

The True Light Which Has Come into the World

John 1:6-13,

Kevin Laser, December 18, 2023

It's always great to be together with brothers and sisters who love the Lord, and who want to open up God's word and study it, and learn it, and be sanctified by it. And so it's my pleasure to be up here, and to be able to do this with you together. Last week, it was really good to see so many of you at the Christmas banquet. I was just blessed and encouraged to be together with everybody, and I trust that you were blessed as well. I know the hospitality committee was doing a lot of planning, a lot of organizing, and on our cell phone, my wife's part of the committee, I saw a lot of texts coming across about, you know, things we need to do here and things we need to do there. And the excitement of all the people that were signing up, and how are we going to manage if we get more people that, you know, we have seats for et cetera, et cetera. And thankfully, everybody actually that wanted to come, I believe, was able to come. And so I just want to thank everybody that participated in coming and participated in setting it up. There's so much involved with the food setting up, cleaning up as well, that's a big one, and so I just want to personally thank everybody that was involved in that.

There was a lot of expectation, and there's a lot of anticipation that came with the banquet. And in a much bigger, much more significant way, when John the Baptist came on earth, there was a lot of anticipation and a lot of anticipation of what the Messiah was going to be because he came and he foretold about Christ coming. And that's what we're going to look at today, we're going to look at three testimonies of John the Baptist that he gave, or three witnesses that he gave of who Christ was, and He being the Promised Messiah. And so we're going to look today at John chapter 1:6-13; you can put your finger there to start.

And the book of John was actually not written by John the Baptist, it was written by John the Apostle. Early in the book, he points us to how John the Baptist is being a witness and giving witness to Christ, He starts by showing that John the Baptist is a forerunner to the Messiah who is sent to come to this earth. And to fully understand the importance and the significance of Jesus as the Messiah, I want us to look at the witnesses, the testimonies that John the Baptist gave. Now, in the ancient days, if a king was going to go to some place, a foreign land or another territory in another city state, they would send a forerunner to go before them to that city state. And they would go and look and check out and make sure everything was going to be okay. And so they would scope out the land, they would check out the people, they would evaluate the political scene, they would make sure that things were planned and ready, because when the king was going to go, the king wanted to make sure that things were going to go successful. And it's not that much different today. When the prime minister or president goes to another land for a conference, there are people that go before and they plan out where they're going to stay and make sure that everything is ready. And so today, we're going to look at three things that John the Baptist testified about.

Let me just say this, John, the Baptist's father, just to give you a bit of a background, his father was Zacharias. And if you remember, his mother was Elizabeth, she was barren, and they were old of age. He was a priest serving in the temple, and they were actually both of the tribe of Levi. She was barren with child, and both of them actually lived with the disgrace of not having children, because in that society, to not have children was disgraceful. That was a different element of their culture and their society. It's not so much here today in our society, but it was in that society. And in that culture, they lived with that disgrace. And yet it says in Luke chapter six of Zacharias and Elizabeth, it says this, and I quote, "They were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly and all the commandments and righteous requirements of the Lord." Now want you to think about that for a second. Having lived in disgrace for years, decades, they didn't become bitter. They didn't become angry at the Lord. They may have had moments, I'm sure, but they were not driven by their bitterness and their anger. Instead, the Bible actually says that they were walking righteously. They were obeying God's commands. And that was a noble commendation that God gave them. But one day Zacharias is serving in the temple as he was doing, and an angel appeared to him and said that his wife was going to have a baby, and they were going to name him, John, which means the Lord is gracious. This would be John the Baptist, of whom we're going to look at the testimony that he gives today. And he would be filled with the Holy Spirit from within the womb. And he would not drink any wine or any alcohol. You see his testimony about Christ was going to be questioned at times, and God called for him to abstain from alcohol in any possible appearance, that his testimony might be compromised or stained. And then Isaiah 40:3-5, as Adam read earlier, Isaiah prophesies about this John the Baptist coming, being the forerunner of Christ. The arrival of Jesus was so important that God actually uniquely and expressly commissioned John the Baptist to be the forerunner to the coming Messiah. Listen to these words, we heard them once, but I want us to look, listen to them again. In Isaiah 40:3-5, it says this,

A voice is calling. "Prepare the way for Yahweh in the wilderness; make smooth in the desert a highway for our God. Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low, and let the rough ground become a plain, and the rugged terrain a broad valley; and then the glory of Yahweh will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together; for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken."

