

John's Last Great Testament

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[0 : 00] There is something that is unbelievably blessed in being able to hold up this book and say to turn in it.

What frames our life, what frames our hope in eternity, is what God in his grace has revealed to us through his scriptures.

Furthermore, it is our blessing to know that when we who know Christ take this book in hand, we are not left to rely merely on intellectual ability to comprehend the sweetness of Christ.

Next, we may rely upon the enabling of the Spirit of God, me in preaching with your prayerful attention, and you hearing with the enabling of the Spirit that the word that we study together may, first of all, strike the heart, and secondly, frame the life.

I want you to take a moment with me and come to the Lord in prayer, asking that his Spirit would quicken our study and my preaching to the glory of Christ.

[1 : 50] Our Father God, this morning, as we gather as your people, we do so with thanksgiving, that were it not for your grace, were it not for your work in bringing Christ Jesus into the world to be the Savior of the world, were it not for your work in bringing us to that point of conviction, were we understanding the darkness and the shamefulness of our heart, like an individual discovering the reality of their own soul sickness, were it not for you drawing us to understand that we, by our own effort and goodness, could not save ourselves, were it not for that, we would not be here this morning to be worshipers.

And we are thankful that you, first of all, convicted us of our sin, and then secondly, drew us to the place that we, seeing our hopelessness, cried out upon the Lord Jesus Christ and asked him to save us.

And you've blessed us with eternal life. You've blessed us with confidence in an eternal home.

You've blessed us with the indwelling ministry of the Spirit of God, who is there in the life of the believer to encourage, to sustain, to strengthen, to give understanding to your Scripture.

And so we, with humility, ask his help this morning. And it is my prayer that the preaching of the Word would be marked by the enabling of the Spirit, and that through his power, there would be individuals this morning that are here, that are drawn to the cross, recognizing their need for salvation, and crying out to Jesus to be their Savior.

And that believers who are here that are struggling with their walk and their joy and their confidence would have their hearts lifted to know that Jesus, indeed, is able to help them in the day of trial and need.

[3 : 52] That we, together, would be encouraged as we rejoice in Christ and look forward to the day that we are going to see him face to face. And that is our prayer this morning we ask in Jesus' name.

Amen. Well, we are looking at John chapter 3, verse 31 through 36, and we are at a place where John the Baptist's ministry in the book of John is going to kind of drift back to the background.

John was, as we found in chapter 1, a forerunner or an announcer, someone who went in front of Jesus and said, Hey, the King is coming, and He is supremely important, and this is the reason why.

Where we are now is that John finishing his ministry, in all practical terms, at least in the book of John, we find that John the Baptist is laid aside. And yet, we are at a point where this ministry, in coming to a conclusion, makes its strongest statement about who Jesus is, at least from the mouth of John the Baptist.

Let me have you stop just for a moment and remember what it says in John chapter 20, verse 31. How many of you know, without turning, what the overarching purpose of the book of John is?

[5 : 10] What is it? These things are written, help me, that you may know. In other words, I'm telling you these things so you can get your hands around the information of who Jesus is for this purpose, that you might believe in Him and have everlasting life.

Yesterday, as I was pumping gas, I happened to bump into a guy that knew me. And he says, How are you doing? I said, Well, I'm doing pretty good. I'm trying to think, Oh, who, Lord, is this? You know, I don't know still. But he says, Yeah. It's all right. I'll forget you. Give me enough time. But anyway, he's talking about visiting the church.

He says, Man, your people sing. Well, praise God. I'm glad. You know, people who know Jesus have a reason to kind of hoop it up. Would you agree with that? Just to give you an illustration, and it's a very poor one, but I would imagine that, what is that song that they sing after football games? I've only been one time. It's like, what is it, Carmen, Ohio? I'll bet you after the national championship, they actually sang it enthusiastically as a team. You know, it's like, We're into this.

[6 : 26] And this guy was, we're pumping gas there, and I'm concentrating on doing my job. And he's, Yeah, your people are singing. They're great. They're blowing it out. I said, Well, praise the Lord for that. And then I had a chance to go where?

