

Become Or Not To Become - John 1:4-16

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 11 January 2026

Preacher: Pastor Jared Bromka

[0:00] Hey guys, thanks for listening to our Calvary Chapel Charlotte podcast.! I will walk by faith and not by sight.

Good morning, everyone. Another week, another Sunday, another day closer to going home and being with the Lord. Amen. Did anybody have any beginnings this week?

Yes, you did. Beginnings of mornings and beginnings of meals and beginnings of conversations. We all did. They're inescapable. You can't escape beginnings. They're there whether we want them or not.

And so also is the one who was in the beginning. He's inescapable too. He's there whether we want them or not. He was there before the beginning. He's in the beginning.

He's at the beginning. He was there every step of the way of our week. Colossians 1.17. He is before all things and by him all things consist. That him is who?

[1:31] Who do we see that was last week? That's the logos. It's the word. It's the word that we're going to see this week was made flesh. The word that was with God and the word that is God.

That word, it speaks. It's an unchanging voice because the Lord changes not because he is all existing, pre-existing, self-sustaining.

And so his voice doesn't change. Now it varies, right? But it's the same voice. It doesn't mean that he speaks the exact same word to each one of us, but he's speaking the same thing.

But it may vary. His voice will vary, but it is unchanging. Maybe a voice of comfort. Maybe a voice of discipline. Maybe correction. Maybe of encouragement.

But it's the same voice. It's unchanging. I don't have to come to a situation and all of a sudden it's going to be like, this is a brand new voice of God. Oh my word. I never knew this about him. Oh, I thought he was so kind and loving, but I found out he's really got this side to him.

[2:28] No, that's not true. It's the same unchanging voice. We can always then trust the results of that voice, no matter how difficult our situation, no matter how hard it is, whatever we're going through, even no matter how hard it's how hard his voice is speaking to us.

We can trust. Okay, Lord, I can trust you because your voice, his voice is based off of something that doesn't change. Something that preexisted us. Revelation 22, 13 and 14.

I am the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. And then he says, blessed are they that do his commandments, right? His voice doesn't just exist just because it's there, right?

He didn't just create us and then just try and wow us all the time with his cool words in his voice. It's to do what? It's to hear. It's to respond. It's to believe. It's to obey. It's to obey and to do his commandments.

So I said last week that we would look at the gospel of John, like the why, the what, the who, and all of that. And so as we kind of did those first three voices, we started in a sense, instead of looking at John, we looked at Jesus.

[3 : 33] We looked at the point of all of this. We looked at what John said is, hey, in the beginning is this. This is the thing that predates me. It predates John. It predates, you know, predates John, not me, but me as well, but predates everything.

This is the most important thing. Let's start there. So John was written between AD 85 and 90, probably. Nobody knows for sure. So John would have been probably, it seems like realistically he would have been maybe 16, 17 years old at the time of when he was traveling the hills of Galilee with Jesus.

16, 17. He was one of the younger ones. My guess is he was the younger brother of James, just from the way they seemed to interact and the fact that James was martyred. But anyway, so at the time of writing this book, he would have been over 100 years old.

And it seems like all of his writings, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John. So John wrote John, Gospel, 1st, 2nd, 3rd John, and Revelation. He's not John the Baptist. John the Baptist didn't write anything.

He said a lot of things, but he didn't write anything that we have. So it seems like he would have been well over 100 years old or 100 years old.

[4 : 44] And it was estimated he died 110, 100 something years old. He became the pastor of the church of Ephesus is where he ended up. And he was known as the apostle of love.

And it was supposedly, according to church tradition, it said that at the end of his life, they would kind of get him up onto the stage or, not I can say them stages, but stand him up, whatever. Back then, maybe they sat him down.

I think everybody would have stood and the teacher would have sat. We'd just all sit here. And he would have just got up and he would have said, my little children love one another, love one another.

And then they'd sit him back down. You know, I think we have people in our lives that maybe we've known for years or known of them. And we meet them and they've just lived long lives of faithfulness.

And when you're in their presence and you know there's somebody who serves the Lord, it's like, wow. There's people that have been in my life that I look back on now when I was a teenager or, you know, growing up in the church or whatever, or went to different conferences or different things that have passed on now.

[5 : 43] And I think, boy, I miss their voice. I miss what they had to say. There's nobody who said it like them or nobody who talked to that issue like they did. I think as we're looking at this, the word, the voice, the logos, right?

It's that voice. It's the voice that someone speaks with that's so familiar. In the Gospel of John, there are significant events in the ministry and life of Jesus that John leaves out. He leaves out Jesus' birth.

It's no birth. He leaves out his baptism. No temptation in the wilderness. No confrontation with demons. He leaves out his parables. The Last Supper, Gethsemane, and the Ascension. Why should we even read this?

He's leaving out all the good stuff. Remember, John is writing after all those other Gospels most likely were written. He's writing, you know, Paul when he was traveling with Luke.

John would have been alive. And then after that, John becomes this old man who then sits down to write this. The first three Gospels, they focus on the ministry in Galilee.

[6 : 41] John will focus his Gospel on Jerusalem. Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem. So in Israel at the time of Jesus' ministry, you had the Galilee, you had Samaria, and you had Judea.

Remember, nobody wanted to go into Samaria because the Samaritans were there. Samaritans were just after Israel was removed from the land in the book of Kings and Chronicles. Then the people that were put back into Israel were the Samaritans.

They were not originally Jews. They were people who just taught some semblance of kind of like Judaism. So the Jews looked at them as, by this time, as just like anathema.

And so they would actually go, when they would go from Jerusalem to Galilee, they would go down to Jericho, and they would go up along the Jericho, along the Jordan River.

They'd go around it. They didn't want to go through it. That's why when we get to John 4, it's so remarkable that Jesus says he must need to go to Samaria. The disciples are like, oh, we're going through Samaria. I can't believe this.