You see, prior to John the Baptist, for about 400 years, there was silence from God; no prophets, no prophecies, no visions, no key events. John here though, breaks the silence. And what he does is he confronts the Jews about their sin and their pride and their unbelief. He begins to chip away at the hardness of their hearts by bearing witness to who Jesus is. The Sower was coming and fields needed to be plowed and made smooth, the valleys needed to be lifted up, the hills needed to be made low, the stones need to be removed from the fields and made level and ready. You see, the Saviour of the world was about to arrive. And although His people appeared clean and righteous on the outside, on the inside, they were very much filled with sin. You see, they were steeped in religious tradition, and they were filled with the pride of themselves, they were depending upon their works to save them. And if they weren't, depending on their own works, they were depending on their lineage, the fact that there were

Jews. And they claimed to be God's children, all while for the most part living as children of the devil. You see, that's the spiritual landscape that the King was coming to. This is the Saviour of the world, and that was the landscape at hand. That kind of spiritual landscape isn't fitting, and it isn't acceptable for a coming King, and so John had a unique and he had a challenging role to play in the coming of King Jesus. Israel, though had been His chosen people. He gave them His commandments, He sent them His prophets to instruct them on how to live, and He warned them about their sin and the consequence of it and judgment to come. He gave visions of glorious things to come. And yet they were not ready for Him. Things needed to change, and they needed to be prepared for His coming. Turn with me if you would, the John 1:6-13, and let's see what it says about John and his witness of Jesus the Christ. Here's what it says,

There was a man having been sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the Light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the Light, but he came to bear witness about the Light.

There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens everyone. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him and the world did not know Him. He came to what was His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

The first testimony of John that we're going to look at this morning is the fact that Christ is the one true Light. John testified to the fact that of all those that claim to be light or have light of truth, Jesus is the one true Light. There are no other true lights in the world or the universe. In John's day, the Pharisees and the Sadducees were the leaders of the day and they claimed to have the light of truth. They were the ones that most of Israel looked to for spiritual guidance, and they claimed to be witnesses to the truth. But John here, confronts them, and he tells them that Jesus is the one true Light, and that they're not following that Light.

About a week or two ago, I was talking to a Hindu, and I was asking him a little bit about what he believes. And he was sharing about, you know, his religion and his religious beliefs. And he mentioned that he said that he believes that all religions lead to eternal life. He says, "We need to be real about our search for the for the truth for the light, and that really anybody can reach Karma," As he said. He said that all religions have some light of truth, they all have enough light of truth to get anybody saved. In other words, all religions have enough light of truth in them to save anybody. He said that they're all equally sufficient to save, and if we're authentic in our religion of choice, we can arrive at a better place after life. That's a very common philosophy. That's a very common perspective in this world, right? I've got spokes on the wheels on my wheelchair here, and the perspective is just choose one of the spokes, they all come to the center. Choose one of the religions, they all come to a good place at the end.

And then what John is doing here is he's using a light here as a metaphor of truth, or a source of truth. He's speaking of it as a way of salvation. Jesus, he calls Jesus the true Light, who enlightens everyone. Everybody who comes to Him has the true Light, and is enlightened to know how to live and how not to live. Jews, they decided though, to reinterpret God's laws their own way, and they actually forsook the grace of God, and they replaced it with their own good works. And they also replaced their dependence on salvation on their lineage. They abandoned what I call the conduit of faith, which is necessary for salvation, and they decided to stand on their own merit. They abandoned a life of humility, and they traded it to pursue a prominent standing among each other. They didn't truly fear God, but instead, they sought the praise and the applause of people. In John chapter 5:44, Jesus is speaking to the religious leaders, and He says this, "How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory that is from the only God?" Instead of seeking God's glory in their lives, they were seeking their own glory. They did things to be noticed by others, and that's what motivated them. That's the reward that they were seeking. But listen to what Jesus says in Matthew 6:1-6, because here He speaks to the religious leaders. And He says this,

Beware of doing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise, you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. Therefore, when you give to the poor, don't sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be glorified by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

And when you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by the men. Truly I say to you, they have the reward in full. But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret, He will reward you.