Talk about Jesus. And the fact that the gospel is what changes us from being kind of dullards to being someone a little enthusiastic in the Lord Jesus Christ, right? And so here we are.

We're working our way through the book of John, and we're dealing with this underlying and recurring theme. Who is Jesus, and what's he all about? And every piece of information chosen that John the apostle chose to write is written for this explicit purpose that you who sit under the hearing of the word of God and read the scriptures can be brought to the point of saying, Hey, I know who Jesus is, and I accept him as my Lord and Savior, or I have nothing to do with him, and so what? I mean, the fact of the matter is is that Bible preaching, follow me here, either brings people to a point of saying what? Yes or no to the truth that's been explained plainly.

And so as we come to John's last great statement, there is a connectedness between the previous verse, and put your finger on it just for a minute.

[7 : 47] He must increase, and I must decrease. He must increase, and I must decrease. I debated back and forth about giving a little lesson on vocabulary, and I will.

This is known as an axiom. An axiom is just a truth that is so undeniably truthful that you can't get away from it. I mean, here, gravity happens.

That's an axiom. Do you know what? Now, the truth of the matter is, is this verse is more certain and more binding than gravity. How do I know that? If I were to go far enough up, I would reach the point where gravity doesn't happen.

What I do know is that the fact of the increasing glory of Christ for now and all eternity is an undeniable fact that is irreversible, and it is there for me to revel and rejoice in and enjoy.

And John the apostle, working through what John the Baptist had to say, you remember the disciples came to him in kind of petty attitude. He, you know what? That guy you baptized, you know, he's getting all the credit, and people are following him, and they're not doing anything with you.

[9 : 09] John says, what's the deal? He must increase, and I must decrease. Now, with that axiom in place, we find in the remaining verses, John's last testimony to the supremacy and significance of Christ.

And these verses are part of this larger picture of the apostle explaining who is Jesus, so that you can believe on him and have everlasting life.

And so, first of all, as we look at these verses, I want you to recognize first the person of Christ.

There in verse 31, it says, 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. Remember, John the Baptist is now fleshing out or expanding this statement, He must increase.

So why must he increase? Well, the obvious reason is, is that because of where he came from. And keep your finger there in John chapter 3 and just turn back a little bit. Go to John chapter 1.

[10 : 18] As John the apostle starts into his gospel, he says, First, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.

All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. So we understand, John makes it clear to us, that Jesus Christ is indeed the second person of the Trinity.

He is God himself. Over there, and also in chapter 3, verse 13, we find a very similar tone, and just mark it, if you will, in John 3, 13, it says, no one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

In other words, nobody else really has firsthand empirical evidence of what heaven is like and who God really is in particular detail, like Jesus has. And so, while it is true that the Son of God came to earth and took on human flesh for all eternity, the recognized fact that we see here is that Jesus is divine.

Yes, all man and all God. Hey, can you put your hands around that one, really? All man and all God. We can't, but the truth is, in the Bible, it tells us that Jesus is all man and all God, and here's the fact.

[11:40] Jesus is divine, divine, and he is the express revelation of the triune God. There's no one like him. And because Jesus is the Son of God, it is right for him to increase.

Why should he become more significant? Why should he take up all the oxygen in the room? Why is it that we will spend all of eternity worshiping and praising him? I remember having a conversation last week with someone who said to me, I'm kind of, I'm struggling with understanding what eternity is going to be like.

I mean, you know, I mean, just sitting around thinking about Jesus. I'm like, ugh. You know, I didn't say it that way, but it's like, hey, if you're not real familiar with him and he doesn't take up much of your time today, I mean, you know, hey, three minutes, I did do, what is that, daily bread.

I mean, hey, I'm good. You know, I've given God a little bit of time here, and if he kind of gets a little two or three minutes on a periodic basis, the idea of spending all the time forever is like, whoa, I'm not sure I'm good with that.

Will there be iPads in heaven? Will there be angry birds in heaven? You know, whatever it is that you occupy your time when you're really engaged, and so here is John saying, hey, he's from above.

[13:00] He's supremely significant. I want you to think about this with me. You can know where your spiritual growth is by checking to see if he is growing in significance in your life.

