

# John 3:16-21

Sunday 3/21/2021

Last week, we laid out one of the greatest verses in all of the Bible that deals with God's salvation to man. It is a great verse because John 3:16 is one of the greatest verses that you could ever get into. It is a really good example of how you and I should develop the Bible and the verses within the Bible. We talked about a trained eye and using investigative skills when it comes to the Bible. Look at the Bible as a plot because the Bible is made up of many plots. The way that you open them up is to look at them with a critical eye, an investigative eye. I showed you how to do that.

Last week, we learned one of the great realities: there are actually two John 3:16s in your Bible. Most people never get past the first one. In the Gospel of John, which is where we are now, there is John 3:16. Then I showed you that in the epistle that John wrote, there is another John 3:16. When I found that, I probably found that twenty-five, thirty years ago, maybe longer than that. I was doing a study of the life of John. I remember a great time when God just kind of rips the pages back and shows you. I remember when I was doing that, I was doing a character study, just like many of you do. A young man asked a question Thursday night about Timothy, and I laid that out for you how to do that character study. But that is what I was doing with John.

## I. The Uniqueness of John

I told you before that John, without a doubt, is the most unique character in the Bible. There are some great men in the Bible, some great women in the Bible, and some great stories in the Bible. But without a doubt, as far as you and I are concerned, John takes the prize because he is, without a doubt, when you begin to lay him out, you begin to see not only in the Gospel of John, but in everything else he writes, the uniqueness of who he is and not only how he writes, but what he writes and to whom he writes it. He is your most perfect, total, complete picture of what my life should be and what your life should be as a New Testament Christian.

When you observe him in the Bible, you are going to find that there are two men in the Bible that in a complete way—and I say this fully knowing that there are hundreds of people in the Bible that you can learn from—but if you want two fundamental examples of what your Christian life is or should be: in the Old Testament, it is Abraham. You find in his life, and we have talked about it many times, and I am not going to go through it all again, but we have talked about him so often, how where he starts and where he winds up. If you would do a character study of Abraham, you will find out that he winds up being God's friend. The real study is unearthing how he got there, because that is how you need to get there.

Then when you come to the New Testament, it is John. John is the only, and this is where his uniqueness begins, he is the only man in the Bible that when he sits down to write, he has the complete New Testament in front of him. Nobody else has that. He writes up there around 90 AD, and when he does that, he has everything else before him. He bridges for you and for me the Old Testament, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and goes the distance all the way up into 90 AD, well into the church age.

The one word that would define him should be the one word that defines us, and that is the word perspective. John, when he writes, has perspective of everything else that God does, and when he writes, he can perceive what he is writing in the light of everything that he already has. He has a complete understanding of both the Old Testament and the New Testament, and so do we, or we should. He understands when he is writing the Gospel where that fits in, when he is writing 1, 2, and 3 John where that fits in, and when he writes the book of Revelation, he understands now how that fits in. And so should you and I.

The first thing that caught my eye is that there was a special relationship that John had with Jesus over the other twelve. At the same time, Jesus had a special relationship with John over the other twelve. We think that God loves us all, and He does. We think that we are His children, and He loves us all equally, and He does, but I am going to tell you, John had a relationship with Christ very clearly here, over and above the other twelve. It is incredible. For instance, in John 13:23, John is the only apostle of the twelve that Jesus says He loves. Jesus loved them all; that is very obvious. But God singled him out and said, "the disciple whom Jesus loved" for a reason.

You have the twelve apostles. One of them is a phony, which tells me these twelve apostles are a picture of any given twelve Christians or Christianity as a whole. Certainly, I do not fall under the stupidity to think that everybody within the sound of my voice, either here or out on YouTube, is saved this morning. Jesus had His twelve, and one of them was a phony. When you take him out of the equation, now you have eleven that are left. Those eleven will represent for us the body of Christianity. But in that eleven, you will find three men: Peter, James, and John, who are what we would call the inner circle. In most Baptist churches today, they would be targeted as the clique. They experience more miracles with God. They see the power of God on the Mount of Transfiguration, when the rising of Jairus's daughter, when there are great miracles that He performs, I do not know where the rest of them are. But you will always find Peter, James, and John. They are that inner circle.

With the body of Christianity, certainly with any church, you are going to find those who are phony. You are going to find those who are like the eleven. Then within that eleven, you are going to find the three. They experience more, they understand more, they are used more of God, and they are found in places where God does great things, where everybody else is, wherever they are. But out of that three, only one goes the distance. When Christ is crucified, James is wherever he is. Peter, we know where he is; he is around the fire, and he betrays the Lord. When Christ is being crucified on the cross, the only one that goes the distance with Him is John.

At the Last Supper, which is found in Matthew 26:26-25, you will find that the Apostle John does something that no other man in the Bible does. The only other person that can do that would be a New Testament Christian. Nobody in the Old Testament could. Nobody else in the Bible does. Only John is recorded in doing this, and the only other person on this planet who could do that would be a New Testament Christian in the church. Do you know what he did at the Last Supper? He leaned over and put his head on the breast of the Lord Jesus, and he heard the very heartbeat of God. Nobody else in the Bible got that privilege. John represents for us what your life and my life should be, because for you and for me, the real key to being what God wants you to be is getting God's heartbeat.

