

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

Turn your bibles with me to John 1.

Last week I provided an introduction on the Gospel of John and we covered the first five verse.

I had warned you guys that we were going to take it slow because I wanted to make sure we grasped what the Holy Spirit inspired John to write in his gospel.

And we studied how John reminded the early church and us as well – that Jesus Christ is God.

He is eternal, He created all things – meaning He is the giver of life, and He also is Light.

This morning – we are going to do more than five verses – we are going to do 8 verses

And in our study this morning, John is going instruct the church on how to respond to the biblical truths that were given to us last week.

Let's pray...

**[Jhn 1:6-13 NKJV] 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name [was] John. 7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light, but [was sent] to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.**

**[Jhn 1:6-13 NKJV] 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name [was] John.**

As I mentioned last week, whenever we see the name, “John”, in the gospel of John, it always refers to the individual we have come to know as John the Baptist.

Now, that is not his first, middle and last name – it’s just how we know him.

Because we know him of what he was doing and what he came to do – and we will learn more about him in the coming weeks.

But for now, we know him as John the Baptist – he was someone who had a specific ministry, he had a specific calling – and he fulfilled it.

And here in verse six, the Holy Spirit inspired the apostle John to write that John was a man that was sent from God.

And I had you mark “sent from God” because as we apply this verse in our lives, we want to make sure that we are men or women sent from God.

This verse is a constant personal reminder in my life and to the ministry that I have been called to – that I am a man sent from God

He is my Master

He is my Leader

He is my Pastor

He is my Shepherd

I am not a man that was sent down here by man.

I never received orders from a man that said, “go down to Santa Cruz County”

We prayed – we prayed for guidance and discernment, we prayed for God to open doors, and most importantly, we prayed for His will.

I am here because God sent me here.

I am not a man sent with someone’s opinion

I am not a man sent with some philosophy

I am not a man sent to try to talk about all these types of things and all these thoughts

I am a man sent by God with God's message

And it is good for all of us here this morning to see ourselves the same way.

You are a man, you are a woman sent by God to deliver His message.

And when we wrap our arms around this church, it changes our perspective.

Yes, we are called to deliver a difficult message – but never forget that we are sent by God.

**[Rom 8:31 NKJV] 31 What then shall we say to these things? If God [is] for us, who [can be] against us?**

The truth is church, many will be against us – but always now, they will not prevail.

His Word will go out and not return void.

It will accomplish the purpose for which it is sent.

John the Baptist was commissioned by God.

As we will see next week, the prophet Isaiah spoke of him –

John was the voice of one crying in the wilderness

He was sent by God,

Meaning God equipped him and placed him in the perfect place, in the perfect time to deliver one message.

What was the message?

Go to verse 7 -

**7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.**

John the Baptist was sent by God for one purpose and that was to point people to the Light – and that Light (vs4,5) was Jesus Christ.

Now, I had you make a note of the word “witness” -

Our job is to be witnesses of Jesus Christ.

There are a couple of ways to think about that.

**The first is the way that we most commonly use that word.**

Think of a courtroom setting.

I am pretty sure we all have either been to court or seen a court case on TV -

As believers, we are called to take the stand to testify of what we know about Jesus Christ.

This is a verbal testimony, as we explain to friends, family members, co-workers, even strangers, about who Jesus is, what He has done and how they can know Him.

This is why God has given us the Bible.

So that we can KNOW

who He is,

what He said,

how He loves and what His plan is.

We then go and deliver that message verbally to those around us – **this is called witnessing.**

That is why sometimes you hear someone say, “I am going to go witness to those individuals – “

**Now, here is where we sometimes error** - We are not called to be attorneys. (Jeff☺)

We are not called to debate, argue, or convince.

We don't have a mandate to shove the bible down people's throat.

There is no spiritual gift of arguing.

We are called to be witnesses—to share the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth concerning what the Lord is doing in our lives.

So we witness verbally – that is one way.

However, the word witness can also be translated as “evidence”

Which brings us to the second way we can be witnesses to Jesus Christ –

We are called to be evidence of Jesus Christ.

In this regard, it's not about a verbal testimony, but a physical one.

Where our lives are literally proof that God can do all the things that we say we believe.

Our lives should prove that God is a God of love because we show love to others unconditionally.

Our lives should prove that God is a God of power by trusting that He is sufficient to solve the problems we face day by day.

Our lives should prove that God is a God of patience and mercy as we show patience and mercy to those around us.

Our lives should prove that God is a God of forgiveness, as we are committed to forgive people who do wrong to us.

Our lives should prove that God is a God of peace, not confusion, as we demonstrate confidence in Him, not worry or be overcome with anxiety or fear.

Our lives are evidence of God to the people around us.

The question is: would that evidence hold up in court?

Is our physical witness (our evidence) a true representation of the light and the life that Jesus Christ has provided?

Does our action match our communication?

Or is our evidence – one who is prone to anger, bitterness, gossip, complaining.

Our desire should be that through our verbal and physical witness, God would transform us to His image so that people would come to us saying, “I want the peace you have. I want the hope you have. I want the confidence you have. I WANT it. How do I get it?”

Turn with me to the Psalm 40

We are going to look at an example of a witness in the OT – we are looking at David’s testimony here.

**[Psa 40:1-3, 9-10 NKJV] 1 To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David. I waited patiently for the LORD; And He inclined to me, And heard my cry. 2 He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, Out of the miry clay, And set my feet upon a rock, [And] established my steps. 3 He has put a new song in my mouth--Praise to our God; Many will see [it] and fear, And will trust in the LORD. ...**

Jump down now to verse 9



It says that many will see it – now we are going to see David share it.