[7 : 40] So there's a Galilee region where Jesus grew up and spent a lot of his ministry in Galilee. Matthew, Mark, and Luke cover that. We will be in Galilee a little bit. That's where the wedding feast of Cana, you can see it there up by Nazareth, happens in chapter 2.

But ultimately, primarily, John looks at the ministry in Jerusalem, in the city of peace. Why did John write the book? Well, he tells us why in John chapter 20, the end of his book, 21 chapters, and the end of chapter 20, he says, and many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples.

So there's a whole lot else that's out there, guys. In chapter 21, the next chapter, he's going to say, in fact, there's so much, I suppose, if it was written, not even the whole world can contain it. But here he says in chapter 20, he says, hey, there are many other things which Jesus did, and they're not written in this book.

But why did he write these things? But these are written that you might believe. That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. And that believing, you might have life through his name.

Why did he write this book? Why are we going to look at this book? That we might believe. That we might believe that the Lamb of God, in Exodus chapter 12, in type, where the blood was put upon the door. In Genesis, I can't remember what chapter now, where Abraham says to Isaac, God will provide himself a lamb.

[9 : 02] In the Levitical system, where every lamb that was brought as an offering would point to this lamb so that we might believe. Do we know all that there is to know about Jesus's life and ministry during his time on this earth?

No. John tells us that. He says, no, you're not going to know everything. But we do know all that is needed for life in his name. We know all that is needed for life in his name.

He didn't leave anything out. It's like, John, I wish you would have written 22 chapters. You know, it's like in Matthew when it says, when Jesus rose from the grave, it says, and many others rose from the grave and they saw them.

People saw them walking through town. And that's all it says. So what happened next? Did they go home? Did they go back to the grave? What was that? We don't get that information. There's a lot that we don't know, but we do know enough that we might believe and have life in his name.

John does not tell us much about himself in the Gospels. He doesn't like to bring himself up. And you just think as a 90-some-year-old man, a 100-some-year-old man, he's just sitting and writing. And he's just like, this does not need to be about me.

[10 : 08] You know, and he's writing about the thing that was most important to him, the thing he knew he was going to go and be with soon, with his Lord. So the apostle John, John's father was Zebedee.

He had a fishing business on Galilee. And that's one of the, where Jesus will go and officially, officially call John. That was in the moment. So John's father was Zebedee.

His mother was Salome. And she's one of the women that goes to the tomb in the early in the morning of the resurrection. John's brother was James. James, not James, the brother of Jesus, who wrote the book of James, Jesus' older brother, half-brother.

But his brother, the first martyr, was James. John was a partner in the fishing business with Peter, who was a partner with his father, Zebedee. And they are known, James and John, their nickname as the Sons of Thunder.

You know, there's a proverb that says, where no oxen are, the crib is clean. If you don't got any ox, you don't got a mess. But much strength is by the increase of the ox.

[11:13] Meaning like, hey, if you want a lot of strength from the ox, you got to put up with the mess. And I look at, think of Jesus with those 12 guys. He's like, oh my, you know, Sons of Thunder. Could be worse. You know, they could be like the Sons of Pansies or something.

You don't want that. Better to have Sons of Thunder. Better to have the mess. And the strength that goes with it. Than the opposite. So John does something very specific. Where he said, and many other signs in John 20.

Where he said that truly to Jesus. John gives us specific signs. He is a seven of them. Which makes sense. There's so many sevens in John. There's 21 chapters divisible by seven.

By three. Seven times three. It's just like in Revelation. You can never come to the end of the sevens. So here he gives us seven major signs. Of the miracles of Jesus. And now I've got a bunch of slides.

You can take pictures. Or also just let you know, I upload all my notes. I don't usually bring this up. They're all online. If you just go to the website under resources. There's a button. They're all there. And also, if you're not signed up for our email.

[12:17] I've corrected the QR code on the back of the bulletin. It was just incorrectly done. But go online and sign up. Or use the QR code.

That's the way we communicate during the week. I'm not really on social media. So if there's a change to anything, that's how you'll know. But pretty much we'll be here Sundays and Wednesdays. But as far as lady studies or things like that.

If the time changes. The best way is through email. But anyway. So John highlights these seven signs. Jesus turning water into wine. Healing the official son. The healing at the pool of Bethesda.

The feeding of the 5,000. Walking on water. Healing the man born blind. And then lastly, raising Lazarus from the dead. All of these signs. And we will eventually go through all of them. John shows us seven I am statements by Jesus.

That Jesus makes about himself. Jesus says, I am the bread of life. I am the light of the world. I am the door. I am the good shepherd. I am the resurrection and the life.

[13:15] I am the way, the truth, and the life. I am the true vine. And I think when the Lord first told that to Moses. He said, I am. That I am. I am the all sufficient one. I am.

And then Jesus comes and says, I'm everything, guys. I'm bread. I'm life. I'm light. I'm the word. I'm the door. I'm the shepherd. I'm resurrection. I'm truth. And I am the source. He says, I am.

Now, Jesus will also make some other I am statements. But not so much like, I am this. He will say, in a sense, I am he that does. There's six of those.

Where Jesus declares, I am he. Not so much, I am this. I am bread. I am life. I am light. That I am. But he will say, I am he. I who speak to you am he.

Sorry. It is I. I am he. He says, do not be afraid. You will die in your sins unless you believe that I am he. I am that one. When you've lifted up the son of man, then shall you know that I am.

[14:13] And it's not in the same context of I am the bread of life. But he's saying, I am he or I am that one. When you've lifted up the son of man, you shall know that I am that one. Truly, truly, I say unto you before, Abraham was, I am.

And then lastly, in John 18, I am he. I am that one. So we said how John also wrote first, second, and third John. He wrote the epistles of John as well.