You would think that God's heartbeat is salvation, or God's heartbeat is this. God's heartbeat is truth. He laid his head on the very breast of the Lord Jesus Christ, and he heard the heartbeat of God Almighty encased in the Son of God. I want to tell you, the only way that you and I can hear that today is through the heart of God, God's Word. This is why men and women in this church and around the world will give their lives for everything through a New Testament local church to do what God has called them to do. Do you know why? They heard what most people never hear today, and that is the very heartbeat of God. I do not have time to develop that today, but if you would go back to Song of Solomon 2:6, where Christ is talking about how much He loves the bride, you would actually find an illustration right there of what John is doing in Matthew 26.

In John 19:26, Jesus is now on the cross, and before He dies, John is there, and before He dies, He looks down to him, and John is there, and the mother of Jesus is there, Mary. Mary is a type of the nation of Israel. If you want to study a picture of Israel, study Mary. When He is on that cross, before He dies, as we are moving into the church age, Christ looks at John, a type of the New Testament Christian, and He gives ownership to take care of His mother. He says, "Woman, behold thy son," and to John, "Behold thy mother." Most people read that and say that was a nice little thing. You do not get it. In Romans 9, Romans 10, and Romans 11, you understand that we as a New Testament church have the custodianship of the nation of Israel, and that is what Jesus was doing here with John.

## II. John's Five Wisdom Books

As I studied him, as I laid him out, you see, when I preached last week, and when I preached through the Gospel of John, it started for me way, way, way back the week before I preached it. I have been through this stuff thirty, forty years ago. This stuff is stuff that I have not just put the notes in my Bible; I put these principles in my life, and they work.

I will tell you something else, and I made a reference to this a couple of weeks back. John writes five books, and those five books for us form the five wisdom books in the New Testament. If you know anything about your Bible, you know there are five wisdom books in the Old Testament. The five books in the Old Testament will match up to John's five books in the New Testament.

- The Gospel of John: Represents Psalms, the heart of God.
- 1 John: Matches Song of Solomon, the fellowship and the intimacy we have with Christ through our walk.
- 2 John: Matches the book of Ecclesiastes, truth in a world where there is no truth.
- 3 John: Matches Proverbs, because in Proverbs you have a wise man and a foolish man, and in 3 John you have a wise man and a foolish man.
- The book of Revelation: Matches the book of Job, the Tribulation period.

Anybody with any understanding would immediately see the connection of all this. A New Testament child of God, who John is an example of, should have the wisdom of God in the Old Testament and the wisdom of God in the New Testament. In other words, you ought to have down the wisdom books in the Old Testament that will point you to where the nation of Israel is and what you can learn, but that is not enough. You have got to get the wisdom books in the New Testament, and this is what John represents. He has both Old Testament and New Testament before him when he writes. He has complete perception. He perceives.

In the book of Proverbs, in Proverbs 5 and Proverbs 7, we see what the Bible tells us the story of a young man who was void of understanding. The analogy in that story is, he is a goofy little guy, comes to the big city, goes out, walks around at night, and in the twilight of the night, who is working the corner? A prostitute, a lady of the evening. The Bible goes into great detail to say that she, and when you study it, this hooker is religious. She talks about God and how she has paid her vows, and she entices him with her words. She is all painted up. She entices him, and her goal is to destroy him. That story probably unfolds itself literally in every big city in the country today, if not around the world. But the picture is that this harlot is a picture of false teaching that permeates the world trying to destroy the young man who is God's chosen, the minister for Him, and she knows that if she can induce him, to seduce him, to talk to him, to flatter him, to say all of those things and appeal to his human side, she can destroy him.

Why did I tell that story? Because the greatest type of you and me in the New Testament is the man John. So in the world today, a hooker or a prostitute, when she picks up her client, do you know what she calls him? She calls him a "John." You cannot get away from the Bible. That is how it works.

We observed last week in our two John 3:16s. The first John 3:16 was a blanket statement of God's salvation to the world. The second John 3:16 defined the first one for us and told us that we need to perceive the love of God. I showed you the connection between the Gospel of John and the Epistle of John, and also 2 John, 3 John, and the book of Revelation. I would call these five books in the New Testament that he writes the wisdom books. I would call them the five essentials of New Testament Christianity.

1. When you look at the Gospel of John, you have a record of the first coming of Christ, God's declaring salvation to the world.
2. When you go to 1 John, you have then our fellowship with God after salvation and how our walk with God depends on our perception of the blanket statement of the first John 3:16.
3. When I would look at 2 John and 3 John, you will find that they deal with the perspective of the elect lady. That will be the nation of Israel, where one talks about the elect lady, the other one talks about, as I said already, two men, one is wise and one is a fool. That would be a picture of my understanding of the nation of Israel.
4. The fifth book that he writes is the book of Revelation, and that is the capstone of the Bible. In the book of Revelation, you clearly see the Old Testament and the New Testament being pulled together. You see how God now uses the Old Testament to reveal the New Testament, and within the New Testament, the Old Testament also is revealed. The two go together, and

you find now God's eternal purpose of what His original plan was and how it is going to finish out.

Those are the five essentials. Without a New Testament Christian having those five areas down—and I know fully well that some of you here do not have that. Those that have been in Bible Institute, those that have been with me for twenty or thirty years and been around, I know you have it. I get it. In that sense, I am preaching to the choir. But these should be your goals. This is my goal in giving you the Bible. This is my goal in Bible Institute.

