

# Jesus Is the Christ, The Son of God

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. This is the first message of our brand new series on the book of John, entitled, Jesus is God.

Take your Bible if you would, and turn with me to the book of John, John chapter 1. John chapter 1, and we're going to read from verse 1 down to verse 14. I am excited. I think that picture you see behind me ought to sum up the most wonderful truth in the world.

Jesus is God. How about repeating that with me? Can you say that out loud? Ready? Jesus is God. Do that again. Jesus is God.

That ought to be clear to you. You ought to know that. You ought to believe that. And everywhere you turn, people are going to sell that truth. They're going to attack that truth. They don't like that truth. But the Bible is clear. Jesus is God.

And that's who we believe in. And if you want to know the Father, you'll have to know the Son. If you want to see God, you'll have to see the Son. And John the Apostle, he is the beloved Apostle.

[ 1 : 1 0 ] He's the one who, when the men would lay, they didn't sit like we do. They kind of laid on their side and propped up as they ate at their meals. And it was John who laid his head on Jesus' chest.

He was just the closest. He called himself the one Jesus loves. That's how he likes to refer to himself. And so now he's writing a book called The Gospel of John. And here's what he wants to do.

He wants to say to everybody, hey, I want you to know that Jesus is God. I want you to know him. I've been close to him. I spent three and a half years with him.

But I want you to understand he wasn't just a man. He wasn't just a great teacher. He wasn't just a great rabbi. He is God. And so he writes the book for that purpose.

So if you have your Bible, turn with me to John chapter 1. And let's read from verse 1 down to verse 14. And you mark these verses. John chapter 1, verse 1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

[ 2 : 0 9 ] The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. The same came for witness to bear witness of the light that all men through him might believe.

He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

[ 3 : 14 ] Let's bow our heads for a word of prayer if we could. Father in heaven, I want to ask you to show Jesus to us today through your word. I ask you to give our people eyes of faith, to see and believe, to hear and believe, and to magnify Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, Jesus, God in human flesh.

I pray, God, that you would help us today to know him, to proclaim him, to declare him, and to take his gospel to the world. And I will give you great honor and glory and praise for all that you do.

In Jesus' name, amen. Well, the Bible has four gospels, and it talks about Jesus, and it brings us the person of Jesus.

And John writes his with one thing in mind. I am going to convince you by the power of the Holy Spirit and by the truths and the facts you can see in his life that Jesus is God.

I'm going to get that across to you, he says, before this is over. I'm going to get that across to you. Jesus is God. That's the great truth of the book of John. To be saved, this is the most important doctrine in the world.

[ 4 : 26 ] It's a doctrine that's under attack. If you don't believe Jesus is God, to be blunt and honest, you can't be saved. You say, well, I believe in God. Well, here's what the Bible says. You can believe in God, but the devils believe in God, and they even tremble.

It's not about believing in God. It's about believing in Jesus because he is the way to God. And without Jesus, you don't get to God. The Bible says in John 14, 6, I'm the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by me.

So we need to know Jesus. We need to know him, know who he is, know what he's done. We need to know and understand Jesus. We need to see him bigger than we've ever seen him before.

We need to see him as God in human flesh. If you would, open your Bible to John 20 and verse 31. This would be a good verse to memorize as we spend a long time. We'll probably be in this book six months.

But if you look at John chapter 20 and verse 31, it sums up what John's doing. He's ending the book. Now, you know, will you listen to this? You know that this book is actually being written.

[ 5 : 27 ] The human writer is John, but we don't believe that any of these books are man-written books. We believe they're God-written books. So this is a book that God's writing through his man, John.

And at the end of it, he said, I want you to know why this book's being written. And this is what he says in John 20, 31. But these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, that believing you might have life through his name.

So he says, hey, let me tell you why I'm writing the book. I'm writing the book for three basic reasons in John chapter 20, verse 31. He said, I'm writing, number one, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ.

Now, that's not the message for today, but just let me show you. Would you look at this? Wait a second. Listen to this. For 39 books, the Bible told us that God was sending somebody. The word for him in the New Testament is Christ.

The word for him in the Old Testament is Messiah. He's the anointed one. He's the one that God's going to do salvation, bring salvation through him. Every time a lamb was sacrificed, it pointed to Jesus.

