

The Gospel of John - #14 - 01/10/2021 - "The ONE Worth Living For!" John 3: 31-36

Introduction: IL- After resigning his pastorate to go lead another church, a pastor was approached by an endearing older member of the congregation. She wept over the pastor's decision to leave and said, "Things will never be the same." The minister tried to console her by saying, "Don't worry, I'm confident you will get a new pastor who is better than me." She continued to sob and replied, "That's what the last three pastors have said, but they just keep getting worse." People, including preachers and elected officials and any of us here today can disappoint at times, but Jesus never does! **He** is the One worth living for and John the Baptist makes it clear in our text today that the Savior should be our focus. Here are five reasons why we should take our eyes off of what is around us and pay full attention to Jesus! He alone deserves our faithful devotion and tireless duty because...[Brief explanation of two views on the authorship of this portion of John 3- either way, the Holy Spirit is THE divine Author!]

Jesus comes from Heaven- verses 31 and 32- John the Baptist demonstrates his humble faithfulness to the superiority of Jesus- His Person and His work! He concentrates in these two verses on the pre-existence and full Deity of Jesus. Philippians 2: 9 agrees- "Therefore God has also highly exalted Him and given Him a name that is above every name!" That word "above" in our text is contrasted with the word "earthly" or "of the earth". Jesus is above all in His nature, rank and authority. Three times John mentions that Jesus is from above which means He is from Heaven, not from earth like you and me. To be earthly simply means to be human. John is emphasizing in the full context the reason WHY Jesus descended from above. Remember- Jesus never wrote a book and yet listen to what the Apostle John says at the very end of this Gospel- John 21: 25- "Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written!" Jesus never wrote a song, but thousands have been written in His honor, and rightfully so! The point of the two verses we are considering is that Jesus had a heavenly origin as well as a divine message for sinners. Jesus saw and heard in Heaven, testifying from first-hand knowledge! John points out accurately that His perfect testimony was not widely received even though it came from God the Father through God the Son. When verse 32 says "no one receives His testimony" it is taken to be a general statement since verse 33 indicates that some "whosoever" did and do receive it. Remember in chapter one, verse 11- "He came to His own and His own did not receive Him" but then in verse 12 John says, "But to all who did receive Him (Jew and Gentile), who believed in His name, He gave the right to become the children of God." So, John the Baptist witnesses here to the glory of Jesus. And He is clear that we are limited coming from earth, but He is not limited since He is God in the flesh, come from Heaven! Jesus declared what He saw and heard and what He speaks about it can be trusted. Those words, "seen and heard" are courtroom phrases referring to an accurate, honest witness who testifies under oath- "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth". There are limits to earthly witnesses. The prophets spoke of what they heard though they didn't sometimes understand it all. Angels investigate these powerful truths of redemption and salvation, but it is mysterious to them, according to 1 Peter 1: 12. Mankind rejects Jesus for the most part because he is earthly and

sinful and committed to self-promotion, not glorifying the Lord who made him! And even though Jesus tells the truth, many do not want to hear it!

Jesus tells the truth- verses 33 and 34(a)- Jesus can be trusted ALWAYS to tell the truth! He knows man's heart and that most people are too proud to bow at the feet of Jesus in humble recognition of Him as their Savior! Most people reject the notion that our future destiny is tied to Jesus- either we know Him as our own Savior from sin or we reject Him as a Redeemer who already bought you and me out of the marketplace of sin and set us free to be who God designed us to be. The person who does walk out of that marketplace by faith and begins to live the life God intended for him or her discovers just how truthful Jesus is. After all, He said concerning Himself, in John 14: 6- "I am the way the TRUTH and the life. No one comes to the Father but by Me!" Jesus is truth and He models and speaks truth. When Jesus spoke of Adam and Eve and their descent into sin that plunged the whole human race into a pattern of sin, He knew the truth because Jesus was there! When He preached about Noah and his immediate family being delivered from the worldwide flood, picturing God's provision of salvation, Jesus knew the facts since He was there. When He preached about Sodom and Gomorrah being destroyed because of excessive sin and debauchery, He knew the truth about the whole incident since Jesus was there. And when Jesus says, in John 14- "In My father's house are many mansions- I go to prepare a place for you" He knows the truthfulness of that teaching because He came FROM there! And our text is clear- the person who truly believes what Jesus says on any subject, "sets his seal to this- that God IS true!" A Roman seal was used to mark certainty, verification, accuracy of a letter or proclamation from the Emperor. **[PIC]** The point for us this morning is that we can claim as true anything our Savior has said- He means it and He will do what He says He will do because He is who He says He is! Jesus asked His followers, in Matthew 16: 15- "Who do YOU say that I am?" And the point of quoting that verse today is that we must have an answer! Who is He to YOU? Can you put that into faith-filled words that will glorify God because they are true, or do you need more proof of who Jesus is and what He has done for you so that you can have eternal life? Jesus "utters" the very words (Rhemas) of God, directing pointed, specific statements of truth to your heart and mind! For WAY too many people their pursuits in life center on money, career, a house in the right neighborhood- all of which are temporary- but Jesus and the written word of God are eternal! 1 John 2: 16 reminds us that, "All that is in the world- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not from the Father but is from the world." God gives perfect gifts, like His Holy Spirit, to those who put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ...