If a New Testament Christian does not have these five areas down, and I know that not all of you do, but I am going to help you get there if you want to. You will in time. So if I am saying this and you do not have it, do not beat yourself up. If you want it, I will help you get there. But what I am saying is, if you do not get them down in your life at some point, you do not have anything, because these five things form the baseline of the Bible. You take these five things and then you build on them. All the time, you look at John as the example. As I laid out John, I began to see for my own self so many years ago, I began to see everything that he was as a picture to me. When I give you this stuff, I am not giving you this stuff because it is just something I read someplace. I give you this stuff because this is what worked for me. I am not interested, though I read a lot of books and I have read a lot of books and I get a lot of material, the only thing I am really interested in to give you is what I know works for me, because you are no better than me, and I do not know better than you, and what are my struggles are your struggles, and I know the only way through this thing for you is the same way I had to find my way.

That is how I found my two John 3:16s, and that gave me my perception. From that point on, I began to perceive, and those two verses are so true of all of us. Most of God's people can get the first one, the fact that God loved man and gave Himself for it, the love of God, but very few ever perceive it and do with it what God wants done the way He wants it done: being that living sacrifice for God based on our understanding of His sacrifice for us. Romans 12:1-2. So John 3:16 and 1 John 3:16 are two of the most incredible verses in all of the Bible, and I found it many, many, many years ago, and I might be able to tell you that it has changed everything how I have looked at things. As I said last week, you need to learn not just to see; you need to learn to observe, because the two are not the same.

### III. God's Purpose: Salvation, Not Condemnation

Today, this is going to be a very practical lesson. We have had some deep things here the last couple of weeks and some good things of laying out the Bible and showing you how it is, but today is going to get more back to a practical side, and that is what I try to do. I do not try to be one thing all the time. There are some guys that that is all they do is practical stuff, other guys all they do is the doctrinal stuff, and you cannot do that. You have got to be able to switch it up, match it up, and blend it together.

We are going to read now back into John 3, and believe it or not, we are going to go through verses 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21.

*John 3:16-21*

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

*For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

*He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

*For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.*

*But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.*

We have here in these verses an understanding of how God works in our lives before salvation, but also after salvation. It really is one of those great places that explains to us what God sees when He looks at us or how He sees us. Verse 16 we have covered: "For God so loved the world." We have got that one.

Let us look at verse 17: "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." What do you see when you see that verse? I will tell you what I see: if there ever was one verse that showed man's misconception of God, it would be this verse. People today, saved people and lost people, they will blame God for everything. When some tragedy happens, when somebody dies, the death of a child, the death of a mother, the death of a father, son, or daughter, some terrible catastrophe, we will blame God for allowing it to happen. We always fall back on that, and of course, that goes all the way back to Adam after they fell. When God came to him and said, "Adam, what did you do?" Adam said, "Well, God, the woman that you gave me." He blamed it on God.

We already saw back in the book of Job many times how when Job is going through what he goes through, his wife is the great comfort that she needs to be, that when he is going through everything, her advice to him is to curse God and die. We already saw it a couple of weeks ago in the Old Testament how they always blame Moses, the leader, for everything that went wrong. Even insurance companies today, there are things about your house, even after you pay your house insurance, that if something happens, they will not cover it because, do you know why? They call it an act of God. They blame it on God. People all through their life, saved and lost, because they do not perceive the love of God, they have no understanding of this verse. They will go through their life, and I have seen God's people over some issue in their life get mad at God, blame God, and stay that way the rest of their lives.

I was telling the people at Institute yesterday, I was watching a documentary on Auschwitz and the Holocaust. This was done back in the seventies, the early seventies, when many of the Holocaust victims were still alive, and they were talking. The Jews, old men and women now,

were talking, and they could not understand. They could not understand why God would let that happen to them, and they would say, "We prayed to God for deliverance. We asked God for this, and we asked God for that." One of them said, "To this day, I do not know why God did not hear our cry." The commentator of that had no answer because he has no understanding. I can answer that question in three seconds or less. Do you know why God did not hear your cry? Because on the cross, you did not hear His Son's. In fact, when you look at the death of Christ, your two statements were, "We have no king but Caesar," and "His blood be upon us and our people." But they do not get that. They do not get it. Most of God's people do not get it.

It is a thing where some of God's people, they think that God is lurking around the corner to give you cancer. They think that God is lurking around the corner to give you some terrible disease. Of course, the reason for this mindset is what we looked at last week: they get John 3:16 down about the universal salvation of God dying for man, how wonderful, but they will never get 1 John 3:16 down. They have no perspective of the love of God and what He has for them.

I have said this many, many times: there are two fundamental issues that all men and women, saved people, have.

- 1.) They do not understand how God sees you.
- 2.) You do not know how to look at Him yet.

You say you are saved; I believe you are. You have a relationship. You are like a guy who got a mail-order bride from Russia or someplace, and she shows up here, and you get married to her. Well, you know nothing about her, and if she came from a foreign country like Russia, she does not even speak the language. So now you are married to a woman, she does not speak English, you do not speak Russian, and now you are going to have a relationship. This is the problem with God's people: you are not speaking His language. No perspective. Having God's love but never understanding it, perceiving it, that will be as worthless as most of God's people in churches today.