Will you think with me about that just for a moment? You can know where you are in your spiritual growth. How am I doing? Am I moving uphill?

Will you can know whether or not there's spiritual progress taking place in your life, whether or not Christ is truly growing to occupy a more and more significant place in your life.

If you're still consumed with your own ambitions and your vices, if you're obsessed with your own importance and what other people think of you, you've got a ways to go because here's the truth of the matter.

Jesus came from above and he is supremely significant because of that. Now just as John talked about Jesus first in verse 30, remember what he said there, he said he must increase, I must decrease.

[14:09] He does the same thing. He first of all talks about Jesus and said he's from above, he must increase. I am from below, I must decrease. And so I want you to think with me just for a moment about this decreasing nature of humanity and who we are.

When John the Baptist said, I must decrease, he followed it up by saying, I'm from the earth. I'm from the earth. And making that statement, he was kind of referencing the reality of the fact that all of us here live very brief and shallow lives.

Is that not true? It's appointed unto man, once to die, and after that, the judgment. In Psalm 90, it says that the average lifespan is between 70 and 80 years, and there is a card for Jessa Bartley that you can sign out there in the foyer.

She's going to be 97 this week. And by the way, don't, I'm not going to be at the door saying, did you sign the card? I may, but I want that thing scrawled all over the place, okay?

Not many of us make it to 97. Give her an attaboy, okay? Thank Jesus for it, by the way. Okay, but John says, I'm of the earth. What is he really talking about?

[15:18] He's talking about the fact, I'm out of here someday. And in Genesis chapter 3, verse 19, it says, from dust you came, and from dust you, or to dust you will return.

And so here is John the Baptist bearing testimony to the fact that his life is marked by brevity, Christ is marked by deity.

Furthermore, there's something else that John knew that he bore witness to when he said there in verse 31, he who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way.

Turn over in your Bible to 2 Corinthians chapter 4, verse 7. Have you ever stopped to ask why it is that I tend to illustrate with Bible passages? It's not an accident.

Here's the answer to that question. I am persuaded that God has the best ideas, and so my job is kind of to say, hey, let's find out what God thinks. 2 Corinthians chapter 4, verse 7, kind of just spot it for you in broad terms.

[16:22] Paul is talking about ministry, and he says, listen, we have this treasure in what? In earthen vessels. Paul was not the only person who was persuaded of his earthiness, of his frailty, of his inadequacy in ministry, and if you still doubt that case, you can stop and remind yourself that at one point in John's ministry, he had second questions about Jesus.

Are you the one or not? John, as wonderful as he was, as a messenger of the Lord of hosts, nevertheless struggled with the reality of his own humanity, and so as you think about this, I think we should recognize that Jesus is supremely worthy of listening to and of exalting because he is God, and John the Baptist is saying, hey, it makes sense for me to diminish because I really am nobody in comparison.

Now, I want you to recognize that sometimes people take their earthiness to be an excuse for habitual and recurring sin. Our earthiness should prompt humility as well as tenderness in dealing with the sins of other people and not the attitude of, hey, ain't no big deal.

I mean, hey, everybody's doing it, you know, so recognize when John says this is an expression of humility, not indifference to the reality of sin. So as you see here from the very beginning, John the Baptist says he's closing up his ministry, he says, let me tell you something about Jesus.

He is eternal. And all the rest of us are very frail and temporary. Well, in the verses that follow now, when we look here in verses 32 through 35, we're going to find an expanded version or expanded declaration of the supremacy of Christ and John bears testimony to several significant things.

[18:17] So think about it. What are the testimonies about Christ? For one, we find there in verse 32 and put your finger on it, John chapter 3, verse 32, he bears witness to what he has seen and heard.

Jesus spoke on the basis of first-hand knowledge. Why would we pay such careful attention to what Jesus has to say? Why should we do that?

Well, the obvious reason is that he is the one who, of all individuals, comes with absolute, accurate information on a place that you and I haven't been and from a person that, at the end of the day, we haven't really seen, have we?

Jesus is the express revelation of the person of the Godhead. Now, I want you, earlier this week as I was studying, I found myself tempted to kind of launch on that and stay the whole time in this one statement about Jesus being the absolute, accurate revelation of the Godhead.

