conley's Bosch novels are, they're very well written books, which is why they're bestsellers, and they are a perfect example of a very common type of fiction and movie in North America.

One of Bosch's lines, he's a detective in L.A., and one of his lines is that everyone matters or no one matters. And what drives the story is that there's always a murder or usually a murder, sometimes by somebody that the world considers to be very unimportant, like a prostitute or a street person, sometimes a very important person like a film mogul.

But the point is that Bosch has this line that everyone matters and no one matters. And so he goes to solve the mystery and there's sort of two big things that go on in the book.

On one hand, of course, is him actually trying to solve the mystery. But the other part of the book, which is very, very, very important and he does very, very well, is that always there are politicians and other police officers who in effect don't want him to solve the crime.

[ 20 : 56 ] not because they're allied with the bad guy. It's not that they're corrupt usually in that way. But because they don't look at the case and think that you have to solve who it is, the actual murder, they worry that either the way it's been or the way it's going that there's something about it that is going to, and then you fill in the blank, it's going to affect their career.

It's going to make the police force look bad. It's going to make the politicians look bad. It's going to make a rich person who's an important donor look bad. And so what Bosch does is he's constantly disobeying his superiors, he's pushing against them because they keep wanting to short circuit or close down his investigation in some of the books they literally tell him he has to stop following the investigation and he literally doesn't stop following the investigation because he believes that what matters is doing what is just and doing what is right and that every human being matters and the people who are in the hierarchy they think that is not what matters.

What matters is what people think of me, what people think of my organization, what people think of the city, how it's going to affect the economy, how it's going to affect investment, how it's going to affect all of these things.

And so an important part of every book is Bosch regularly fighting against the pressure, ignoring the pressure to pursue that which is right and that which is just in terms of this case.

Now here's the interesting thing about this. In many ways what these novels, it's why they sell millions and millions and millions of novels, millions of novels, is that obviously when you and I read that book, who are we?

[ 22 : 42 ] I'm Bosch. Bosch in a sense perfectly articulates what I wish I was, what I believe I am. But really, literally, do you think all of the million of us who read that book that we're all Bosch?

Like how many of us in our day-to-day life are in fact the lieutenants and the captains and the politicians and the important people who don't really want to pursue truth but want to cover things over because we really care more about what people say about us.

You see, I can easily imagine as well as you that there could be a whole busload of people going to work downtown reading the Michael Connolly novel and going, yes, Bosch, way to go, Bosch, and as soon as we get to work, we're the bureaucrats who stop the truth.

We're the leaders who care more about our reputation. And this is one of the things which Jesus, you know, and in a sense what happens is what we're describing is this process whereby we believe about ourselves that we should be pursuing the truth but we lack complete and utter self-knowledge that what we're actually doing is we're actually don't really care about the truth but we care more about what people think about us about our respect about promotions about making more money having more power that these things in fact have a very, very powerful hold on how we understand right and wrong and how we pursue the truth and what actually forms our conscience. the Michael Connolly novels both show what we desire but they don't have the power to reveal to us our own divided nature or maybe not even divided because we are fully fledged supporters and pursuers of pursuing that which makes me look good.

[ 24 : 57 ] and it's in the middle of this both desire as to what we think we would be and lack of insight as to what's going on that Jesus starts to reveal to our hearts because you see my guess is that every single person who listened to Jesus unless they were pricked by his line about there is a possibility that darkness will overcome your conscience and darkness will overcome your affections and darkness can overcome your intellect and darkness can overcome your entire sense of how it is right and just to live in the world and darkness can overcome all of these things without you being aware of it and that's what Jesus says to them do you get it?

do you get it? do you get it? you see on one one hand a novel like a Bosch novel and these words of Jesus on one hand it can be very depressing that people don't get it that maybe I don't get it but the whole context of Jesus' discussion not only will try to have it pierce into our consciousness and our conscience and our minds and our affections that it might very well be me who is being described as having my conscience or my mind overwhelmed and Jesus is going to go dig deep as to why it is that these things happen to us but he will also provide some very very important hope that he draws people to himself that we're not just lost and abandoned in this situation that darkness can overcome us and nothing will help

John the writer of this he pauses in these words of Jesus and John of course was taught by Jesus if when we get to heaven John will say listen all of those parts if you have a Bible like mine that has red and black print all of those black bits that I wrote in there I learned all of that from Jesus none of that came from me it all came from Jesus all the black bits all the black words came from Jesus not just the red words and if you look at the second part of verse 36 John gives a bit of a summary or an understanding of these things look at that in verse 36 the second part of it when Jesus had said these things he departed and hid himself from them though he had done so many signs see that's where I was saying that John is very conscious that Jesus was very conscious he'd done all these miracles right though he had done so many signs before them they still did not believe in him so we might say well doesn't that show that God doesn't draw no no that would only show that if God didn't know what was going to happen as if somehow God was up in heaven said oh dang people aren't reacting the way I thought I would I guess I have to have plan B no no John is so helpful here Jesus is so helpful here verse 37 again though he had done so many signs before them they still did not believe in him so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled Lord he quotes from from Isaiah 53 Lord who has believed what he heard from us to whom is the arm of the Lord been revealed therefore verse 39 they could not believe that's really troublesome I'll talk about it in a moment they could not believe for again Isaiah said and this is going to sound very troublesome he has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart lest they see with their eyes and understand with their heart and turn and I would heal them Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory that's God the son of God's glory he's talking about the pre-existence of Christ and spoke of him nevertheless many even of the authorities believed in him but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it so that they would not be put out of the synagogue for they love the glory that is the praise glory can be translated as the glory the praise the honor the respect that comes from other human beings more than the glory that comes from God he's perfectly described the plot of every