Our verse says, when God came into the world, His purpose was not to condemn man, but to give him His salvation. Do you know why God came? God came to save you and me from ourselves, because no matter how we want to blame God to get out from under our responsibility, we are the problem today. God's people today have so little understanding of God and how He works. I am telling you, God's original plan He had in mind never included cancer, it never included leukemia, it never included lymphoma, heart attacks, strokes, nursing homes, hospice care, funeral homes, crematoriums, graveyards, diabetes. His original plan never took into account that there would ever be a hurricane, and now they will stay politically correct, a "hammock cane." He never took into account that there would be drought, that there would be tornadoes, there would be cyclones, that there would be floods, that there would be tsunamis, that there would be forest fires, that there would be war. He never in His plan said, "I need to have the United Nations." He never in His plan looked at communism going to be a threat. He never looked at His plan as socialism to be a threat. He never looked at His plan that capitalism was going to be a problem or fascism, and He certainly did not need to put a place there for Democrats and Republicans. God's plan did not need doctors. It did not need your six-month medical checkup. In God's plan, there was no Alzheimer's, there was no dementia, there was no

need for radiologists, no hospitals. You see, His plan was a perfect world. It was a perfect world where man could enjoy all of God's creation and have eternal fellowship with God. When God put Adam and Eve down here in the garden, that is exactly what His plan was and what He intended: a perfect world with perfect weather, with perfect health, with perfect animals, a perfect creation. But when you study it and you lay it out, we went from a perfect world to a perfect storm.

#### IV. Man's Rebellion and the Fall

Here is where it really starts: Genesis 3. There is something about God you need to know. God created this wonderful plan. He created this beautiful utopia in this garden, and He put two people down in it, Adam and Eve. But there is a characteristic of God and God's holiness that you need to understand, and that is that God will not force you to love Him. No man who finds a beautiful woman that he wants her to love him would be satisfied if he went to the witch doctor and got love potion number nine, and as long as she drank some every day, she would stay in love with you, and the day she quit drinking it, then she would say, "I do not want anything to do with you." That would not be the love you want. We want people to love us because they choose to. Well, that is the way God is. So God gave man a free will. God wants you and me, and really if you look at that chart over there, that is the whole perspective of God's plan. Notice it starts in a garden and it ends in a garden, and everything in between for six thousand years that is recorded, we could get into a million things that is going on, but fundamentally, do you know what it is? Every man, every woman getting to choose if they want to pick back up at the end where God was going to start here. So God created this little parentheses in time to give you and me the choice through our own free will.

Man, you and me, I will tell you what our problem is. I like preaching messages like this because some messages I try to be careful with this. I hate to say "you"; I like to say "us" because I do not want to ever give the impression that it is you and not me. If the truth is known, it is probably more me than you, but that is beside the point. Confess your faults one to another. That is it. That is all you are going to get.

Do you know what our problem is? Every one of us, and I do not care how spiritual you think you are, I do not care how long you have been in the Bible, we all have an old sin nature, and that old sin nature will always fundamentally go back to the first sin in the Bible. Do you know what the first sin in the Bible was? Somebody thinking they knew more about it than God did. Do you know that is every one of our problems? I thank God for GPSs. There are some things in this world that make life easier; a GPS is one of them. But I am going to be honest with you, every time it tells me to go this way, I am thinking in my mind, "I know a better way to go." That is human nature. That goes back all the way to Genesis 3, and we all think, man, man always thinks he has a better plan than God. So man ruined God's plan, and now man, the mess we are in today in the world, in America, that is simplified. Do you know what it is? This country was founded on the Word of God. This country was founded on the principles of the Word of God. Its founding fathers believed the very Bible you are holding, and they believed God was who He was, and look where we are at today. Do you know why? Because man today thinks he knows

more about it than God does. That is the problem with the world. That is the problem with America. You take God's people that are just like that. Do you know where you are? I love you, but do you know what you are? You are just a very small version of that big version of the world.

So we go through our lives. We have a Bible. The Bible tells us what to do. It tells us what the church is. It tells us what this is. It tells us how to get into ministry. It tells us how to do this, how to do that, how to have a relationship, how to find a spouse, how to do this, how to do everything, and we get in a mess. Why? You have a book that tells you everything you need to know that you would never have an issue. Now look at our lives today. Do you know why? We think we know more than God does. That has been the number one issue all down through history.

Parents, I laugh at parents sometimes. They will come to me and they will say, "Well, I am just having trouble with my teenage kid. My teenage kid, he thinks he will not listen to me. He will not follow what I am saying. He thinks he knows more about life than we do. He has not paid a bill. He has not done this. He has not got out in the world. He lives under our roof, and he just thinks he will not listen to us, and he just thinks he knows more about life than we do." I look at that and I think to myself, in most cases, "Well, that is what you do with God. That is what we do with God. That is what they do it to their earthly father; we do it to our heavenly Father." We eternally think we have a better plan than God, and that is going to mess your kids up, but hey, do not blame it on them, it is going to mess us up. We are no different than them. We will do the exact same thing.