[ 6 : 31 ] Every time salvation is mentioned, it pointed to Jesus. And John wants to say, hey, everybody, look up. Listen up. You know the Old Testament? You know what it says for 39 books? Let me tell you who that guy is.

That guy is Jesus. He is the Christ. So I'm going to talk to you about the one God sent. I want to talk to you about the one God anointed. I want to talk to you about the one that brings salvation. In fact, what he's saying is, you know, over there in Isaiah 53, where all of our sins were placed on him?

Let me tell you who he is. He is Jesus. You see him as a man, but he is God. You see him here, but he is God in an expression. Then it says Jesus the Christ, the Son of God.

I want you to know he is God in human flesh. God is three persons in one. We call it the Trinity. That's not a Bible word, but it's a Bible truth. There's God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

And you're going to see them expressed all through the Bible. One person, three persons in one. You say, do you understand that? No, I don't. I just trust God and what he said on that. Can you say amen right there?

[ 7 : 33 ] He is God, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. And then he said, look at this, that believing you might have life through his name. Do you know how you get saved? Through his name.

John said, you've got to know who he is. You've got to know who he is. You've got to know what he did. Because there's only one way you can truly be born again. That's through Jesus. Parentheses.

You may come to church and believe a whole lot about Jesus up here in your head. You may know all the stories and all the facts. But if you haven't got a hold of something down in your heart, that Jesus isn't some historical figure.

That Jesus isn't somebody we talk about. He is God in human flesh. You are not saved. You are not born again. You are not going to heaven when you die. Jesus isn't a good man.

He is in a good way. He is the way and the only way. And it is through Jesus or absolutely no one else. Now go with me if you would to verse 1. John 1.1. Get your ink pen ready.

[ 8 : 31 ] Let's find out who Jesus is. John 1.1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.

But beside verse 1, you might ought to write down the word preexistent. You might ought to write down the word preexistent. What it means is Jesus or the Christ or the Son of God has always been.

He has always been. He has no beginning, and He has no end because He is God. In the beginning, when it all started, He was already there.

In the beginning, when it all started, He was already there. Jesus is before the Christ. The Word is before all creation. He is before everything.

Before there ever was an earth, before there ever was a sun, before there ever was a moon, before there ever was anything, He was already there. He is the Word, the uncreated.

[ 9 : 33 ] He is the creator, not the created. He existed with the Father before anything else. Jesus existed with the Father, or Christ existed with the Father before anything else.

Take your Bible, go to John 17, 5. John 17, 5. Jesus knew that. You see, Jesus is God's earthly manifestation of Himself.

It's God made flesh. Jesus, the person of Jesus, is God made flesh. God taken on human flesh. And in John 17, He's praying, and He's talking to the Father.

He's here on earth, and He's in His earthly body, and He prays. Now, listen to this. And the Holy Spirit writes it down so you'll know who He was. And in John 17, 5, the Bible says, Jesus talking.

And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. God, I want You to glorify me like You did before we ever had a world, before we ever created any of this, before any of it ever started.

[ 10 : 35 ] I want You to glorify me. I've been down here on this earth for 33 years. They're about to crucify me. But I know who I am. I know where I came from. I know where I'm going. Glorify me like we were before there ever was a world.

He is God in human flesh. In John chapter 8 and verse 58, John chapter 8 and verse 58, Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am.

That was the wildest statement of all. Here are these Pharisees and Sadducees and spiritual leaders and people who knew the Old Testament and people who knew the genealogies and people that knew where Jesus lived and people that knew who He was.

And they all really think Abraham's the stuff and Abraham's generations back. And Jesus just looked at them and said, well, I'll just go ahead and tell you all, before there ever was an Abraham, I already was. And he didn't say I was. He said, I am.

Now, that was like blasphemy. Who says I am? Who says I am? Moses asked God, he said, would you mind telling me what your name is? He said, what do you need to know my name for?

[ 11 : 37 ] He said, all right, you want to know my name? I'll tell you who it is. I am. That I am. And Jesus looked at him and did just the exact same thing. He said, before Abraham was, I am. And everybody in the room knew, wow, he's claiming to be God.