And first John, he kind of mirrors the beginning that he does here in the book of John. He says, that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the word of life.

And so how does this book start here in John? In the beginning was the word. So John writes first, John and says, hey, guys, that word that was in the beginning, we've heard him. We've seen him. We've looked on him.

Our hands have handled the word of life. For the life was manifested and we have seen it and we bear witness and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the father and was manifested unto us, was made known to us.

[15:22] And now we are making it known to you, John says, that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you that you also may have fellowship with us. And truly our fellowship is with the father and with his son, Jesus Christ.

And then he tells us this. And these things write we unto you, your joy may be full. Why is John writing? Well, he's writing the book of John. He says that believing you might have life in his name so that your joy may be full.

You see, the life that we find in the name in Jesus, it's a joy filled life. It's a life that fills us with joy. John is saying all of these things that we have, we have been a part of this and you can too.

You don't need to see him and handle him, but you can have fellowship with him in the same way. You can have your joy filled in the same way. How? By believing in his name. The gospel of John reveals Jesus, not just as the son of God, but the son who is God, not just as the son of God, not just a son of God, but who is the son of God.

He is God. And so as we jump back into the text in chapter one of chapter one is long guys, it's like 50 one verses. We'll get through 14 today.

[16:39] And then next week we'll pick up actually in the narrative, but there's a lot of theology that he throws in the beginning here. It's because he wants us to know who this is before we spend time looking at who he is, like what he did, I guess, before we spend time looking at all that he did.

He's like, you need to know who he is. But today we're going to look at where last week we looked at beginnings and we talked about this word become. We're going to look some more at that and our part and our choice of whether we will become or not to become, you know, what do we want to be in this process of who this word is, who this Jesus is?

What about us? What are we going to become or not become? John 1, 3, we saw that all things became by him and without him, nothing became that was become.

All things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made. That's that word in the Greek become, become that which was not becoming that which is something coming into existence.

Now this word become appears 678 times in the New Testament and between verses 1 through 14, it appears eight of those times and four of them, I think, are in verse three alone.

[17:49] So this, this word in the beginning here, it's very heavily weighted. It's a common word. It means to become, becoming something you're not. Like if I said to you, well, what are you becoming? Well, it's like, what are you becoming into?

What are you now that you are turning into or you are obtaining? But there's another word. It's a much older word. We, we don't really use it anymore. Becoming saying like, well, that is not very becoming of you. You know, we don't usually say that, or that wasn't a very, very becoming thing, or you're not wearing something very becoming, right?

That word means suitable, proper, belonging to the character, adapted to circumstances. So if you use it in that context, you'd be like, you know, that wasn't very becoming of you.

What you said was not belonging to your character. Why would you say that? You know, that's not very, very becoming for this situation. It's not adapted to these circumstances. I like that definition though.

What are we becoming? What am I becoming? What am I being made suitable for, belonging to, or adapting myself to? What am I being made suitable for?

[18:53] What am I belonging to? And what am I adapting myself to? You know, as individuals, we are the sum of what we've already become. Who you are today and who I am today, we're the sum of what we've already become, plus what we're currently becoming, right?

We're not, we're not static. We're not just, oh, I finally got to this point and that's it. No, this is what we become and what we're becoming. It's a combination. That's who we are in flux always. What we've become and what we are becoming.

And I think in our minds, what we're becoming may be different sometimes than what we're actually becoming. What we want to become, what my expectations are. I'm like, yes, this is what I'm going towards.

But so often the end result is not exactly, it's not exactly what we would expect. It's not who we are now, but it's often not exactly who I would expect. Maybe as I look back over the last years or however long, and I think, I remember that time in my life where I thought I was becoming this and I was becoming something different.

I didn't realize that. But we are a result of what we've considered suitable and proper, like that word. What have we considered suitable and proper to shape who we are adapting ourselves into?

[20:10] That is the result of who we are. The things that I consider suitable and proper in my life to shape and adapt me into what I'm becoming. What do I allow in my life to shape and adapt me?

What is that thing that I consider suitable and proper? What are we becoming? Well, as we jump into verse four here, I think the idea is Jesus did not become, all things from him became, but we're going to see not all things necessarily turned out as expected.

Why? Because of sin. Because sin entered the world. Now, it's not outside of what God expected that he's like, oh, this was a surprise for me. But outside of the expectation you would get when you think, well, God started all of this.

God, who is all these things about his character and his nature, like God is doing a new work. And it resulted in a fall? Resulted in sin? This can't be the Lord's work. How many times in my life do I think, God, I thought you were taking me here.

Why am I now down here? Well, because that's part of the process to get there. Sin wasn't the end result. Sin is not who we are. Sin may have been for a moment who we became, but who are we becoming?

[21:21] Through Christ. In him, verse four, was life. I like this. We're beginning all of a sudden to shape this a little more. I think of in Genesis where it said that darkness was upon the face of the deep and the spirit of God hovered upon the darkness.

And he said, let there be light. And he began to create. And now we're, this thing is taking shape. It's taking form. The word now has a him. It's a him. In him was life.

Not in it, not in that, not in them. In him was life. And the life was the light of men. What is life? What are some characteristics about life? Well, life is not death.

It is the opposite of death. In our natural existence, you cannot experience life in death. Now, spiritually, that's a different matter. But nobody is dead experiencing life, right?

You have to be alive. It's the opposite of death. Life is also evidenced by definitive signs of life. We as people living in this life, there are definitive signs that you are alive and that I'm alive.

- [22 : 24] We know if someone's alive or not by those very definitive signs. All things we experience in this life are experienced in life, right?

Has anybody experienced anything in death in this life? No. Death takes us what? Outside the experience of this life. Death in this life takes us outside of that. So life, all things we experience in life, they're experienced here in this life.