It was man who threw this world into a complete disaster. So when it goes bad because of man's rebellion and him not wanting to take responsibility for it, yeah, we blame God for it. It is His fault, like Moses in Numbers 21, like people will do with you in the ministry. That story of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3, all a complete and total picture of where we are at today. Most people just do not see it.

We have talked a lot about character studies and about stories and types. Well, here is one for you. Adam and Eve. Adam, now watch this, this is why you and me are in the mess that we are in. Adam is a type of Christ. He is a type of the church. The devil, well, he is the devil. But when he comes to Eve, who is a type of the church, he comes when Adam, who is a type of Christ, is not at home. You see, that is a picture of the church age. All Eve had to know what she was supposed to do and not do was what God had told her, and Christ is not here today to tap you on the shoulder. All you have to tell you what you should do and should not do is sitting in your laps today, what God told you. All Eve had to do was listen to what He said and said, "You know what? That does not exactly match up. You have got a now the reversed revision because that is not what God told me." But she did not. Through the devil destroying Eve, a type of the church, just like he destroys the church today by simply saying, "Yea, hath God said?" and then changed what God said, and she fell for it, and your church and your pastor falls for it, and most of God's people fall for it.

So here it is: Eve, type of the church; Adam, a type of Christ; the devil, the devil. He shows up when Adam is not there. He deceives her. He beguiles her. She falls for it, and she brings the

world into sin. Then when Adam comes home, type of Christ, he suddenly sees that Snow White is not Snow White anymore. The seven dwarfs have showed up. Do you know what he did as a type of Christ? The same thing the Lord Jesus Christ did when He saw our condition. She was deceived in the transgression, but Adam sinned willfully. Do you know why he sinned willfully? Because he is a type of Christ, and he saw that his bride was now dead, so he died for her. When your Christ saw you and me, His bride, dead in the trespasses of sin, because while He was away in the church age, the devil came in and destroyed it, do you know what He did? He died for you and for me. Gospel according to Genesis. You cannot beat the book, man. You just cannot.

When man disobeys God, he brought a curse on man, and not just a curse on man, but a curse on all the earth. You go to Romans 8:19-23, and you will see how bad this thing is. That curse did not just fall on mankind; it fell on earth. That is why we have tornadoes now. That is why we have thorn bushes now. That is why we have the disease and the sickness that we have. It was all brought in because of sin. It is not just that; the Bible says that all of God's creation groaneth, and Romans 8 says that the whole earth is waiting for the restoration and the second coming of Christ.

*Romans 8:19-23*

*For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.*

*For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,*

*Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*

*For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.*

*And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.*

We hear a lot today about global warming. We hear a lot today about the ozone layer being destroyed to keep out the solar radiation, cosmic radiation. We are concerned about air pollution. They want to get away with all the carbon combustion cars and get everybody on electric cars. People are worrying about the natural forces that are being destroyed. Let me tell you something, man has abused this old earth for six thousand years, and this earth is just not going to take much more of it. I am telling you, somebody asked me if I believed in global warming. You bet I do. Book of Revelation, the Bible says the sun is going to get seven times hotter in the Tribulation. You bet I believe it. It is going to warm this globe. Now, the ozone layer being destroyed, ladies, that is your fault, because they have already come out and proved with the fact that it is all your hairspray. Every time you are up there, and I do not think women use hairspray anymore, do they? Everybody is not everybody is into that natural, some people do, but most people are into that natural wet look, like you just stepped out of the shower, your hair is still wet. I mean, it is that free-blown look now. But back in the day, hairspray was the deal. It is okay, the ozone layer is already gone, so you have done your damage.

Everything is a mess, and it is simply a mess because the longer man goes thinking he knows better than God, the worse it is all going to get. Now you think I am talking about the world? No, I am talking about God's people. I want to tell you right now, the way the world is going in America and around the world, there is only one reason for that: that is because Christianity is in the mess that it is in. We are the salt. We are the preserving factor of any country, any nation in the world, and when the salt loses its savor, then this is what you have.

## V. The Condemnation of Darkness

Look at verse 19: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." That goes back to Genesis 1:4, does it not, where God divided the light from the darkness? In 1 John 1:3-9, you get the definition of it: "light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." See how it works? You want to get this simple truth: men in darkness, saved or lost, cannot comprehend the light. 1 John 1:7 says that our fellowship with Him is based on us walking in the light as He is in the light. When you do not have the light and you cannot comprehend it, then there is no walk.

John 1:5 talks about the light for salvation. 1 John 1:7 talked about the light for fellowship after salvation. So that works, and we are to stay out of the darkness, and we are to walk into the light. That is what the Bible says in 1 Thessalonians 5:5, that we should be children of the day and not children of the night. He is talking about a saved person. A saved person can be a child of the night. I want you to know it was man from Genesis 3 to today, saved or lost, who rejected the light and took darkness.

Look at verse 20, what a great commentary on man, both saved and lost: "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd." That is an unsaved man, but it is also a saved man if you have been in any work in the ministry. A saved man and an unsaved man who is in the flesh and lives in sin, a saved man who walks after the flesh and does the works of the flesh. The difference is found in 1 John 3:6-9 and Galatians 5:19 for anybody that wants to study it out.