This guy's going too far. He's claiming to be God. Jesus really believed he was God because he was God. Look, if you would, in Philippians chapter 2, verses 6 through 8, if you would.

In Philippians chapter 2, verses 6 through 8. Jesus is who we're talking about, or who Paul is talking about. The Holy Spirit's writing through Paul. And he says, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death.

Even the death of the cross. Jesus, in heaven, equal to God, and he never even crossed his mind to think anybody would ever say, Jesus, you can't claim to be God.

He said, I don't even think, that never crosses my mind because I am. I don't think it's robbery to say I'm God because I am. I don't think it's robbery for me to act like I'm God because I am. I don't think it's going to be anything strange that y'all hear me say I'm God because I am.

[ 12 : 50 ] And then all of a sudden, he steps up, lays down all that royalty and all that prestige. He doesn't leave off being God. And he steps down to earth and he takes on himself the form of a servant.

A servant. Not a serpent. A servant. Hey, that's bad. Don't say that. Bleep that out of there. He wouldn't take on the form of a servant. He took on the form of a servant. And he came to this earth.

And he was born here on this, born on this earth, taking on human flesh. Would you go back to verse 1? Let me get you the sign to circle a word that I think is key to you. Look in verse 1.

Chapter 1, verse 1. In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God. I want you to circle the word with. You know why? Because there's two people being mentioned there.

There's God the Father and God the Son. And he is with him. He is God, but he's with him. One God, two people mentioned in that one verse.

[ 13 : 47 ] In the chapter and all through the book, you're going to find all three people. Now, let's see who he is. Let's see who he is. In Revelation 118, you don't need to look that up.

He said, I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, says the Lord, which is, which was, which is to come. Jesus is God.

God. Jesus is God in human flesh. Look, if you would, in John chapter 1 and verse 3. You need to know who he is. We're going to get to salvation in just a minute.

We're going to get to what happened. But see, all through history, everybody rejects this truth. Nobody wants to hear this truth. The great majority of people in the world rebel at this truth. How can a man be God?

How can God become a man? Impossible. Impossible. In John 1, 3, it says that all things were made by him. All things were made by him. And without him was there anything made that was made.

[ 14 : 46 ] Now, look at this. That word that was in the beginning, that was with God, that was God. He was in the very beginning and he made the world. And everything that God made, he made it through Jesus.

Jesus Christ. The word. He was in the beginning. In Colossians 1, 16, the Bible says, for by him were all things created. They're in heaven and they're in earth. Visible and invisible.

Whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him. Jesus is the creating God. He is the power of God.

He is the creator of God. Creating indicates a lot of stuff, you know. That means he was there before the creation. That means he is the pre-existent God. I need you to stop and look this way.

It's like, maybe somehow we turn Jesus into a little baby born at Bethlehem. And he becomes almost like a folk story. It's a sweet, romantic, hallmark moment when that little baby is born in Bethlehem.

[ 15 : 46 ] But you need to know something. God, Jesus already existed. He's not the little baby God. He is the great big creator God. He is not the little bitty God born in Bethlehem that men are going to come to worship.

No, he is the God of all creation. Come to earth to speak to man and to bring truth to man. He is God. Look what happens in him. Look if you would at verse 4.

In him was life. And the life was the light of men. Now look this way. Nobody gave him life. Joseph and Mary didn't give him life.

And even the Holy Spirit and Mary and the miraculous conception didn't give him life. In him was life. From the very beginning before it all started, in Jesus, in the Word, in Christ was life.

Because he is God. He's God. John's screaming, you're not talking about a man here. You're not talking about a religious historical figure here. You're not talking about a rabbi.

[ 16 : 47 ] We're talking about God. How in the world could he bring salvation if he was just a man? John said he wasn't a man. He's God. He was already here. He created the world. And by the way, guess where life came from?

Him. They created Adam and Eve, laid them out on the ground, and God breathed into him what was already in God. Life. He breathed into him the breath of life.

He is God. Chapter 1, verse 5, if you would, this then is the message, 1 John 1, 5, this then is the message which we have heard of him and declaring to you, God is light.