All of our experiences. And life, by definition, must be derived from a source. Life cannot just exist as life. Say, wait a minute. God exists apart, eternal as life.

Yes, but he is the source. He is life and he's the source. Life is not just some indetermined thing. And for us, there most definitely must be a source. Life here in chapter one of John, in him was life.

There's different kinds of life. There's biological life. There's life of something that's being animated. There's plant life. There's animal life. But life here is not life that's just referring to biology.

- [23 : 28] It means life real and genuine. A living soul. Vitality. The absolute fullness of life belonging to God. Supreme life.

This is a life that is not something that's just natural. This is a life that is from its source, which is God. So then John is saying what? He's saying the logos, the word, the full expression of God is the very principle and source of life.

That's the point he's making here. All life then emanates from the word in a sense as a light shining from its source. So you know, a flashlight. This would be like a flash life.

You turn it on and when it shines on, boom, there's life. All life. It emanates from the single source in a sense, the way light emanates from a source. So man's life is more than physical, isn't it?

Man's life is a living soul lit up as it were by God. In Genesis 2, 7, the Lord God formed a man, formed man and the out of the dust of the ground and breathes into his nostrils the breath of life.

- [24 : 33] What was that life? It's just that he is alive. That he just was material. That he just lived for this life. And that was it. And man became a living soul. The man's life is more than physical.

His soul in a sense is lit up by God. We looked at some characteristics of life. What about light? Well, light is known by what it illuminates.

Light is only known by what it illuminates. For example, if you had a light bulb and you turn on the light, right? You see the source of the light, but it's not light.

You see what light shines on, but light is only known by what it is illuminating, right? If you turn that light bulb off, turn the lamp off, is the bulb still light?

No, it's not. It's not light. You know, I work in civil engineering and I'm at different construction sites and starting up this one pump station.

[25 : 29] The electrician that was there, I was listening to this conversation he was having with someone. They're like, well, they're trying to fix something. Like, well, you're the expert electrician. You know how electricity works. He goes, no, I don't. He's like, I know what it does.

I know how to, that if I connect this to here and here and here, then that signal is going to go there to turn that on. But I don't know how that works and I don't know what that is. And I thought, man, you just described God. You just described the source.

It's so amazing to hear him just say that. He's like, I have no idea what electricity is. I can tell you what it does and I can tell you how to do it. But light is known by what it illuminates.

Light has never known darkness ever. Now, wait a minute. I've been in a dark room with a little flashlight and I turned it on. There's a lot of dark and there's a little light. But where that light is, there is no darkness. Light has never known darkness.

You can never bring the two to meet. It probably thinks darkness is a figment of our imagination. Look at Mr. Light. Have you never met Mr. Darkness? I've heard about darkness my whole life and I've never seen him.

[26 : 32] Light allows one to see what could not be seen without it. Obviously, without light, if this was all dark, we could feel that it's there. But there's so much we would miss.

So much that cannot be seen. And again, light must be derived from a source. Light must have a source. And God said, let there be light. And there was light.

Jesus in John chapter 8, he claimed to be that source. He said, I am the light of the world. He that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Wow. The same one that John talks about right here. All things were made by him. And in him was life. And the light was the light of men. Every soul. In essence is what is being said here is born with a certain amount of understanding, a certain amount of light, as it were, concerning the source of its light.

Paul tells us that in Romans. He says that the wrath of God, God's wrath is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

[27 : 36] What does that mean? It means they know the truth, but they're not doing right with it. They're not doing right by it. Why? Because that which may be known of God is manifest to them. For God has showed it unto them.

Why? Because that light is the light of men. We're going to see a little further down here in verse 9, that that light is a light which lights every man that comes into the world.

Every soul, every person has a divine spark, as it were, a divine source. It does not make them divine. We were created for what? Life and light.

That's why we're created. But we've experienced death and darkness because of sin. It's interesting. People, men, women, all people are born with this innate fear of what?

Death and darkness. We're all born with that. There's something about that that is just, we pull away from. It's terrifying. What may look beautiful in the daytime, a walk through the woods, becomes terrifying in the night when you can't see anything, but you can still hear it.

[28 : 49] Jesus comes as the solution to both. He is the light and he is the life. And he comes to deliver them through who fear of, who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Fear brings bondage. Fear is the opposite of faith. Fear is the opposite of faith. Our trust in God brings liberty. Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. So Jesus, the logos and the light, the word, the light, the truth, he comes as a solution to both.

And verse five, this light then, which lights every man that comes into the world. In him was life and the life was the light of men. That light shined in the darkness.

Light came because there was darkness. And the solution is what? Light. There's only one solution for darkness. It's light. And the light shines in the darkness and the darkness comprehended him.

Comprehended it, not. Comprehended means it did not obtain. It did not grasp it. It did not hold it. To comprehend. Like you said, well, I don't comprehend what you're saying to me. I can't grasp it. I haven't obtained it.

[29 : 54] I don't quite get it. Darkness. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness comprehended it not. Darkness has no power in itself to be dark.

You know that? Darkness exists only where light is absent. Darkness has no power in itself to be dark. You know, as the sun goes down, you turn your lights on in your home.

It's not like, oh no. Man, we need to get to bed before, you know, the darkness starts pressing in. And it's like all of a sudden it's coming in and the light's getting smaller. No. As long as the source of light is sustained, the darkness is held at bay.

Darkness has absolutely no power to be dark in our lives. Using that parallel where Jesus being the light of the world would have the light of life. Darkness has no power as long as there's light.

Darkness has no power except to what? Inhibit us with fear. Ooh, be afraid of the dark. I don't even be afraid of the dark. I've got the light. To stay in the dark then is to do what?