Jesus gives the Holy Spirit- verse 34(b) [PIC back] Jesus was indwelt by the Holy Spirit and when He was baptized by John in the Jordan River the Spirit descended upon Him in full measure. Jesus' earthly ministry for three years was marked by the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit and those who put their faith in the Savior and have eternal life in Him also have the indwelling, empowering, guiding, teaching, gifting Holy Spirit as our "Helper" so that we can live a life that consistently glorifies God and honors the Lord Jesus as our Master. The Person and ministry of the Holy Spirit are worthy of our study and application. But the phrase in our text

that is like a neon-sign of truth is "He gives the Spirit without measure!" He, Jesus, gives to His children the FULL measure of the Holy Spirit. We do not receive a little bit of the Spirit every now and then. Some believers, particularly of the Pentecostal persuasion, urge their followers to pray for more of the Spirit and more of His gifts of all kinds. But there is no text in our Bibles that indicates that believers need to pray for more of Him or of His gifts. We have the Spirit "without measure" which means, as much of Him as there is. And every Christian, according to my Bible, has at least one gift from the Holy Spirit and need not pray for more, because He has already imparted to you and me the very gift or gifts HE wants you to have. 1 Corinthians 12: 11 states this about gifts of the Spirit- "All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as HE wills!" Jesus had the Holy Spirit empowering Him while on earth and as the God-man He demonstrates what Spirit-indwelt people can accomplish to the glory of God! By application- we need to be more faithful to the Word of God and more yielded to the Spirit of God! To do so proves we know who is in control!

Jesus has ALL authority- verse 35 God loves the Son and has given all things into His hand! Notice as we start this verse that, along with the end of verse 34, the Trinity is taught- the Holy Spirit in verse 34(b), the Father and the Son in verse 35. Why does John mention the Father's love for His only Son? Because in the next verse he will deal with the wrath of God against Christ-rejectors, so it is critical here to determine that God the Father will not ignore those who treat His Son with contempt or indifference! God proves His intense and perfect love for Jesus by giving ALL things into His hand or under His control. We can and should celebrate Jesus' full authority because it is a reminder for you and me that love doesn't hold back! What God gives to you and me He gives without measure! We should respond affirmatively to His total authority and not reject it absolutely like so many seem to do today! But in the case of His Son the Father gives total authority or right to rule to Jesus because He is God in human form and because God loves Him SO much- like He loves YOU! **IL-** A.W. Tozer- "While it looks like everything is out of control, behind the scenes is a God who has not surrendered authority!" **IL-** Bishop J. C. Ryle- "We can never make too much of Christ!" For any or all of us, there are only two options in reference to Jesus: trust the Son or reject the Son!

Jesus offers eternal life- verse 36 He is always there to give His free gift of eternal life to those who honestly and humbly kneel before Him and say, "Yes- I am a sinner and I need your grace, your gift, and I want my life to give YOU glory!" Salvation comes when sinners believe on the finished work of Jesus on the Cross without adding our good deeds or human efforts to the equation. Our heavenly destiny is tied to Jesus, not to a religion or a list of do's and don'ts. The opposite of eternal life in Jesus is the wrath of God poured out on a rejector of the perfect gift from the perfect Savior. To reject Jesus and His offer of grace is a slap in the face of God. Every human being must choose- wrath or mercy! A simple definition of mercy is NOT getting what we do deserve- eternal punishment for rejecting God's Son! **IL-** Jonathon Edwards- "Sin against an infinitely holy God is infinitely heinous and thus worthy of infinite punishment." Rather than take that chance, why not turn in child-like faith to Jesus and take His gift offered by grace? Genuine faith is obedient faith. To not believe is to not obey His command in Acts 16: 31-

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved!" because honoring God by obedience once we have become His child proves that we love Him and are thankful for all He has done for us! The person who believes in Jesus for eternal salvation does not regard sin lightly or simply excuse it saying- "Well, everybody does it!" It comes down to a choice every person must make. Have YOU made that choice? If not, you need to know that God's wrath "abides" on you. His wrath is not some angry outburst or a violent rage- it means a "settled displeasure" You are not someone awaiting sentence in God's heavenly courtroom- you are already under sentence! When John writes that the rejector "shall not see life" he means that that person can form no true conception of life as God intended it and, as a result, he cannot enjoy life- he or she merely exists until the end comes. UNLESS! You see, this is not, as some think, a God-forsaken world. It is a world that has forsaken God! On one occasion in Mark 3: 5 Jesus "looked at the crowds in anger, and was grieved at their hardness of heart." Don't let your heart become hard- while it is still soft, open your heart and let Jesus come in and save you and take up residence in your heart and life. It all starts with submitting ourselves to Him and receiving His gift of grace. That's when life takes on a purpose and joy fills our moments and our days- even when things are not going well around us!

Conclusion: IL- Warren Wiersbe, in his book, "On Being A Leader" wrote- "Submission makes a person become more of what God wants him to be. It gives him freedom to accomplish all that God has for his life!" Submit to the One who, with all authority, is worth living for and put confident faith in Him alone to accomplish His purposes for your life. HE will get the glory, rightfully, and YOU will get the blessing of an abundant life through yielding to Him!

Closing Song- *"My Faith Has Found a Resting Place"*