And when you're praying, don't use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore, do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

Let me ask you, let me ask myself, what are you living for in life? Who are you living for? Who is the audience in your life? Who is it that you are trying to please? Who is it that you notice when they notice you? Jesus cuts to the quick and He rebukes them for seeking the glory and the praise and the applause and the approval of others. You see, my friends, those kinds of rewards are fleeting, they're fickle, they're short lived, and they're temporal. When we live to impress, we aren't walking by faith. God calls us to walk by faith, not to impress one another. The light of truth though, convicts us when we say that we are living for God and His glory, but instead we are motivated by our own glory. How often do we say that we're living for God and yet secretly, we are looking, we're striving to get our own glory. We're

secretly looking to please others in such a way as that they will applaud us. You see, when we come to the light of Christ, His truth is convicting, and few want to be near that light, because it is convicting. A couple chapters later in John chapter three, Jesus speaks about this, where He explains why we tend to avoid his light. In John 3:19, it says,

And this is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light lest his deeds be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been done by God.

Now, did you notice as I read that, that when He was talking about the deeds, He talked about them differently, and I might add, He almost seems talks about different deeds? Did you notice that the first deeds were the ones that were sinful, and that people really don't want to be exposed, the light of Christ exposes those deeds as being evil and wicked. But he who practices truth comes to the light, so that his deeds may be, what? May be manifested as having been done by God. He switches from talking about the evil deeds to our righteous deeds. The same light that exposes the sin in us is the light that manifests our righteous deeds as having been done or carried out or from God Himself. You see, the root of our righteous deeds, is rooted from God. The evil that we do comes from within, but the good deeds we do are manifested as having been done by God. He causes, He produces the good deeds within us. Apart from Christ, our deeds are condemned, but in Christ, our deeds are manifested as being of Him.

One of the things that I enjoy about my house is that it has a lot of windows. I like bright rooms, and throughout the year, I just like to have sort of a lightness in the house. And it just makes it feel cheery and warm, and I can see things easier. But there's a couple times that I don't like all the windows, and that is, in the early morning, even if it's in the summer, and the sun is just coming up over the horizon, and it has a really just a shallow horizon. It's, you know, coming directly in right against all the cupboards and right against the floors and right against the table. And at that point, it's amazing how many blemishes I see in my house. You know, 10 minutes before that sun came up, the house felt rather clean. I had wiped the counters, the floor was swept and, and all sudden now with a bright, light shining, even in the winter, right? It comes on a sharp angle in the winter. It just comes in and it's like, oh, man, I didn't clean that counter good enough, man. I didn't wipe the counter good enough here. And, and it's sort of discouraging. It's like I did everything I knew I could, and yet still, it's not quite clean enough, it seems. And that's like the light of Christ. If we come to the light of Christ, He will expose our sin in us and it will make us feel uncomfortable. But if we don't come to Him, we won't be confessing, we won't be dealing with our sin. We need to be humbled before the Lord and approach Him. Because when we come to Him who is the Light and exposes our sin, then we will find freedom because the truth will set you free.

John's testimony here points to our need to come to Jesus who is the light so our sins are exposed. We in our sinful nature love our darkness for it keeps our sins hidden, but Jesus says everybody who does evil

hates the light. Jesus said that we are either for Him, or we are against Him. And in the same way we are either living in the light, or we are living in the darkness. We either love our sin and avoid the light of Christ, or we humble ourselves and we confess our sin, and we find freedom in Him when we come to him. Later in John chapter 12. Jesus explains that He is the light and we need to walk according to the light. Because He says in John 12:35-36. It says this.

So Jesus said to them, “For a little while longer the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you. He who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you might become sons of the Light.

Friend, I have to ask you, have you found freedom from your sin by humbly coming to the Lord Jesus and approaching the light of Christ? Do you seek His light in your life to guide you, to expose the sin in your life, that you might repent and find the freedom of being in Christ? he is the light and he's given us His light in his word. Take your Bible, this is His light. If you want to know what His light is, read this, this is His light. He's given it to us. We're not living with Jesus back then, we can't approach Him physically and talk to Him. But we can know everything about the light just by reading this.