**9 I have proclaimed the good news of righteousness In the great assembly; Indeed, I do not restrain my lips, O LORD, You Yourself know. 10 I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart; I have declared Your faithfulness and Your salvation; I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth From the great assembly.**

David was a witness.

I love what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 3:7

**[1Co 3:7 NKJV] 7 So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.**

Church, we are not responsible for the salvation of others – we are just responsible for what we are – a witness.

That is our calling as disciples, as representatives, as ambassadors of Jesus Christ.

To testify and be used by God as evidence of His powerful plan.

And that is what John the Baptist did.

**8 He was not that Light, but [was sent] to bear witness of that Light.**

I want to remind you of something I said last week – that the Holy Spirit inspired John to write this gospel later than the other three gospels.

And one of the reasons that he wrote it was to remind the early church who Jesus Christ is.

Here John makes the distinction between John the Baptist and Jesus Christ.

This is very important – and I had you make a note of the word but – because John uses “but” over 100 times in his gospel to make a distinction.

In the early church, there was a sect that was led by Apollos (we find in the book of Acts) who continued the teachings of John the Baptist – but had no knowledge of the completed work of Christ upon the cross.

So Paul and Aquilla and Priscilla witnessed to Apollos.

John the Baptist was not the light – he was only a witness to the Light.

**The focus should be on the Light**

As Christians, we do not minister so that WE can gain a following.

The Christian life is not lived so that we can gain a following.

Our service for God is so that He will be magnified.

So that He will be glorified.

So that people will be focused on Him, not on us.

He must increase, we must decrease.

That is the point that John is making here.

**9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.**

Verse 9 is a reminder to us all that no man, no woman will be without excuse when they stand before God.

Jesus Christ gives light to every man coming into the world.

Turn with me to Rom 1

**[Rom 1:18-21 NKJV] 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown [it] to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible [attributes] are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, [even] His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, 21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify [Him] as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.**

Every man knows innately, intuitively that there is a God.

Psalm 19 states that the heavens declare the glory of God, and that there is no place on earth where their voice is not heard.

Creation tells us there is a God

Our conscious tells us – we all know the difference between right and wrong – where did that come from? God, as He created us.

Jesus shines on every person who has ever been born.

He is the reason why anyone is born into a world with any love or care or goodness at all is because of the true Light and the light He gives to the world.

The problem is that most have run from the light, some even convincing themselves that there's no such thing as light.

**10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.**

Here is an amazing thing!!!

Jesus created the world, yet when He entered the creation through the Incarnation, the world didn't recognize Him.

He was rejected by the world and worse, He was rejected by Jews.

God directed the entire course of history so that the world would be right & ripe for the arrival of the Son.

He called Abraham to move from Ur to Canaan.

Then He developed Abraham's descendants into a nation in covenant with Him.

He spoke through the prophets & scriptures to prepare the Jewish people for the Promised Redeemer who would restore to humanity what had been lost in the Fall.

Though the Jews had the blueprint, when the Architect came, they didn't accept Him.

Instead, they hijacked the blueprint and built things their own way.

They rejected their Messiah.

They rejected the Light.

Even his family thought He was out of His mind. (Mark 3:21)

One of the saddest verses in scripture, John 6:66 says that even some of His own disciples walked with Him no more.

I had you make a note where it says, He came to His own.

Our Creator, the Word, Jesus reached out to us.

He came to us.

He came to offer us salvation, and if we receive His free gift, He offers us light and life and strength and peace, power and forgiveness, purpose and eternity.

Church, this is the opposite of every world religion, every phony system that says we must earn our way into a good standing with God.

Jesus comes to us.

And He does this because He loves us, not because we've earned His light.

Jesus comes to each of us so that we can see.

So that we can find a way out of the sin of this world and receive eternity with Him in heaven.

**12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.**

To receive Christ is the opposite of not knowing Him and rejecting Him (1:10-11). It means to welcome Him into our life.

The hope that we all desire, the wisdom we all need, the help for living and the promise of eternity only comes from God.

We can only be reborn by His power.

Not through our own works.

Not through our own intentions,

John is drawing a contrast here between those who've been born again & unbelieving Jews who claimed they & they alone were the children of God.

John says it's not blood, meaning physical descent from Abraham that counts.

It isn't the will of the flesh, meaning it's not adherence to some religious code or law, as though someone could merit a position as a son or daughter.

Nor is it by the will of man.

Someone else can't secure salvation for you.

Only God saves & turns the lost into His children.

Only God can do this miracle.

Just as we had nothing to do with our physical birth, so we had nothing to do with our spiritual birth. We can't take credit for it. We can't boast in our wise decision to believe in Christ. All glory must go to God.

And here in our last verse, we are introduced to the true nature of God with regard to the gospel.

God is by nature a Savior.

He is a Savior whose mighty power causes us to receive His Son and to believe in His name.

"I sent Jesus as a sacrifice – either believe in Him or not"

If you believe in Him – you are saved.

If you don't – it's on you.

It's not on God. He has made a way of escape for you. Take it.

**[1Jo 3:1-2 NKJV] 1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.**

**Let's pray...**

**To Receive Christ do the following:**

**Admit, "I am a sinner."**

**Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.**

**Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.**

**Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.**

**Dear Lord Jesus,**



I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 'May the LORD bless you and protect you. 25 May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you. 26 May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