Bosch novel because the people are far more concerned with their respect their honor their praise than the truth now what Jesus is showing here is the possibility of us having very very very very hard hearts every system of thought has to deal with the problem that human beings seem to have free will yet on the other hand there's parts of the way the world are organized that would imply that free will does not exist if you a lot of people who would say they're scientists are not just they're not just holding or committed to just trying to understand the material causes of why things happen they're also committed to a larger philosophy that says that every cause has an effect and that we're locked in a series of causes and effects and causes and effects but if you if you literally believe that it means that there is no such thing as free will it literally means that in islam they have the problem that they've made god to be so big and powerful that basically everything that happens is fate everything that happens is fate in hinduism and all of the eastern religions with the whole law of karma and the cycle of death and birth and rebirth what ends up happening is that you fundamentally have a system where everything is completely and utterly determined and all systems of thought have to try to deal with the fact that on one hand because hinduism and buddhism will still give you ethical commands yet their fundamental understanding of how things work is one is if you're on a cycle of fate that will just keep moving you and moving you and moving

and islam has things that you're supposed to do yet their understanding of god is that all these things will just keep happening and happening and happening because it's all and utterly completely determined by

[ 31 : 55 ] Allah and only the christian faith wrestles with these ways in something that is true to our experience and gives us hope not just that it gives us hope but it's true you see at the very heart of the christian faith is the threeness of god that from all eternity before there was anything created from all eternity before anything was created the father was god the son was god the holy spirit was god yet there's only one god and the father loved the son and the son loved the father and the holy spirit in some issue in some is a third person in some ways this personhood is described as that unending love and communication and respect and giving of glory and praise that endlessly went back and forward without ceasing from the father to the son and at the very very heart of our understanding of who god is is community and is love love and it is the father the son and the holy spirit this unending community of love that is the god that has created all things and so it is that the god who really does exist he really is god really is sovereign over all things he really truly is but the world that god created the father and the son and the holy spirit this unending communication and love of giving and receiving of knowing and being known that is at the very heart of all things this is the god who created all things and so this god who has created all things it makes complete another sense that on one hand this god would still be sovereign but the very nature of what he wants to give to his creatures is the dignity of causality and the dignity of freedom and the dignity and the power of love and of truly knowing and not being a constant victim why because it fits exactly with who god is this is who god is and so when we see these words of jesus here what he is saying here isn't that oh my friend and i'll call him bob my friend bob he keeps wanting to believe in jesus and god sees him and smacks him down no you're not going to believe in jesus i refuse it that's not what this is saying as if god somehow or another undermines our desires to know him you see a merging of two wills i come to hear the truth and i turn away from it because i love the praise of other human beings i want to be thought well of i don't want to take a moral position in my society that will make people feel unhappy about me and not like me or not want to talk to me i know very well what it's like to develop a friendship with a barista or somebody in a starbucks and eventually they ask me what i do and i tell them that i'm a pastor and their face gets cloudy and they look disappointed i experience that all the time we thought he was a nice guy but he's a christian how could he and so what the bible is saying here is there's this double there's this old saying that the door to hell is locked from the inside and that i as a human being i have this the light of conscience i have the light of reason i have the light of good affections and i choose the non-light i hear the truth and i choose non-truth i hear of justice and i choose non-justice and what i'm doing is every time i turn away and choose something else i'm turning away from the light i'm turning away from god i'm choosing darkness i'm choosing hardness and at some point in time god who

by his common grace is is stopping the full implication of my choice to turn away from him to choose evil to choose to be a god to choose to be better than other people to choose to be the center all of these times and god god reigns that in he resists that he restrains that and at some point in time he says to me i will be done you have chosen darkness darkness is what you will have you have chosen hardness hardness will be what you have you have chosen to resist the truth not knowing the truth will be what you have and jesus in this teaching is warning us that it's sometime by god's sovereign choice it's only by god's action that i have freedom that i can know the truth that i can have affections that are good that i can love justice and love mercy and love peace and love goodness and desire to know the truth and be in the truth and not to be a person of the lie but to be a person of the truth it's only by god's common grace that even though i am fallen that can still be a possibility at some point in time god says enough to darkness you want to go to darkness you will go to never have anything to do with me never having anything to do with me is is what will be of you and jesus says these things so that you and i will say is it i lord is it i lord and unlike the scientific so-called scientific understanding unlike the cycle of life and the cycle of karma and unlike even in islam where it's all controlled because the god who does exist is a god who is three but one that when our conscience is convicted we can say lord have mercy lord have mercy is it me lord have mercy lord have mercy and there is a god who can hear who can respond and act with power who can say george george you are so ridiculous george you are so given over to your ego george why is it george that when you drive you think people driving faster than you are maniacs and people driving slower than you are idiots why is it you think you're the center of all things you are so