And in him is no darkness at all. I'll just stop just a second. Let's get John's message because this is so vitally important because we're going to get salvation for us.

It's so important. John says, hey, history stops right now and history begins again. And because God came down from heaven and he came to earth and he's creator, but he's preexistent.

[ 17 : 47 ] He's really God. I know he died and I know he was buried and I know he rose again. And I know y'all think of him as a historical figure, but I need to tell you right off the bat, John's like jumping up and down and screaming, no, he's God.

No, he's God. He was in the beginning before anything else was. He's God. He's preexistent. Life comes from him. And so, you know, here's what happened.

John 1, 14. Look at John 1, 14. The one that was in the beginning with God, the one that was God, the one who created, took on human flesh.

Now, this is where we know that that one we're talking about and all these preexistent terms and all these terms like big lofty terms that he was with God and he was God. And without him was not anything made that was made.

Here's how I know who he is. Look at John 1, 14. This ought to be a verse you almost memorize. If you don't memorize it, look at it. And the word was made flesh. And the word, chapter 1 and verse 1, and the word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

[ 18 : 50 ] And the God who was in the beginning with God, the God who was in the beginning that nothing was created by him, the God that was long before anything else was created, was made flesh.

And we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of his Father, full of grace and truth. John says, guys, let me tell you, before anything ever was, he was.

And then one day, the he that was before everything was made flesh and came down to earth and lived among us. Can I remind you that you know that, but you probably think of it as a Christmas carol.

And you probably think of it as something cute you sing around Christmas. But how about this? In Matthew chapter 1 and verse 23, they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us.

They didn't look at some little baby. The Bible said that's not just some little baby born there, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. The truth is that's God come down to be among us.

[ 19 : 58 ] He is God. Probably one of the most excruciating passages of Scripture in the Bible and found in John chapter 14, verses 8 through 11.

And I'm just going to walk you through that. You can read it later. Mark it down so you can read it later. Listen to this. Jesus starts off and he says, Let not your heart be troubled. Do you believe in God? Believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions.

And he's telling all this. They've been living with him and they've known him in the book of John for 13 chapters from the first miracle and before. They've known him. And Philip has the nerve to look at him and say, Well, if you'd show us the Father, that'd be enough.

Could you just show us the Father? And Jesus said, Show you the Father? You've been with me all this time and you don't know who I am yet?

If you have seen me, you have seen the Father. We're the same one. It's so important for you to get a hold of something. Jesus looked at Philip and said, Philip, you want to see the Father?

[ 21 : 01 ] Look at me. I am God. You want to see God? You see me. By the way, in Hebrews, it calls Jesus the express image of his glory. In Colossians chapter 1, he is called the image of God.

So watch this. Look and we'll move on. Are you looking this way? Just a second. Listen to me. You've got to know this. He's God. He's God. He is God.

Jesus is God. We're not here today because we like this historical figure that started Christianity. We're not here today because Jesus and the apostles wrote a book and it was really neat and it's really fun.

No, we're here today because God split time and eternity and was born on earth. And God took on human flesh and became a man. But he is God.

That's why we're here. Then John the apostles write in the story. He says, guys, this is the fact. But some of you guys are more caught up with John the Baptist than you were with Jesus.

[ 22 : 09 ] And so he moves to number two and he says, God sent a witness. And he sent John the Baptist as a witness. Look, if you would, in John chapter 1, verse 6. And there was a man sent from God whose name was John.

The same came for witness to bear witness of the light that all men through him might believe. He was not that light but was sent to bear witness of the light that was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

I just want to stop here and say this. This is why we're a missionary church. This is why we send missionaries. Can you underline in verse 7, all men through him might believe. That all men through him might believe.

That's found in verse 7. John said, this guy came to bear witness of the light that all men through him might believe. Circle all men anyway. Go down to verse 9.

That was the true light which lighteth every man that comes into the world. Lighteth every man that comes into the world. He is the light.

[ 23 : 12 ] Now I want you to know, in just a minute you're going to see that they all reject him. But you need to know this. God's made provision. God's made provision for salvation.

In 1 Timothy chapter 4 and verse 10, your Bible says, For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially those that believe.

God sent Jesus to bring salvation to the world. 1 John 2, 2. And he is a propitiation for our sins and not for ours only, but for the sins of the world.