But I want you to look at a small slice of that reality by keeping your finger in John and go over to Hebrews. Turn in your Bible to Hebrews, chapter 1, verse 1 through 4.

[19:40] In chapter 1 of Hebrews, we begin with the opening statement that the author makes. He says this, long ago, as many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets.

But in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son. After that statement, in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son, the author of Hebrews gives us seven different statements about the supremacy of Christ as the revealer of the eternal glory of God.

Why should we listen to Jesus? Because, hammer, hammer, hammer, seven strokes that nail the subject down and make us completely persuaded Jesus is the one who is worthy to listen to.

Second reason why we should listen to Jesus as we look here in the passage going back to John is that Jesus spoke with perfect and complete accuracy.

accuracy. He spoke as one who had come from heaven and understood with absolute perfection who the Father is, who the triune God is, and He spoke with undeniable authority and accuracy.

[20:55] But secondly, He spoke with complete and perfect accuracy. There's not a single word that was ever said by Jesus that was not something that the Father intended for Him to say.

How many of you say things that you wish you didn't say? Okay, out here. A couple of you, I know. The rest of you are probably near perfect, but most of us are like, ah, don't do that.

Okay? I want you to understand that Jesus spoke with perfect and complete accuracy. Go back to John because we want to see this. It says this in verse 32, He bears witness to what He has seen

and heard, yet no one receives His testimony.

Whoever receives Jesus' testimony sets His seal to this, that God is true. Jesus spoke completely about the truth of God.

And when the Word of God tells us something about God, whether we like it or not, whether we agree with it or not, whether we think it's a good idea or it's something that should be changed, at the end of the day, it is God's Word and it is absolutely reliable.

[22 : 08] It is what it is and we settle it and that's what God has to say. I want you to understand that when Jesus spoke, He wasn't just kind of chattering to fill the time.

How many of you have ever been in a situation where you were responsible for leading a group and you ask one of those open-ended questions and everybody got that blank stare like I'm not answering?

Have you ever been there? It was like, and what you try to do, it's a mistake most of the time, you try to fill the emptiness with just a little drivel.

It's a blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, and you're just saying things that really don't amount to anything. Jesus didn't chatter just to hear Himself speak or to occupy the moment while He was waiting for His disciples to get it.

Having said that, you're obviously thinking the logical question is, where's that in the Bible? Is that what you're thinking? Everybody's smiling at me. I mean, the logical thing for godly people to do when a pastor makes a statement is what?

[23 : 12] Oh, yeah? Where is that? Oh, well, thank you. I'm glad you asked. Let's go to John 8. John 8, verse 28.

I don't know. You may even want to take a pencil and pen and underline this. Jesus said to them, 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, J-U-S-T, what?

Just? Speak just as the Father taught me. Did Jesus go off page? And the answer is, no. Did Jesus ever make any kind of erroneous statements that really, well, I'm not really sure that should have been taken literally, blah, blah, blah.

No, when Jesus said it, it was Jesus speaking and it was exactly what God the Father wanted Him to say. Let's look further at this. John 12, verse 49.

John 12, verse 49. For I have not spoken on mine own authority, but the Father who sent me has made, has Himself given me a commandment, what to say and what to speak.

[24 : 26] It reminds me, years ago, when Judith and I were, is Judith in here? She's, hey, good to see you. Judith and I are going on vacation, just checking to see if she's here, she's driving.

But, years ago, when Judith and I were living over in Angaro, our kids, particularly our boys, would play in the basement and our boys were, were much more aggressive in that, you know, smack down, knock down kind of things, you know, and girls are into dolls and boys are into, you know, thumping chests and it's like trying to see whatever.

And every now and then, my son, my older son, was significantly older than my younger son and sometimes there would be just moderate injuries, you know. And I'd, I'd hear this thing kind of playing out, devolve, you know, it's kind of, and I'd, I'd shout down the steps and say, what's going on?

You know what the standard answer was? 100% of the time, nothing. Nothing. We're good. And then I would send one of my daughters, you know, I was like, why get out of the chair, you know, Heather, go.