[30 : 59] He says the darkness obtained him not. It means there was the opportunity to be in the light, but they stayed in the dark. What does that mean they're doing? Someone stays in the dark. They're avoiding light. To stay in the dark means you avoid the light.

But the logos has come. The full expression of God. He's come to bring life to those who have an absence of this type of life. An absence of supreme life.

And yet, unfortunately, many who are without the light of life, many who are in the dark, they choose not to obtain it. They choose not to lay hold of it. They don't want it.

A little further down in Romans chapter 1. Oh, no. Did we already read this one? No. This is the next. After verse 19. Verse 21.

Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God. Neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations. And their foolish heart was what? It was darkened.

[31 : 56] It was darkened. Darkness came. They knew God. They knew the source. But they said, I don't want that. So I'm going to avoid the light. How sad when man chooses to seek darkness instead of the source of their life.

John 3.19. We will eventually get there. Probably sometime in spring. It's 51 verses to John. I think I already said that, right?

Yeah. Okay. So rich. So good. You know, I value your time, guys. That you want to be here and, you know, and listen.

You're not here to listen to me, but listen to the word. And I want to make sure that everything we talk about and what we cover is, it's meaningful. It's impactful. It's deep. It brings richness. It brings something to us we can take away.

And we can go back to the word and go, I remember studying through this. I remember what was there. That's why we can't go fast, you know, in the sense of like, we're just going to, you know, touch on a few highlights. I want to know what it says for myself.

[32 : 54] I want to know why this is written. I want to know what is there. And Jesus says in John 3, 19, and this is the condemnation. Not that they're sinners.

Not that they're fallen. Not that God hates them. But the light has come into the world. Light came into the world. The source that preexisted all that is came into the world.

And men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. You know, that is the reason that the enemy seeks as early as possible in the lives of kids.

Young people. You're not kids, but young people. The enemy wants to introduce darkness into our lives as soon as possible. As soon as possible. To keep the soul from finding the source of life.

See, every soul has the same source. It's lit by God. So much easier to share the truth with children than to jaded, hard-hearted, darkened heart adults.

[33 : 53] So we get to a point where we've allowed those things that have shaped us, what we've become, we've allowed more darkness in. The word is the source by which life became.

It's the source by which life remains. And it's the source by which life is obtained. And it shines in our life to keep out the darkness. Now, the enemy says, let me introduce darkness as quick as I can.

And boy, are we living in a society today where darkness is introduced. There's darkness in the lives of children that I can't even comprehend exists.

And you hear about it or you see it and you're like, they're watching that. They're learning that. They're being told that. Why? So that man would not seek to know the source of the life within him.

1 Thessalonians 5.5 says, you, those of you in Christ, those of you who have received the light, you are all the children of light and the children of the day. We are not of the night nor of the darkness.

[34 : 55] That's why Jesus said in the New Testament, when he said, let your light so shine, he didn't say, don't put it out. Right? He said, don't cover it. Don't cover it. Because it's always shining.

So the only way for us to introduce darkness into our lives is to cover the light. Because it's always going to be shining. Very hard to introduce darkness into light. Just like, man, every time I try to bring it close, boom, pushes it away.

Just like, disappears. But if we cover our light, well, I can now kind of partake in some darkness. We're now told of another that was sent out from God.

In verse 6, we've had the word, the life, and the light. They're all from the same source. They've all been sent from the same source. And now we're told about John that there was another sent from a source. A man was sent.

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. John means Jehovah is a gracious giver. Jehovah is a gracious giver.

[35 : 55] Not a stingy giver. Not an Indian giver. You know why we use that term in our culture? We don't use it as much anymore. But I read this book and I was talking about the Plains Indians. It was interesting. Their cultural view of giving was that gifts should reciprocate an equal gift.

That's just, that's how they showed honor and value to one another. So if I gave you a horse, you need to give something back in equal of equal value to show, you know, honor and respect. If you didn't, they'd go and take their gift back.

That's why it was called that. It wasn't just that they were stealing it back. But Jehovah is a gracious giver. The gifts of God are without repentance. So the same source of the word, the life and the light is also of this man who was sent out.

And this man, he came, the same came for what? A witness. To bear witness of the light. Witness means one who gives testimony. Just ultimately the idea is one who gives testimony before a judge or before one who's judging.

This witness came to bear witness of the light. That all men through him might believe he was not that light, but he was sent to bear witness of that light.

[37 : 04] A witness is one who speaks. Speaks, has to communicate. Maybe not with words, maybe it's a written testimony. Witness, testimony. You have to communicate.

You can't be an effective witness if you don't communicate. Right? If you get up on the witness stand. All right. Communicate to us everything you know. Oh, I know a lot about what took place. All right.

Tell us. Tell us. No. Well, you're a terrible witness. Call another witness. Well, this one doesn't know nearly as much. Will they talk? Yeah. We'll put them up there. Right?

I wonder how many times God's looking for someone who will bear witness. And I wonder how many times I've been guilty of like that was that teaching or that person talking or that message, is that evangelistic opportunity, that wasn't done very well.

And the Lord's like, well, I'm just looking for someone who will speak. Why don't you go and speak instead if you know so much? A witness speaks. He speaks what he knows. Again, a witness is worthless if they just speak something they don't know.

[38 : 02] Just make it all up. A witness is committed to his testimony. He's not neutral. As soon as you open your mouth as a witness, you can't be neutral.

You can't witness, you can't bear witness and testimony for something and then play the opposite side and say, well, it's not all really true. You're committed. You're no longer neutral. This one came to bear witness.

You know, as people, just how God created us, we are extremely influenced, aren't we? What do we call these people online that they're called influencers? What a terrible name. That's ridiculous.

You know, it's like artificial intelligence. Let's use it. Wait a minute. Again, real intelligence, fake intelligence. I'll go with the real intelligence. Thank you. Have you seen this person?