The sins of the whole world. He sent him that he might bring salvation. He sent him that he might bring salvation.

And John stands up and says, John the Baptist is talking now. John the apostle is writing this whole story. And he said it starts off with everybody understanding it long before anything ever was. Jesus, God, the Son, the Messiah, the Christ, the Word already was.

[ 24 : 16 ] He always has been and he always will be. And he is God. And then God sent out a guy named John the Baptist. And John the Baptist came out preaching and telling everybody, hey, he's come.

In fact, it is in John 1, 29. He's going to say, behold, the Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the world. And so John is there to announce it.

By the way, John is extremely famous. John is being used in a very unusual way. In Matthew 3, 3, it says that this is the guy that Isaiah said was coming.

Isaiah was saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness. All the way from the Old Testament. All the way from the Old Testament, there was a prophecy. One guy was coming someday to announce the coming of the real guy.

There's going to be a prophet sent out to announce and prepare the way for the real one, God, Jesus, the Messiah, the Christ, the Word. And he came out. And you know John the Baptist? John the Baptist, this guy, I mean, he is a sensation in his day.

[ 25 : 19 ] He's like the biggest preacher. He's Rick Warren and Joel Osteen and Billy Graham and everybody else you can mention all wrapped up into one. This is the fiery, leather-girded preacher that the whole world is going out to hear.

And he doesn't pull any punches, and he's not smiling a whole lot. By the way, everything about him has been unusual. You remember? First off, his mama couldn't have a baby.

She got so old she couldn't have a baby. And God said she's going to have a baby. And then the angel told John, and John said, what? And the Lord said, all right, because you're doubting me, you're not going to speak again.

And when he's born, you tell him his name is John. And all of a sudden, the baby's born. And John, I mean, and Zacharias hadn't been able to speak. And he's standing there. And they come, and they say, well, what do you want to name him? Your wife says John, but nobody in your family is named John.

And he said, bring me something to write on. And they brought it. He wrote down and called him John. This guy's not normal. This guy's not normal. God has big plans for him, and the whole world's listening to him.

[ 26 : 21 ] And he goes out, and he starts preaching. And he tells everybody, hey, guys, I'm getting you ready for somebody that's coming. There's somebody coming who's bigger than me. I don't even have the right to bend down and tie his shoestrings.

Everybody likes me, and you all follow me, and I'm on the front page of every newspaper. And they're talking about me on Channel 11 at 6 o'clock and at 11 o'clock again. Man, I'm the news. But I'll tell you something. I'm not the news.

I'm here to tell you the news that another one is coming. And so he told them about Jesus. He was so big in Mark 1 and verse 5. The Bible said, They went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem were baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

People were going out from everywhere to hear about the coming one, to see John, to be yelled at by John about bringing forth fruit worthy of repentance before they could be baptized.

Look in your Bible. Please mark this verse. John 1 and verse 29. John the Baptist said, The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and he says, Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world.

[ 27 : 28 ] Now, to us, maybe that doesn't mean much. We don't really understand unless we're studying our Bible. But when he said the Lamb of God, every Jew knew about lambs. The Day of Atonement was thousands of lambs dying, and every day the blood ran out of that tabernacle and out of that temple and sacrifice after sacrifice.

They all knew that they were in Egypt in sin, and a lamb died, and the blood was spread on the doorposts and on the lintel. They all knew about all the sacrifices. And John, he says, I'm the prophet.

It's been 400 years. You hadn't heard from God. And God hadn't sent anybody to talk, but I'm here. And you know I'm strange. You know I'm unusual. You know God sent me. Nobody else has been like me for a long time. They're all like, yeah, we know you're the man.

He said, let me tell you, that's the Lamb of God. That's the guy God sent. That's the guy who's going to die on a cross. That's the guy who's going to shed his blood. That's the guy who's going to bring salvation to all of you. Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world.

So John tells everybody, get ready. Here he comes. Now go with me, if you would, to John chapter 1 and verse 10. Look at this. Look what men did. Look what men did.

[ 28 : 39 ] He was in the beginning. In the beginning was the Word.