Daddy wants to know what you guys are doing. I mean, do you think she was going down there on her own initiative?

[25 : 53] And the answer is, no. Do you think she was coming with her own message like, hey, Joe and Sam, will you two be nice to each other? You know, that's not what it was. It was like, what are you doing?

Dad said. Here's the deal. Jesus is making it clear to us that what he had to say was not just his own opinion.

It was what God wanted him to say. If Jesus should be heard because he spoke exactly what the Father wanted him to say, then those earthen vessels who speak for him and do not wonder from the text should be listened to carefully.

And as a result of that, one of the things that should characterize those who preach the word is that they talk less about themselves and more about him. Less about their own experiences and more about the authority and the sufficiency of Christ.

Do you understand that? Keep that in mind. Let's come to the third lesson that I want you to see. This is indicting. Do you know what indicting means?

[27 : 02] It kind of dings me a little bit as I've been studying and praying and then illustrating, unfortunately. But let's go to the third point. You know it ahead of time because it flashed up on the board.

Jesus spoke in the fullness of the Spirit. Okay? For he whom God has sent utters the words of God for he gives the Spirit without measure.

For he gives the Spirit here. Here's another passage that deserves a full launch. What is the characteristic of speaking through the enabling of the Spirit?

We won't do that this morning but I do want you to recognize that speaking through the enabling of the Spirit of God is something that should characterize all Bible preaching. It should also be one of the things that you pray for when you pray for me or you pray for whoever this evening Pastor Saul is going to hey by the way it would be better for you to show up and pray for him than to stay home and watch the shopping channel and pray for him.

Right? I mean do you understand the choices? So one of the reasons why you should pray for those who are preachers of the Word of God is because they do have the treasure in earthen vessels and what you want to do is pray that by the Spirit of God their earthiness would be a little diminished.

[28 : 33] No man apart from our Lord Jesus will ever speak as Jesus did in the complete fullness of the Spirit.

Why is that? For one we can grieve the Spirit. Would you agree with that? I don't have to remind you who know the Scriptures that it says grieve not the Holy Spirit. In other words I can do things that grieve the Holy Spirit and if I am grieving the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit then going to help me as I speak on his behalf?

I got to get the grief issue out. Deal with it. Another thing is this is that we can quench the Spirit. We can on a recurring basis say no I don't want to listen to that I don't want to do that I'm not interested in that and as a result of that that the Holy Spirit's ministry in enabling us to proclaim the glory of Christ can be diminished.

The Spirit quickened every single word Jesus spoke. Now having said that earlier this morning I said something that was not prompted by the Spirit of God.

I'll tell you what it was because when I sat down there I thought to myself Tim stop what I did. Here's what I said.

[29 : 51] I said something about raising hands and I want you to understand God in his infinite wisdom did not make all of us to be exactly alike. Do you understand that? I married a girl wonderful 44 plus years I think is it 44 where are you?

Yeah. We're going towards 45. In case you didn't know I am a marginally emotional person. What that tells you is that Judith is as mellow as they come.

And for me to look at her and say what's the deal with you? And for her to look at me and say what is wrong? So here's the deal. All I want is for God's people to worship in spirit and in truth.

How you do that should not be something that I flap my gums about a little less. Do you follow what I'm saying? Bear with me. That's a little bit of the earthiness and when an illustration and I didn't come this morning intending to do that.

I'm struck by the fact that every single word that Jesus said was like an arrow in the hands of a mighty man. It hit the target and it made an eternal difference.

[31 : 10] Now I have prayed about this so I'm going to say it. I would also caution those who buy into the idea that the Holy Spirit is behind the meaningless babbling and mutterings that pass off for charismatic gifts and speaking in tongues and here's why.

If Jesus never said a single word that was not understandable and for the sake of exalting the supremacy of his father then why do we come off with the idea that this muttering and babbling that cannot be discerned and has no spiritual outcome really is significant apart from just doing it. Now am I going to throw stones at people that do it? No, no, no, no, no but I won't say this it's not of the Holy Spirit. How do I know that? The Holy Spirit is interested in making Jesus look good in

letting you see him.