Secondly, we see that John testified to our need to believe, bearing the fruit of repentance. John testified to our need to believe, bearing the fruit of repentance. He says in verse seven, John one again here, “He came as a witness to bear witness about the Light, so that all might believe through him.” He says in verse 12, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even those who believe in His name.” See in the book of John, the apostle here begins by pointing to the necessity to believe in Christ in order to have life. And he says the same thing at the end. Jeremy was talking about that last week in John chapter 20:31.

So what does it mean to believe? How do we know if someone is actually believing? And does it matter what we believe in? Turn with me for a moment to Isaiah chapter nine, if you would, we're going to read some verses here that shed some light on these questions. Isaiah chapter nine, we're going to read from verses two to seven. This is Isaiah prophesying about Jesus is coming. And it prophecies about who Jesus is. And it lets us know who it is that we are believing in. In Isaiah chapter nine, beginning at verse two, it says this,

The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; those who live in the land of the shadow of death, the light will shine on them. You shall multiply the nation, and you shall make great their gladness; they will be glad in your presence as with the gladness of harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For You shall shatter the yoke of their burden and the staff on their shoulders, the rod of their taskmaster, as at the battle of Midian. For every boot of the booted warrior in the rumbling of battle, and cloak rolled in blood, will be for burning, fuel for the fire. For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase

of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of Yahweh of hosts will accomplish this.

Did you notice the four names that are referenced and that have spoken up about the Lord Jesus here? It says, first of all, that He is our Wonderful Counselor. He is our Wonderful Counselor. You see, we are blind, as we already talked about, and we are lost in the way that that we go and on our own, and it leads to destruction. We are deceived by our own blindness and our own wickedness and we're walking in this darkness, but He is the light that leads to peace with Him. You see, He knows the way of salvation. He is the way of salvation. And He gives the best counsel ever. Remember, it says here He is the Wonderful Counselor. He gives the best counsel ever. I'm going to read for you what it says in Matthew 11:28-30 because I think this is among the best counsel ever. I mean, it's all good, don't get me wrong, but this is amazing because Jesus says this. He says in Matthew 11:28-30, He says,

Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.

What wonderful words of counsel Jesus gives. Come to Him, and we will have rest. Come to him, and we will have peace.

But we are also believing that He is the one and only Mighty God. You see, there is none other. He is the one that is supreme, the one that is over all. He's the one that has all authority. And Jesus Himself said, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and earth." To believe in Jesus includes believing that He is the almighty God of heaven.

The third one is, it says that he is Eternal Father. This is not to say that Jesus is God the Father, but that He is the one who is an authority above us, and we are of Him. He's our head. He's our chief commander. And Jesus is eternal; the Son of God has always been, and always will be.

And we believe also that Jesus is the Prince of Peace. He came to rescue those who are not at peace with Him. His ways are always peaceful. His ways are peaceful, and He is the Prince of Peace because he mediated peace between us and a holy, righteous God, who is our judge. Romans 5:1 says this, "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God," how? "Through our Lord Jesus Christ." As the Prince of Peace, Jesus came to reconcile sinners to Himself, and we know Him to be peace. When we are in Him, we have peace with Him. This is whom we serve, and it does matter whom we believe in.

In John 20:31 John says the same thing in terms of we need to believe in Him, and that He is the Son of God, and we need to believe in His life; He is the source of life. At the same time though that John here

testifies to whom we need to believe in, John is pointing to the simplicity of believing. He points to not only who we believe in, but the simplicity of believing. The Jews abandoned God's grace and that simplicity, and they exchanged it for one of two things: either their own good works, which was a complex set of burdensome rules that were really unachievable and unattainable, or it was their ethnic lineage. They determined that faith alone in God wasn't sufficient, but they determined that it was incomplete. There needed to be more, there needed to be something else that comes from us, either our lineage or works or something else that we can bring to God to merit our salvation. And John goes further in Luke chapter three at explaining what believing in Jesus looks like. Turn with me briefly, if you would to Luke chapter three:7-8. Luke chapter three, John is preaching to the crowds, and he knows that there's hypocrites in the crowds, and he has some strong words for them. Luke chapter three beginning of verse seven. This is John the Baptist speaking.