Do not kid yourself, not for a second. The church age is full of Christians today, saved people, who claim to be saved, who hate that book so desperately that they go to a church and they will get a pastor, and he preaches the truth, and they do not like it, so they leave, and they will go find a church and a pastor where, even if he preaches the truth, that is a watered-down version. He is not going to get in your face. He is not going to ruffle your feathers. He may use the devil's Bible. He may use the King James Bible, but he is never going to offend anybody. It is always going to be a teaching thing, and he is never going to get up there and get in your face. Let me tell you something, if you go to any church and you go to the services for any length of time and you feel good about yourself, you are in the wrong church. May I say it? There is nothing good about any of us, and you need the Word of God coming down your street.

For an unsaved man, do you know what he does? He will spend his whole life. He will get three hundred thousand dollars worth of education. He will do every good thing he can think of, all for

the purpose of getting him around the condemnation of the truth of the Word of God. That old Bible says in Proverbs 19:21:

*Proverbs 19:21*

*There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.*

The one word they all hate, saved and lost, one little word in verse 20, did you pick it up yet? One little word that they just cannot stand, and it is the word "reproved." "Deeds be reproved." Verse 20, one of the biggest little words in all of Christianity today.

Now get this, 2 Timothy 3:16, a familiar verse:

*2 Timothy 3:16*

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*

I want you to see this for the Christian, for the child of God. All scripture is given for inspiration. Watch the order:

- 1.) Doctrine
- 2.) Reproof

Once you get the truth of the doctrine and that thing reproves you, then and only then can you get correction and take instruction in righteousness. Get it down clearly: you teach people doctrine, that is truth. That truth will reprove them where they are wrong, and if they take the reproof and change about them what needs to be changed, then you can correct them, and you can instruct them in righteousness. If they reject reproof, John 3:20, then they are in darkness, and you cannot correct them nor instruct them in righteousness. You have to be reproved first, whether you are saved or whether you are lost. Brother, if that does not answer a lot of questions in Christianity today, I do not know what does.

This idea that you can just do whatever you want to do, go wherever you want to go, and be whatever you want to be and still call yourself a Christian, I am telling you right now, you have got to get doctrine first, that is truth. That doctrine will reprove you, and only after you accept that reproof that reproves your deeds are you able to get corrected and instruction in righteousness.

Now look at verse 18: "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." That is a great verse that if a man is not saved, he is as good as in hell right now. John 3:36 says:

*John 3:36*

*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

An unsaved man is as good right now as in hell with the door locked, the key lost, and the lock rusted up, and he is not going to change that unless he takes the reproof. That is the state of an unsaved man. You see it again in John 8:44:

*John 8:44*

*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*

He is in darkness. He was a murderer from the beginning. Everybody thinks that that is talking about Cain killing Abel. Well, he killed Cain and Abel, no question about that, but he killed two other people spiritually before Cain and Abel were ever born. He killed Adam and Eve, and "the day thou eat thereof, thou shalt surely die." He was a murderer from the beginning, the original sin, and abode not in the truth. So he had the truth, he just did not abide in it. So when he comes and says, "Yea, hath God said?" then he just conveniently changed what God said, and she did not catch it. You cannot blame Eve ninety-nine point nine for the sin. God's people do not catch it today either. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaks of the lie, he is speaking of his own, for he is a liar and the father of it. The first lie found in your Bible in Genesis 3, do you know what it was? A lie about what God said. That lie has been propagated down through history and added to and changed and formatted and used in so many different ways. Incredible.

Do you know why people do not like the Bible? Because it is too exact. In the Bible, the reason why it is so clear and simple and it is so easy and not hard, the reason is, when it comes to God, the Bible, man, all you have is two choices, and people do not like that. They want to make it theological. They want to get lost in all the minutia of the Bible and Christianity and the Dead Sea Scrolls and this or that. They are always looking for something that may add to what they really want to be, and that is why they hate that book that you have in your lap today, because that book does not cut him any slack. That book does not give him any latitude. That book does not allow them to do what we like to do, and that is to put our plan over God's. This is why people leave church, good Bible-believing churches, because the Word of God is a light, and when they do not want to reprove their deeds and they want to keep on going the way they are going, they are not going to stay in the light. The reason why they hate the Bible, saved or lost, is because the Bible only gives you two choices: light or darkness. Every man and every woman on planet Earth, saved or lost, will fall on one side or the other. For the child of God, it is truth and reproof.

The reason why they hate the Bible and do not want to be around the preaching of the Bible, and they will find a church where a guy is a nice guy, but he is never going to get in their face. He is never going to hold them accountable. Most of the churches are very small, and the guy does not really know what he is doing anyhow, so he wants everybody he can get to come to church, and the last thing he is going to do is make somebody mad because they leave. You see, that is backwards. The first thing a pastor should do is to preach to make everybody leave, and then the one that stays, you have something. You do not preach a church so everybody stays. Well, that is a mess. You preach a church where you have to look deep inside yourself and realize that you need reproof, and then you either decide, "Yeah, I am going to," or "No, I am not," and the rest of it takes care of itself. When you focus on that instead of focusing on making it...