They're an influencer. What are they influencing me for? What do they want me to do? But our greatest sources of influence are usually things we consider familiar and comfortable.

[39 : 00] They're usually something we're familiar and comfortable with. That's why, mom and dad, you cannot replace that influence of a parent. No matter how good the mentor is, the teacher is, the pastor is, the youth leader, whatever, they can never replace that familiarity and comfortability that God has built into that relationship.

They are the most influential. Our greatest source of influence is usually what we're familiar and comfortable with. We don't usually go out of our way to find something that kind of like uncomfortable and unfamiliar and be like, yeah, I just want to be just like that.

Or that really influenced me. I think that we imagine that something super powerful and miraculous would be the most meaningful and impactful. Man, people's lives, if they could just see this, they would be changed.

If something powerful would happen, then, you know, maybe then. Maybe then they would. Yet the most influential means of influencing a mind is a faithful source that comes from a familiar source.

The thing that influences my mind the most is just a faithful source that comes from a familiar source. I don't know who you are. Why am I going to listen to you?

[40 : 08] I know who you are. If you come and tell me, hey, man, that's influential. That's meaningful. It's something that's familiar. Remember in Luke 16, Jesus is not speaking a parable.

He's speaking an actual event because in parables, he doesn't use names. Here he's using actual names and places. When he speaks of the rich man, he doesn't give him a name, and Lazarus, the beggar who sat at his gate. The idea in that culture was rich people had beggars.

That was the welfare system. People would bring someone who was poor or a beggar, and they would put him essentially at the gate of the rich person. Be like, this is your responsibility to care for him.

That's kind of how they did that in that culture. The rich man didn't do anything, cared nothing for Lazarus. He begged at his gate, and it says the dogs came and licked his sores. That was the only comfort he had.

They both die, and they go into the afterlife. It says the rich man is in hell, and then Lazarus is in Abraham's bosom, or the place of the redeemed at that time.

- [41:08] And for whatever reason, they're able to see, and the rich man in torment can look and say, I'm tormented. Father Abraham, send Lazarus with just a drop of water from my tongue.

He saw a great gulf fix between us. Friend, you and life had good things. That was where you put all your reward. Lazarus, evil. It wasn't like karma. Like, well, if I go and I'm a beggar, and then I'll get great things in heaven.

No. The point was Lazarus had put his hope in a reward to come. He says, all right, I have brothers. Go back. Send Lazarus back to my father's house. He says, lest they come here.

And then Abraham says, they have Moses, and they have the prophets. They've got the word. Let them hear them. And he said, no, Father Abraham. But if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

Surely if there was like some amazing resurrection after three days being in the grave, everyone will believe. And he said unto them, if they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

- [42:14] And the one did rise from the dead. And there are still so many that aren't persuaded. It's not the pizzazz and the lights and the excitement. And so often it is just simply a faithful, familiar witness that influences us the most.

Application. Make sure your life is filled with good, faithful sources that are speaking witness into your life. The things you're comfortable with that are influencing you. You need to be those faithful witnesses.

And so John was sent not to be the light, John the Baptist, let's not confuse him, not John the Apostle, but to give testimony to the reality of the light. He wasn't at the light, but he's giving testimony.

Why? Because believing the word, believing the light to be what it has been witnessed to be, when we believe the word, we believe the logos is what has been witnessed to us to be.

It allows the light of life to illuminate our darkness. It allows then that contrast, that picture that's being put up there of light and life is the difference between death and life in the Lord.

- [43:20] And so when we believe what has been witnessed regarding Christ, it then illuminates our darkness with life. Jesus says in John chapter 12, verse 36 through 38, While you have light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light.

These things spake Jesus and departed, and he did hide himself from them. But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him. Though the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who's believed our report?

To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? He did all of those miracles, and John tells us in chapter 12, but they didn't believe on him. He said, believe in the light while you have light. Verse 9, that was the true light, not was as in past, but was as in the source of light, life, and illumination for all men was, before man ever was.

That was the true light, which lightens every man that comes into the world. That's that same idea, that every man is born with that. The source is the same, in a sense.

That spark of life comes from God. John the Baptist is bearing witness of the true light to the souls, which were each born with a certain amount of light, amount of understanding.

[44 : 41] So John is bearing witness of the true light to every person who's been born with a certain amount of light, understanding, concerning that source of light. We've all been born.

Everybody's born with a certain amount of understanding of what that source is. I didn't just arrive because of life in myself. He was in the world, verse 10.

Not John the Baptist, but the one he's bearing witness to, the light. And again, here it is. He, I love it. We're creating from here. He was in the world and the world is made by him. And the world knew him not.

There's a lot of lights out there, guys. Follow the light. Follow the light. There's all kinds of songs and things and stuff saying, follow the light. But Jesus never leaves a vague. The word never leaves vague the source.

It does not follow the light. It's follow the light who is Christ. I am the light of the world. He, a person, an individual was in the world and the world was made by him.

[45 : 42] The world knew him not, knew him not, would be, came to know. They would not come to know him. It was not that the world could not come to know their creator, but that they would not.

Here the creator, the one as we read, who was before all things and by him all things consist. He comes to his own, to the world that he created. And they didn't want to come to know him.

The full expression of God, by which all things became and existed, he came to be among his creation. The full expression of God, everything that exists, he came.

The thing that is holding these people in existence came to them. And his creation refused to acknowledge the force, the source of their existence. They refused it. I will not acknowledge that source of my existence.

He then comes to his own, okay? Well, you know what? If my created beings, my creation, well, certainly those who I have chosen out of this world. Certainly those that I have given a special place in my, in my plan for the ages.

[46 : 47] He came unto his own, his own received him not. Not just those who came into existence by God, but now those who are separated out as his very own. He comes to Israel.