So he was saying to the crowds who are going out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham."

You see, John is testifying that true faith bears the fruit of righteousness, and the only kind of faith that saves is repentant faith. A faith that turns from sin and forsakes it, it abandons it as a way of life and it turns to Jesus as the vine and draws from His life. Faith and repentance, though, are always together. It's impossible to have one without the other. They're like a door that opens into a room. When you open a door that goes into a room, the door goes into a room and it sort of leaves another room. And in the same way, when we have faith, we come to the Lord Jesus. We're coming to Him, but we are repenting, or leaving, forsaking our sin or life of sin. And so true faith can never be without repentance. Because just as you can't open a door that goes into a room, it has to always sort of leave another room. In the same way, repentance means we're leaving our life of sin and we're seeking moving to God. And so that's a helpful way for me to remember what faith and repentance looks like. You can also think of it like two sides of a coin. You can't eliminate one side of a coin and say now the coin only has one side; it will always have two sides. And faith will always have the fruit of righteousness and the fruit of repentance.

But there's a third testimony that John brings out in this passage, and that is that John testified to the right of the believing to become children of God. John testified to the right of the believing to become children of God. It says in verses 12 back in John chapter one,

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

Notice that he calls us to receive Him. We do need to receive Him. The Jews though, thought that their right to be called children of God was based on their lineage. John flips the tables on them, and he says

that the only way to be called a child of God is to believe in Him. Receiving that right come through faith alone. There aren't works that we can do or lineage or a heritage that we can point to that gives us that right. Even John's baptism wasn't securing anyone's salvation The baptism itself didn't secure their salvation. But he also makes clear that our salvation doesn't come from ourselves. It's not something that we produce. It's not something that we determine. It comes from a spiritual birth, and it is of God. John goes so far as to say that it isn't the will of man that determines our salvation, but it's the will of God. Our salvation originates in Him. He's the author of our salvation, our salvation comes out of or from Him. It isn't something that we initiate, it's not from our will or our determination. Rather, we are born of His will, and we enter into salvation by believing and having faith. This is a hard truth for us to accept because it really strips us of the pride in our lives that we tend to have that I have contributed something to my salvation.

But there's many examples of God exercising His freewill over us, and I want us to take a look at some of them. In the Old Testament God shows the nation of Israel to be His chosen people, not based on anything that they did. They had nothing to boast about, but God in His freedom to choose, chose them as His treasured possession. In Deuteronomy 7:7-8, it says this of Israel,

Yahweh did not set His affection on you nor choose you because you are more in number than any of His peoples, for you are the fewest of all peoples, but yet, but because Yahweh loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your fathers, Yahweh brought you out with a strong hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

In the New Testament in John 15:16, Jesus is speaking to His disciples, and He says to them, "You did not choose me, but I chose you." Now, I asked you, did they believe? Did they get up? Did they follow? Did they make a decision? Yes, they did. And yet Jesus says, "You did not choose me. I chose you." Later in the book of Acts in 13:48, Paul and Barnabas are preaching in Antioch. And Paul rebuked the Jews for rejecting the gospel and he's preaching to the Gentiles. Many were coming to salvation, and here in Acts 13:48, it says, "And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed." What a humbling concept. Here it says that their salvation was appointed. This was something that was appointed of God. There's one more verse that I want to mention, and that is in 2 Thessalonians 2:13 that speaks of God's choosing and salvation. Paul here is writing to the believers in Thessalonica, and he's thanking them for their faithfulness. He's warning them of a great deception that's coming at the end of the age. He says that Jesus is going to slay the enemy. And in that context, Paul says in chapter 2:13, he says this, "But we should always give thanks to God for you, brothers, beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you as the first fruits for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth." You see, over and over again in the Scriptures it's pretty clear, God is the one who actively chooses us. And His call is effectual, it's effective.