The Word was with God. And the Word was God. And nothing was made that he didn't make. And he's light. And he's life. And in him is life found. And then God even sent forth a miracle working, earth-shaking prophet.

Man, I mean, this guy's unusual. He announced that Jesus was coming. He was announced from the Old Testament. It was obvious. And yet, guess what man does? Man rejects him.

Go with me, if you would, to John chapter 1 and verse 10. John chapter 1 and verse 10. He was in the world. And the world was made by him. But the world knew him not. And the world knew him not.

He came unto his own. And his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

[ 29 : 43 ] The world wouldn't recognize him for who he was. With all those credentials, with all that he had done, with all that John had announced, the world still said, we don't believe you.

In my devotions, this very morning, his own brothers said to him, if you really are who you say you are, why don't you make it clear to everybody? Why do you keep hiding everything and do it in private?

And the Bible says that his own brothers didn't believe him. They didn't receive him. They wouldn't accept him. They rejected him. They rejected his testimony. His own disciples have a hard time believing that he's God.

They lived with him for three and a half years. They watch him raise the dead. They watch him walk on water. They watch him produce food. They watch him get money out of a fish's mouth. And these guys are just having a hard time because it just kind of goes against our nature to believe that God really invaded time and history.

And he came down to earth. It's kind of against us. So Philip looks at him and says, let us see the Father. And Thomas doubts that he's risen.

[ 30 : 50 ] And he dies and he's buried. And they say, man, he's back. And Thomas says, I don't believe it. I don't believe it. Unless I touch him myself, I'm not going to believe it.

Peter and the other guys took off when fishing. That was a sure strong testimony. They believed real good, didn't it? There were some guys walking down the road. And Jesus came along and started walking by him in his resurrected body.

And they're talking. And Jesus said, what are you guys talking about? And they said, you're the only guy in this whole city that don't know what's happened? Are you the only guy that doesn't understand what happened? There was this guy. We really thought he was the one.

We really thought he was going to make a difference. We really thought he might be the Christ. But he was crucified and he died. And Jesus, just walking around there, he's alive. He was dead and buried and rose again.

And he's walking with him. He starts to explain things to them. Everybody's having problems believing that Jesus is the Son of God.

[ 31 : 51 ] I want you to go down to verse 12. And I want you to see what it takes to get saved. In verse 12, the Bible says, but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even them that believe on his name.

Now, I want you to, could you circle the word power and maybe to the margin, write the word authority or right to? You see, there's several truths in verse 12. Now, listen to this.

You're not saved just because. And you're not a child of God. I mean, all over Peru, I face it almost every day of my life.

They say, we're all the children of God. Well, listen to what I'm about to tell you. No, we're not. No, we're not. You can't be a child of God unless God lets you be.

You can't just walk up and say, I'm one of the family. He said, you can't be one of the family unless I give you the power, the authority. You don't just walk into my family. Well, that's pretty obvious, isn't it?

[ 32 : 52 ] Can you imagine three or four orphans showing up at your house tomorrow, walking up and saying, hey, I'm your new son. You say, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. I don't know about that. Let me think on that one a minute. Let me check. Well, you know what? You know what happens in this story, don't you?

You don't just walk up to him. He said, as many as received him. You see, if you'll believe him and receive him and accept him as who he says he is, could I just stop real quick and say, that's probably not.

Some of you think that because you prayed a prayer and not even believing or understanding you just somebody told you in Bible school, bye, you didn't pray this prayer. And you've been walking on that.

Here's what salvation is. It's knowing he is really who he said he is. It is knowing that he is God. It is knowing that he died on a cross. It is knowing that you sin and you don't deserve to be there.

It is knowing that salvation is purely a gift from God and not yours. And look what he says in verse 13. You got to get verse 13. Let's look at it a second. Verse 13, he said, which were born.

[ 33 : 49 ] You know how people get born into the family of God, how people get put in the family of God? They have to have the authority. But that authority, that power doesn't come by blood.

And your mom and dad could be the greatest Christians that ever lived. They could have been great pastors and great missionaries. They could have gone to church all their life. And you could say to me, well, all my family's always been Christian.

That doesn't mean anything for you. Nobody goes to heaven because of who their parents were. Can you say amen right there? Nobody goes to heaven because of who their parents were. Not by blood.