I want you to be happy. I mean, I want you to be a happy person, I really do. Most of you are happy people. We do not have any grumpy people around here anymore. The grumpy bears went through the grumpy bear playground, and that is where they are hanging out with the other grumpy bears. I get that. I want you to be happy. I do. When you walk down those stairs, I want you to be singing in your heart, "I got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart." I want you to get up on Sunday morning or Bible Institute or Thursday night Bible study, and I want you to wake up, and your alarm goes off, and it is 7:30 or 6:30 or whatever you decide to get up, and you kind of lay there for a minute, and then you look over, and then you suddenly realize that it is Sunday morning. You would have thought somebody called you and just told you you won the lottery. You are out of bed, up straight. You are just out of that thing. Nothing gets you down. You get your cup of coffee, that always helps, and then you are just getting ready, and you are anticipating being here, and you know you are going to get something from God, and you are praying and talking and singing and all those things, and you are just slobbering with anticipation, and you walk down those steps, and you come in, you find your seat, and you sit down there, and you open it up, and you have got your little ready to go, and you are going to get it all down, and you are sitting there, and in your mind you are saying, "Lord, give me what You have. Give me what I can have today. I am here. I want something from You. Give me something." Yet some of God's people in most churches come into their churches looking like they have been baptized in dill pickle juice. They are just about as shriveled in their spirit as could be. Do you know why? Because you have no joy. I want you to be happy, but do you know where real happiness comes from? Joy comes from knowing that you are right with God, and do you know how you know you are right with God this morning? Here it comes: because your love will prove your children.

You as a parent, especially you young parents, you ought to train your children. Notice I did not say raise your children. You ought to train your children that getting out of fellowship with mom and dad is the most terrible, worst thing that could ever happen to them, because they are going to be faced with a lot of problems, and because they are going to be faced with a lot of things out there in the world, and if you do not do your job right, they are not going to give a flip about disappointing you, breaking fellowship with you. In most cases, the reason why they do not is because they really do not have any fellowship to begin with, and do you know what happened? They start fellowshipping with somebody else. A mom and dad had to train that child up to the point where when they do something wrong, not only do they know what is wrong, but they are not just sorry that they got caught, they are sorry because they now understand that what they did broke fellowship with mom and dad because they have a standard. When you train them that way, you can just move that right into their relationship with Jesus Christ, and that ought to really be the kicker for all of us, because the world will come after you just like it is going to come after your child, and if a child is not built by the parents to have fellowship with them as number one and guard that above all else, that ought to be exactly what we do with our fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. There should be nothing out there, and when we break it, it ought to just grieve us like it did David. Grieve us to the point that we cannot wait to get it corrected. But do you know how you get the correction? Reproof. When you hate reproof, you will never get corrected, and this is why your children will grow up and hate correction, and you

cannot do anything with them. Do you know why? Because you failed in reproofing him, and it is just the way that it works, and it is not complicated.

In a Bible truth, somebody preaching it will turn on the lights. This is not a very good example, but it is a graphic one, and I like it. It is like if you lived in a sleazy apartment place someplace, and at three o'clock in the morning you had to get a drink of water, and you went into the kitchen, and you turn a light on, and suddenly thirty cockroaches run for the darkness. That is what the Word of God does; it scatters us. It defines us, and we ought to allow the light to do what the light God intended it to do, and that is shine on us. Here are all these Christians out there, "Oh God, make Your face to shine upon us." Yeah, just keep it on my face, Lord, do not get it down in my heart.

## VI. The Importance of "Doing Truth"

Look at verse 20 and 21. Look at this one for a minute. I do not know how your scorecard looks, but look at this one. These two, do not tell me, but tell me what you see there. One of the greatest truths you are ever going to find right there in verse 20 and 21. I am going to read it: "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproofed." That pretty much takes care of things, does it not? "Neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproofed." Boy, that is self-explanatory. That is why God's people and unsaved people, but that is why God's people will not get what is right and do what is right. "But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest." Oh, that is what we all need. When you get into the Word of God, it does not let you hide. It manifests your deeds, "that they are wrought in God." Now that is a saved person. An unsaved man's deeds are not wrought in God, but a saved person's deeds are.

Trained eye, what do you see? I will tell you what I see in those two verses. I will tell you right now, it is not that you have the truth that makes no difference here. Most of God's people have the truth. It is not the fact that you believe the truth. It is not even the fact that you preach the truth. Verse 21, the key is "doeth truth." Do you do what the Bible says? God's people are caught up in the first three: "Oh, I have the Word of God. Do not talk to me about it. I have the Bible. I love the Bible. I love the Bible. Well, I preach the Bible." Really? But do you do it? Do you do it, or do you, like most of God's people, pick and choose what works for you? As a child of God, you do not have that luxury. We either take it all, it is very clear now, is it not? We either take it all or we do not take any of it.

Here is what God's people have done. The Bible is so clear that it is light or it is darkness. I have laid that out for you so clearly now. Let me tell you what we all do. We like to fabricate the twilight zone of Christianity. A place where it is not real dark, but it is not real light. A place where we just kind of like, "God told me." I said, "Are you, how are you doing? Are you in fellowship?" "Well, I am kind of in fellowship, and I am kind of not in fellowship." That is the twilight zone. That is the twilight zone Christians fabricate. Do you know why they fabricate that? Because you do not want to fabricate that because you hate the light. You do not want to get your deeds reproofed. So you make up something that is not real so you can pretend you are okay instead of doing truth. So you create this not too bright, not too dark. It is a place where I just

live, where I am not real in the light, but I am not really in the dark. I am just kind of in the middle. There is no middle. Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me." It is just that simple. You did not read any twilight zone in anything that I told you today or read to you. It is either light or darkness, and you will love the one or you will hate it. You will either love darkness or you will hate darkness. You will love the light or you will hate the light. The reason why you hate the light is because your deeds are evil. So you can maintain that you are a Christian. So you can pretend in your mind, in your heart, you are okay. So you do not have to really get down to the nuts and bolts of doing truth. You fabricate this little twilight zone place where you can just kind of exist, and you do not have to worry about your deeds being exposed by the light because you have convinced yourself that you are okay.