hopeless and i love you i am drawing you to myself and george i want you to understand that there is nothing in your salvation in christ that you can take credit for because george as a fallen human being you want to take credit for something i'm not like those stupid people who were who studied university like i did and they just accepted everything but i sought the truth and eventually became a christian no george i called you i chose you i called you i enabled you to come to faith i gave you faith i saved you i hold you i will bring you to glory there is nothing in your salvation that you can claim credit for there is nothing in your salvation george that will make you can allow you to look down your nose and other people or feel somehow proud and pat yourself on the chest or the back for what you used to be more flexible i could pat myself on the back now i can't pat myself on the head and and and and and and that's that's what jesus saying i die on the cross i drink the cup i am the lamb of god who takes away the sin of the world i draw you listen there is this possibility that hardness will overtake you and darkness will overtake you i came that you might be a son or daughter of light i draw you so you will have eternal life i love you look how it finishes in verse 44 and jesus cried out literally means he yelled whoever believes in me believes not in me but in him who sent me and whoever sees me sees me sees him who sent me i have come into the world as light so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness there is hope if anyone hears my words and does not keep them i do not judge him for i did not come to judge the world but to save the world the one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge the words that i have spoken will judge him on that last day for i have not spoken on my own authority in other words he's saying my words don't come out of me just as an aside you see this is one of the so many times in the bible why do i believe that the scripture is infallible and errant because this is what jesus teaches i have not spoken on my own authority but the father who sent me has himself given me a commandment what to say and what to speak and i know that his commandment is eternal life god takes no delight in the death of a sinner but rather that he or she will turn from their wickedness and live what i say therefore i say as the father has told me it's 40 minutes i'll just show you my points there it'll help that there are really two points in three parts if you just put them up very quickly to bring this home you know all of these things in the text are said to try to help you see who you are at the level of your heart in the presence of the living god that's what the text is trying to do jesus confronts to connect and maybe the words won't here you can go in the line later on and find them here's the just try to summarize this the first thing is outside of god's grace your heart mind and conscience not can be overtaken by darkness but will be overtaken by darkness you see it's god's common grace that allows us to still to still have a heart and mind and conscience that seek after the good and the true and the beautiful and outside of god's grace it will it will become darkness the next point when you continually choose a hard heart the lord will eventually harden your heart you see it isn't as if he somehow makes your heart hard so you won't believe but he looks at george and he says look at that george is choosing a hard heart and he chooses it again and again and again and again and at some point in time god says to george your will be done next point your love of people's praise respect and honor will move you farther and farther from jesus and deeper and deeper into darkness the positive the next point andrew every aspect of your salvation in jesus christ is from him every aspect next point there is no part of your salvation that you can take credit for allowing you to expect praise from others and or look down on others and finally if you could put it up when you believe in jesus he gives you eternal life and remakes you into a son or daughter of light you see to be gripped by the gospel and to be a disciple of jesus is to ask that the light will characterize who you are more and more the light of justice the light of mercy the light of goodness the light of truth the light of beauty will characterize you more and more please stand once again you know if you have never given your life to jesus there is no better time than now to say jesus deliver me from hardness of heart and love of darkness and make me your own just just say those in your own words jesus deliver me from hardness of heart and love of darkness and make me your own make me a son or daughter of light there is no better time than now to call out to jesus and ask for that and for those of us who struggle with if we're aware of it that there's things in our lives right now that we're just sort of forgetting that he's made us sons of daughters of light but we discover that we have a we've been challenged that we have a bit of a fear about the truth the fear of the light then there's no better time than now not to not to become a christian again but to recommit to him and say father thank you so much that you love me that you know me that you want me to be your son and daughter of light that you want light to describe who i am more and more there's no better time than now just to call out to him that the light would have an even deeper role in your life let's pray to

god father i don't preach to others i preach to myself i need your word father i father i hope father no one here thinks that i am a shining example of of of of the good the true and the beautiful father it's all jesus i thank you so much for grace i thank you father that your son has drawn me and others here to him that you do not wear merits but pardon our offenses that you do not desire the death of a sinner but that we would turn to you and live we thank you father you did not desire that we would have hard hearts but soft hearts so we would not choose darkness but choose light and we ask father that your holy spirit would move with might and power and deep conviction within us and make us disciples of jesus who are gripped by the gospel and able to confront the darkness and confront the hardness that you would make our hearts soft and our minds more and more hungry our hearts more and more hungry for the good the true the beautiful for you and we ask this in the name of jesus and all god's people said amen you