You didn't inherit this. You didn't inherit this. You know what we inherited by blood? Sin and death. In Romans chapter 5 and verse 12, Wherefore by sin, wherefore a sin that passed upon all men and death by sin.

Read the verse yourself. How about throwing a Roman? There it is. Wherefore is by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin. So death passed upon all men for that all have sinned. That's what we got by blood.

[ 34 : 50 ] I go back to John 1.13. He said it wasn't by blood. He said you're not going to heaven by blood, nor are you going by the will of the flesh. Now this might be interesting to you. Listen to this real quick. None of us just walk up to God and say I'm getting saved.

I can do it. I make my decision. Yes, you decide to accept Jesus Christ. Don't get me wrong. But somewhere along the way we almost get this flippant idea that God's just a bellhopper.

Hey, get over here and save me right now. And I'll go right back on and do what I'm doing. That's not exactly what goes on. Do you understand that? There's no flippant coming to Him. You don't decide like that.

The fact is you can't make up your own plan. They've been making up plans all over the world for a long time. You know Muslims got a plan, don't they? And Buddhists got a plan, don't they? And Hindus got a plan.

And Roman Catholics got a plan. And Baptists got a plan, but God has His own plan. And His plan is that you sin against the Holy God. And Jesus died to pay the sin debt.

[ 35 : 48 ] And you trust and believe what Jesus said. And salvation is yours. Not of flesh, nor the will of man. No pastor, no pope, no preacher, no church can make you saved.

It is of God. Salvation comes because God does a work in our lives. You do not have authority to make yourself a son of God. But here's what happens.

Salvation is found in believing and receiving in verse 12. What do you believe? You believe who He said He was and who He said He is. You believe that He is the preexistent God that takes on human flesh.

You believe that He is the one who created the world, that He is the very God and Son of God. You believe that Jesus is the Savior. He paid the price.

Now look this way just a second and I'm through. Now listen to what I'm going to tell you. Listen to what I'm going to tell you. Salvation, this is a serious issue. And it scares me sometimes how many of our people, we almost take flippantly that we're saved.

[ 36 : 55 ] And we take, I think maybe we were brought up in Christian homes. We went to church all of our lives. And somebody told us we were saved. But we struggle with sin.

And it might just because we're not in. And so what do you mean by that? I mean, God does a work in us in salvation.

It's more than, I believe, it's more than, let me sign my name up, piece of paper. It's more than let me pray a flippant prayer. It is no one. I believe that Jesus is who He said He was.

And that Jesus died in the salvations of God. Johnson, I want you to believe. I want you to know who He is. I want you to have life. But life's found in Him. You're not going to like this statement, but here it comes.

You can't come to God on your terms. You come to God on His terms. You can't walk up to God and say to God, God, I think that I'm a good guy and that's good enough.

[ 37 : 57 ] Well, a rich young ruler tried that one, didn't he? It didn't work. There are people all through history have been going to God with their own plan. Here's the plan. That God loved you enough to send His Son, God in human flesh, to die on a cross to pay the sin debt so that you could be saved.

And He took on Him your sins. And you will come to Him as a helpless, worthless, unworthy sinner and accept a gift given to you by God.

For the wages of sin is death. But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. It's a gift.

I'm afraid that in the Southeast we've turned salvation into do, do, do. But it's not do. It's believe. It's not what you do.

It's what He did. It's not who you are. It's who He is. It's trusting Jesus have you. Father in heaven, I love you. And I thank you for what you've done on the cross of Calvary.

[ 39 : 06 ] And I pray, God, that this morning you might deal with some hearts. Lord, I know they'll choose to accept and believe. God, I know they've got to know that the way they're doing it is believe in you, not themselves and not what they can do and not what they can work up.

And, God, I pray today that you'd save some of our folks that aren't saved. God, you'd wake us up to what real salvation is and you'd make a difference in our lives and our church.

God, I pray that you'd use your word to make a great difference. You have been listening to Austin Gardner, pastor of Vision Baptist Church.

For contact information, location, service times, or more audio and video recordings, log on to [www.visionbaptist.com](http://www.visionbaptist.com).