The full expression of God made himself known to that which he had taken to himself. God, the full expression of God, he comes and he makes himself known to what he's taken to himself.

He said, I've taken you to myself. I want you to know me. I want you to know who I am. But they wouldn't take him to themselves. They had no interest in that. Why? Why would those created by light reject light?

It seems so illogical. Why would they do that? The very source of their existence. Why? And this is the condemnation that light is coming to the world. And men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.

And what is that evil deed? It's that Jesus stands in direct opposition to my claim as the God man. I am the God man, not Jesus.

[47:54] Jesus comes and stands in direct opposition to man's claim of independence from God. Same lie that was in the garden. Oh, no, no, no, no, no. You can be like God.

Fallen man. You see, we have just enough light to know that their beginning is divine. Fallen man has just enough light to know that their beginning. It's something.

It's something outside of themselves. It's just enough to know our beginning was divine. But the darkness they live in keeps them from looking outside of themselves for the source of true light in life.

What do they do? They look inside. Oh, certainly in here is the source of light. Certainly in here is the source of life. Follow my heart. Oh, whatever. This is the source.

There is a source that has given us life, which started with divine life. Yes, it doesn't make us divine. But the darkness we live in, it keeps us from looking outside of ourselves.

[48:52] Why do they reject the light? Because Jesus comes and he says, I am the source. Well, that means I'm not. And that's a bummer.

Because I had all these plans of what I was going to do. But the problem is, if I'm the source, you can't claim to be the source either. I can't have you, you know, coming against my claim as the source.

So now you have to bow before my source. Who gets to win out their source? My source. I'm just as much value in my source. I'm just as divine.

I'm whatever. However, Jesus stands in direct opposition because he claims to be the true God man. But contrasting those that were created by him, those that were his own, who would not receive him, who would not take him to themselves, who would not come to him.

But as many, as many means as great, as far, how much, whoever. John 1, 7. We just read it. The same John the Baptist came for a witness to bear witness of the light that how many may believe that all men through him might believe.

[50:02] But as many, no matter how great, how far, how much, whoever received him. To them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

We've got a bunch of words here. Received means to lay hold. But as many, whoever laid hold to him, to them gave, to give is to supply, to furnish things necessary.

He gave power to become the sons of God. Power, the right, the liberty, the authority. As many as who would lay hold of the full expression of God would be supplied with the necessary authority to become what they are not.

They would become that which is begotten. They would become that which is expressed of God. The full expression of God has come so that any who would lay hold of him would have the right and the authority themselves to have God express his life into them.

Amazing. Romans 8, 29. As many as received him to them gave he power to become sons of God.

[51:23] Not just servants of God or friends of God or not just those that have been blessed by God, but sons of God. We lay hold of God how? Well, he says it right there.

To them that believe on his name. We lay hold of God by believing. Believing means to place credit or confidence in. We lay hold of God by placing our credit, our confidence in the name.

And what is the name? Name is just expressed identity of a person. It's a person's identity, their personhood. That which is expressed of who they are. You know, we've got a number of people with the same name in this church.

If you've got a name, Susan or Aaron, you've probably got a couple people that you're crossing over with. Right? Not too many people named Jared. Right? But it's not like, well, you've got the same name as that person?

You must be the same person. That's who you are. No. But if someone mentions that name, I'm like, well, which one? This one. Oh, instantly. You know. Oh, they have an identity.

[52:22] They have a personhood that's expressed through the name that I associate with them. When we lay hold of God by placing our confidence or credit in the person that he has expressed himself to be in that name, we have a privilege and an authority and a sense to stand before God and say, God, I'm now yours.

I belong to you because of what you have done. Each of us, I don't think, have personally had Jesus express himself to us.

You know, my guess is that we each committed to his name when we believe the word of a committed witness. My guess is we each committed, believed and trusted in his name because of the word of a committed witness.

Someone who is faithful to speak that into our lives. And those that do that, they were born, verse 13, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

And Jesus will eventually say to Nicodemus in John chapter three, you must be born again. You must be born. What is it to be born? There's a lot of definitions for born, right? Birth, to be God.

[53:36] But I really liked this one. Born means to be fathered. Now there is one person who has been born, who was not mothered, right?

And not, oh no, he was mothered. Sorry. Who did not have an earthly father, but there's nobody born who was not fathered. Even Jesus had a father. I like that.

To be born, which were fathered. That which is born has a source and it has a beginning. That which is born has parentage and it has relationship. We who can be born of God, we who are fathered from our father in heaven, we have a source and a beginning and it is God.

We have a parentage and we have a parentage and a relationship now because of that. What is John saying here when he says that they were not born of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God.

I think he's saying those fathers of those fathered of God have not been fathered of a natural process, blood, a natural desire, the flesh or natural choices, man.

[54:44] They've not been fathered because of a natural process or something outside of that. It didn't come through my desires. It wasn't that this was I really wanted. God knows because he did it.

It wasn't my choice that I need to be fathered by God is that God pressed in. God's expression to man is for the purpose of expressing new life into man.

The reason he sent Jesus, the reason he sent the word and the expression of man to man is that he might express new life in man. It's the whole point of this, that we would be born.

The reality of our relationship with God, our hope in God, and our life in the spirit of God, it all originates where? In the heart of God.

It was his will. Not of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor the will of man. It's not a natural process. It's a spiritual process. It was not my desire.

[55:42] It was his desire. It wasn't my choice. It was his. It was his. That means my relationship, my hope in God, my life in the spirit. It all originated in his heart. Didn't start with me.

God's will for me, you, and all men is that we lay hold of new life, which is true life. And that word then, which is a he, which has a name, which is a being, it was made flesh and it tabernacled among us.

And we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten. Only begotten means the single of its kind. He was the firstborn among many brethren. First in position, first in placement, firstborn, the single of its kind.