Every single word that Jesus said was designed by the Father to lift up the glory and the supremacy of the Father in heaven and people walked away every time Jesus opened his mouth not every time but you know when they walked away they said we have never heard anyone talk like him and what was he doing?

He was speaking in language that people could understand and he was convicting them with that language fourth Jesus spoke as the beloved of the Father look at John the Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand the love of the Father for our Lord Jesus Christ is a magnificent channel through which the glory flows I want you to turn with me just for a moment to a passage kind of frame this out and understand it keep your finger in John because we are coming back there but John chapter 13 John chapter 13 verse 21 through 25 this is at the last supper when Jesus is celebrating

[33 : 32] Passover with his disciples for the last time and you will remember and I'm not going to have you turn there but you'll remember that in the flow of the supper he stops and says this he says one of you is going to betray me this is a pretty significant statement and pretty significant moment because in a very unusual manner the disciples actually hear what Jesus said and they kind of take it to heart most of the time when the disciples heard Jesus saying things they were thinking they hoped that John would hear it or that Peter would hear it or that one of the other disciples excluding them would get the memo how many of you have ever been listening to a sermon and thought man I really hope my husband hears this one in fact you even nudge him just in case he's dozed off and you know that you're helping the Holy Spirit like hey Bubba it's you he's talking to okay in this case and you can find it in Luke chapter 22 okay they say am I the one and actually it's in Matthew chapter 26 that they say am I the one and then in Luke chapter 22 they look to each other and they say is it you are you going to betray him are you doing this you see first am I doing it second are you doing it then we come up to the golden moment that we're referring to in John chapter 13 look at this passage

John chapter 13 verse 21 after saying these things things Jesus was troubled in his spirit and testified truly truly I say to you one of you will betray me the disciples looked at one another uncertain of whom he spoke one of his disciples whom Jesus loved was reclining at the table close to Jesus Simon Peter motioned him and asked motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking so that disciple leaning back against Jesus said to him Lord who is it Jesus answered it is he to whom I will give the morsel of bread when I have dipped it and so when he had dipped the morsel he gave it to Judas the son of Iscariot do you follow this I want you to recognize this here are the disciples and in their desire to understand really what was going on they asked someone who was close to interpret what was being said

I want you to understand one of the characteristics of love love reveals all that there is isn't that right and love doesn't hold back secrets one of the things that I think is important in marriage is that there be no secrets I mean after all doesn't the Bible say and is not the Bible reliable and trustworthy that the two shall become what what what one flesh no secrets with one flesh I am who I am my wife knows me she is who she is and I know her and God intends that that love relationship is one that that has a level of transparency and sweetness that that cannot take place apart from that and so here is Jesus saying or here is John the Baptist saying because the father loves Jesus he can be completely relied upon to communicate everything that we know the love of the father communicates freely and openly with

Christ one other illustration because I think it's important to recognize Judges chapter 16 the story of Samson by the way if you think that Samson learned from the first experience he didn't but you remember that he fell in love with Delilah and remember she kept on coming to him and said hey what's the secret to your strength oh if you bind me with seven wet bow strings that'll do it you know if you tie my hair into the weaver's beam and she says you know it's quite evident that you don't love me because you aren't telling me the truth and he says well the deal is if you cut my hair I'm done and it happened you see Delilah leveraged the issue of relationship if you love me you'll tell me and John the Baptist is reminding us that because God the father loves

Jesus he gives Jesus all the information about who he is well that brings us to a final truth and I want you to go back to John chapter 3 so we understand the significance of this you know there are a lot of people today that believe just back up just a minute a lot of people believe that Jesus is a pretty good guy I mean you know okay he kind of went around doing good things you know and in

fact you can even rely upon him to kind of be a pretty sweet person now being a product of the 70s I can't help but think about the idea of Jesus as being someone who if you're going to San Francisco you know wear flowers in your hair some of you are thinking where is he coming from you know it's like here's the deal Jesus was not just about being nice and sweet he was also about telling the truth do you follow that heaven and hell are undeniably real truths in fact listen to me carefully [39 : 40] Jesus talked more about hell than any other person in the scriptures and here is John the Baptist speaking on behalf of the Savior the Lord Jesus Christ and here's what he said 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 you can't talk about Jesus truthfully without bringing people to a point of saying yes or no to God and what is it that Jesus really tells us he tells us all we need to know about God and so let me give you just a real simple summary to hold on to that I want to have clearly fixed in your mind number one this is the undeniable Bible truth that God is holy and cannot overlook sin