Now, this is a paradox because on the one hand, we go out, and we spread the word, and we talk to people, and we say, you know, we say it nicely, hopefully. But you're a sinner, you need to repent, you need to turn, you need to decide, you need to believe, you need to do something here. So on the one hand, that is what we preach: repent, believe, have faith. We don't abandon that message, but on the other side, we recognize that we are appointed and we are chosen. And we have nothing really to do with that except to call people to repentance, just as you were called to repentance, and I was called to repentance. And you and I have come to faith in Christ Jesus. You see this is like I said a paradox because on the one hand, and I just said it, I know I'm repeating myself, but on the one hand, God calls us to repent. He calls us to believe and have faith, but He also says this in Ephesians 1:4, it says this, "He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world." There are many other verses that speak of God's choosing us for salvation, yet His call to everyone is to repent.

And I don't know your situation in life, but I do look out over the crowd and I say, "Have you repented of your sins? Have you come to the light of Christ? Do you believe him to be the Messiah? Do you recognize that He is the Saviour of the world, and that when His blood was being shed on the cross that was for you, so that you might be saved and that you might become a child of God?" We need to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that He is the Son of God. We believe that He is born of the virgin Mary. We believe that He lived a perfect life, and that He always obeyed God the Father. We believe that His death on the cross satisfied the justice of God to pay for our sins. We believe that He forgave us of all of our sins. We believe that He was raised from the dead on the third day and that He conquered sin, and Satan and the power of sin. And we believe that we are saved by grace through faith in Him, and nothing else.

John here points, in the scripture, out, he points out that it is only by believing in Jesus that we have the right to become children of God. And once you believe, you are born again. And being born again, is something that is permanent. It's irrevocable. It's a spiritual birth. And it's something that God gives, because it's a gift that He gives.

At Christmas time we like to put up lights. I think it's you know, we go around and drive and look at the lights to see all the nice lights and see all the fun colors, and you can pick your favorite house or pick your favorite scene, and all of that sort of stuff. And it's nice and it's cheerful. It's a fun thing to do to kind of celebrate Christmas. But during this Christmas season, I want us to draw nearer to the light of Christ. Let's draw near to the light of Christ because as we draw near to the light of Christ, we will find freedom; freedom from our sin, freedom from the shackles, freedom to live as He wants, freedom to make the right choices, so that we're living truly by faith. It says in Hebrews 11:6, "And without faith it's impossible to please Him, for he who draws nearer to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." My prayer for you today is that these testimonies of John will draw you nearer to Christ and His light. John testified to Christ as a way to prepare for His coming, but I want to remind you that Jesus is coming again. Jesus came once. He came the first time; John prepared the way; but Jesus is coming again. You see, nowhere in Scripture, are we actually instructed to celebrate

and make a big deal about the fact that He was born. It doesn't say "have a Christmas." We do it, and it's great, and it's fun, and great things can come from it; we learn a lot of good things. But that's not where the word of God points us. Where the word of God actually points us is to His second coming. And He's coming again. As you think about Christ's birth, I encourage you to spend time preparing yourself for His second coming, and being a witness to others about these truths that we've looked at this morning, let's pray.

Our Father in heaven, we thank You that Jesus is the Light of the world, the one true Light. And we thank You that we are able to come to You through the blood of Christ. There's no other way to the Father except through the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank You that You have given us the command to believe and that there's something simple about believing. Our heart is at times very hard and prideful and filled with self. We're often very blind to things and we don't see things as they truly, really are, but as we come to Christ, we know Lord, that it is by believing and believing alone in the Lord Jesus, that we become children of God, and that we have them the right to become children of God.

I pray Father, that we would be people who live in the light of Christ, that we would seek Christ, that we would know Christ, that we would bear testimony of Christ Lord in our lives to our neighbors and our friends and our colleagues.

And Father, we look forward to the second coming of Christ. I pray, Lord, that we would be found to be faithful, that we would be busy serving you, that we would be walking by faith, not by sight, but by faith. Father, I pray that we would see the significance of the testimonies that John the Baptist gave of the return of the coming of Christ Jesus, and that Lord we would be filled with joy and be filled with excitement, be filled with anticipation at the second coming of our Lord and Saviour, as He will one day come in the clouds. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.