The glories of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth. He is the one by which all things became. And yet he chose to constrain himself to become like that, which he had begotten.

All things exist by him. And he said, you know, the best way is not to show my power. But it's something familiar, something comfortable. And what did he come and do?

[56 : 57] This is just, I love this part. He tabernacled. What was it that God placed among Israel to let them know of his daily presence? Every day the sea parted.

Every day there was some miraculous, crazy thing happening. No, it was something they were super familiar with, weren't they? Guys, you should, if you were here during Exodus, you should be really familiar with the tabernacle.

They were really familiar with it. They were really comfortable with it. They built it. They weaved it. They carved it. They understood it all. It was something super familiar and super comfortable that dwelt among them.

And Jesus did the same thing. He came the most comfortable, familiar way possible to come and say, hey, this is who I am. I want to influence you. The one by which all things became, he chose to constrain himself to become like that, which he begot.

The word became like man so that he might tabernacle with man for the purpose of showing the heart of God to man. Full of grace and truth.

[58 : 05] Full means every part filled. No corner left unfilled. Grace, favor, truth, certainty. The fullness of God's expression to you is filled in every part with the certainty of his favor towards you.

The fullness that we see in Jesus is the certainty filled in every single corner of certainty of his favor towards you. Full of grace and truth.

It is certain of how he thinks about you and me. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him can be certain that they have fullness of life, everlasting life.

They shall not perish. The father's heart was to give to man the full expression of what? His word, his life, his light, and his name.

John has set us up here saying, guys, God's heart for you. It wasn't by the flesh. It wasn't by blood. It wasn't by the will of man. God's heart for you is that he would give you the full expression of his word, of his life, of his light, and of his name.

[59 : 12] And that full expression became the most comfortable, familiar, relatable thing when he became Jesus in the flesh. God wants man not just to behold, but also to partake of his glory.

In the tabernacle, they beheld the glory in the old covenant. In Jesus, they partake in the glory. And that glory is what? Grace and truth. Grace and truth. Ephesians 2, 4 through 8.

But God, who is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ. By grace you are saved. And has raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ.

That in the ages to come, he might show the exceeding riches of his grace and his kindness toward us through Jesus Christ. For by grace are you saved through faith that not of yourselves.

It is the gift of God. Gift means offered. A gift that's offered in expression of honor. Specifically here, the wording is, would be honor to God.

[60:17] We who have been given light, how do we honor God? When we receive his gift of light, that's how we honor him. We who have been given life, how do we honor God?

When we receive his gift of life, that honors God. God's glory is displayed in the honor. He has bestowed upon us by allowing us to become what we could never have been before.

God's glory in this world is displayed not through the mighty, amazing miracles. Those things do. We're going to see some of those. But it's displayed by allowing us to become what we could not have ever become.

Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. He came into his own and they received him not.

They didn't expect that expression of God. They were expecting something else at that time. They wanted the power. They wanted the might. They wanted the show. Come and wipe out Rome.

[61:31] Come and give us dominion. Come and lower our taxes and free us. They weren't prepared to receive the full expression of God into our lives. And I wonder how many times, because the package is different than I expected, do I hold that full expression of God at full length, at arm's length.

I wonder if I'm believing John where he says, but these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you might have life through his name. I don't know how many times I'm not putting my credit, my confidence in that.

And I'm looking for a source somewhere else. I'm looking for a source in here. God, if only I felt different. You know, I've learned you're never going to feel different. Feelings are what they are.

But he has done something for us that could have never been done before. He's given us the opportunity to be sons of God. That brings glory to him.

And then we have the privilege of going out and doing what? Mighty miracles in his name. Maybe. If that's what's needed. For sure. But generally, most of the time, he's going to use you as a familiar and comfortable voice in the life of someone else to be a testimony of the amazing fact that you're a son of God.

[62:57] Are we prepared to receive the full expression of God into our lives? Are we prepared for what that'll do to our lives?

I think we are afraid sometimes because we think it's going to be some like drastic change. And yet we find out he's just so comfortable and familiar. There's nothing more comfortable and familiar than that voice.

As these guys lead us in worship as we close here. Receive the full expression of God into your life. Let it be what's influencing you. Let it be the source in your life that is making you to become something.

That you could never be otherwise. Father, thank you that you're so comfortable. You're so familiar.

And here in the midst of all of these deep thoughts and this deep theology and all the things that this 100-year-old, some 90-year-old man who walked with you as a teenager who saw the resurrected Lord who was there on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came who was with Peter when he went up to the temple mount and heard Peter say, silver and gold have I none but such as I have give you thee.

[64:12] In the name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk. Perhaps he was there at the council in Jerusalem when Paul comes back and says the gospel has gone to the Gentiles.

Let me tell you all that God's doing throughout the known world. And as an old man writing, we've seen him, we've heard him, we've handled him.

But you know guys, the best part is we have fellowship with him. Lord, you could have chosen any other means but you created us in such a way, Lord, that we respond the best when we're comfortable and with something familiar.

Lord, I pray that we would take time to be with you, to be in your word, to not look within for the source but to know now that the source that's from without dwells within.

Lord, how we love you. Come and speak that full expression of your love to us again as we close and in Jesus' name. Amen. You know, we like John, we're not the light but we've been called to give testimony to the light as the light of the world.

[65 : 30] A witness speaks, speaks what it knows, is committed to his testimony, is not neutral. Why? So that all might experience the fullness of joy in the fullness of God.

These things write we unto you that your joy may be full. I hope as we've taken apart this first section of John here and next week we'll get into the story, the narrative.

I hope as we go all through this book that in your mind is the vastness, how big and amazing the word is and yet how familiar and how comfortable he's made himself so that we can receive him.

And now may the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace. God bless you.

See you next week. See you next week.