God is holy and cannot overlook sin it doesn't make any difference what flavor you're involved in do you understand that in fact keep your finger here we go finger exercises today go to 1 Corinthians chapter 6 1 Corinthians chapter 6 one of the things I love love love love say it again love about the gospel is that the gospel tells us we don't have to stay the way we are 1 Corinthians chapter 6 verse 9 do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God don't be deceived don't mess with God neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who practice homosexuality nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor revelers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God now we come to the next verse that I love and such were some of you in fact let me add to that that's who we all were isn't that right you know we may not have committed the nasty nine or the filthy five or the dirty dozen but the truth of the matter is all have sinned and come short of the glory of God that's the truth and how can a man who stands between heaven and hell not draw attention to the fact that heaven and hell rest in the balance and make it clear that Christ Jesus came first of all because God is holy and cannot abide sin secondly because we are sinners and cannot remedy our problem on our own hey can I get to heaven by being good on my own efforts and what's the answer not by works of righteousness lest any man should boast you know when we get when we cross the finish line none of us are going to be saying I finally made it you know it was it was that extra little bit of work I did for United Way that's the thing that pulled me through given blood whatever stop not by works of righteousness lest any one of us should boast and we come to the third truth is this is God sent his son the Lord Jesus Christ to die for our sins he died for me he died in my place one of the Bible truths I love to say at a funeral is that Christ died your death will I die well if Jesus doesn't come back first that's going to happen but I won't die like Jesus died I will slip from this place through the moment of death into the presence of the Father with the smile of God upon me absent in the body present with the Lord and that is because Jesus died for me so I want you to understand that as the scriptures make it clear in this passage believing in Jesus brings everlasting life and joyful obedience and by the way hey everybody listen telling me you're saved and there's nothing that indicates that you're walking by faith in obedience obedience is kind of counter intuitive it's not affirming and encouraging do you follow me

I mean if I say I love my wife and I do then I would move furniture more willingly how many of you understand that statement now it's a process to get there but the spirit of God is working hey here's the deal Jesus says this he says not everyone that saith to me Lord Lord will enter the kingdom but he that doeth the will of my father and so Jesus and having a relationship with him means coming to a point of walking in obedience with him secondly I want you to know this and close with it rejecting Jesus brings the eternal wrath of God rejecting Jesus brings the eternal wrath of God can I ask you something can you imagine a church that doesn't make that clear huh I want you to imagine just for a moment I am a physician who has little pills

[45 : 18] I don't have them in my pocket but just little pills these are pills that that take care of the poison of the soul and you come in with a variety of symptoms but at the end of the day the symptoms that you are showing are symptoms that indicate that you have this affliction and you're being poisoned by that disease or sickness and I have the pills in my pocket what kind of conscientious loving sympathetic physician would not say to you man I am so glad you came here and you know it is a messy problem that you have and you could die from this disease but I've got good news for you take this do you like that we're all great physicians we're all helpers of the great physician isn't that right that's what we're in the business of doing is letting people know that Christ

Jesus came into the world to save sinners and Paul said this of whom I am chief I love the privilege of speaking about the power of the cross don't you and you can understand why the apostle as he penned this letter and as he brought the ministry of John the Baptist to a close it ends up as you would expect with the sweetness of the gospel let's close in prayer holy father this morning as we gather together we are here because of the Lord Jesus Christ who found us in our hopeless despair and convicted us of our sin and brought us to the point of realizing that we have no hope in our own efforts in our own goodness but Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners and the spirit of God works to bring the person who is under condemnation first to realize the reality of their judgment and secondly to realize there is no hope apart from Christ and so this morning as we hear the word preached our desire is this is that we who know Christ would revel in the sweetness of the gospel and those who are here that don't know Christ would be drawn to believe in Jesus for the salvation of their soul and that's our prayer this morning as we close in Jesus name amen as we