"For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd." There it is. You are not going to do the Word of God. You are going to, your plan is better than God's plan. You want to say, "Oh, I want to see people saved. I want to do this. I want to do that. Oh, I want to get into ministry." You want to do it your way. So what do you do? The twilight zone. That is where you live. But it is "he that doeth truth." It is not what you say, but what you do in any given situation, any problem that you have. I do not care if it is an issue that you are having with your own. I do not care if it is a problem you are having with somebody else. Do you know how you solve it? You come to a book. You sit down and you turn on the lights. Do not try to figure it out yourself. Do not try to presume where somebody else is at. Sit down with that person if you have a grievance, you have an issue. Sit down with that person and just turn on the light and let the light be the light. Do you know why people will not do that? Just guess.

When a parent comes down the steps to check on their kids, which you all ought to do, you come around a corner and you say, "What are you doing?" Now the answer can be good or bad. But when God checks on us and says, "Hey, what are you doing?" the answer should be, "What am I doing, God? I am doing truth. I am doing truth in my mind, in my heart, in my spirit, and every aspect of my life, and to the best of my ability, I am doing what 1 John 1:7 says: walking in the light as He is in the light, having fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

The Bible tells us in Ephesians 4:27 that we as Christians are to give no place to the devil. Do you know where that place will be? It will be the place between what God tells you to do and what you actually do, and the space between those two is where the devil's playground is because you give him place. The way you shut down the devil was the same way that Jesus did in Matthew 4. Every time the devil came to Him, He did not argue. He did not get into a field of discussion. He just said, "It is written," because the greatest defense you have against the darkness is doing truth.

Maybe you see now that as we get through the book of John, the farther we get into this book, the deeper it is going to get into you. The more you get into this book, the more the light of this book gets into your life, and it always exposes. When a person rejects the light of God, as the old evangelists used to say, "Light rejected becomes lightning," and you face God's judgment. The more we get into the light of God's Word, the more it will define us, and your life and my life is

nothing more than a redefining as we move up the levels. God has a specific protocol for us as Christians, and it is based on truth and light, and the farther we go up into it, the more it exposes who we are, and we have to take the reproof and correct it and then get the instructions in righteousness.

When God's people will not follow the light or they want to pick and choose what part of the light they want, what do they do that for? So they can pretend they are okay, escape reproof. That is when they invent the twilight zone of Christianity, and when reproof comes, they go to another church or they hide out. If you stay with the book in all things and you grow through the book and you get light after light after light on the issues and you follow the principle, it is so simple: doctrine equals truth which equals light, and when it is applied through preaching, it will reprove us so we can get it corrected, and then God can give us instructions in righteousness. If we reject the biblical reproof, and do not kid yourself, you are now in darkness. You are dead in your tracks, and the lights go out.

You have to do truth. You get on an issue, open the book, and get God's light on it, because the Bible says, as I gave you this last week or the week before, in Psalms 119:30:

*Psalms 119:30*

*I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me.*

At the entrance of thy word giveth light. When a child of God will not do that and you reject the truth, you close the book, and the lights go out. That is why from that point on, you have got to make your ministry work. You have got to finagle things. You have got to hook up with this or with that. You now have to do it. I have seen pastors like that, and I have seen Christians like that. You are now in control of your own ministry, and you are making things happen. You are making phone calls. You are doing this. You are doing that. You are now trying to keep it alive because, do you know why? God is not part of it. Anything that you have got to sustain and keep going, you better take a long look at it. It is a thing where if God is not the author of it, "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it." If God is not using you through your New Testament local church to put you where He wants you to be, then you are out there flapping in the wind all by yourself, and it is you who is doing it, not the Lord, because that Bible is very clear that the problem is reproof. You have got to deal with things and get the restructure, get the correction, and then get the instruction in righteousness. If you reject that truth, you are in darkness, and now you are a child of God that is already, you have defined yourself, and now what you do is you criticize others to make you look good. You put the blame of your failures on somebody else. I have had people come to me over the years and say, and I have told you this before, try to blame me because they do not have anybody to work with. They blame me because, "Well, why do not you give me somebody to disciple?" or "Why do not you give me this?" or "Why do not you give me that?" Well, if God was really in your world, if you need me to be the Holy Spirit of God in your life, you are in sad shape. I cannot remember the last time I have given somebody to work with. Do you know why? Because you are here and you are engaged, and that is just the way it goes today. It is terrible. It is terrible. "Doeth truth." It is not about what you say you believe. It is not about how you preach what you believe. It is not

about how you put it out there who you are and what you really believe and, "Oh, I have got the truth," but do you do truth? You cannot do truth on your terms. You have to do it on God's.