

Signs That Lead to Salvation

Scripture: John 20:30–31

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We come this morning in our study of the Word of God to the end of chapter 20 of John. It has gone by so fast. I was trying to remember how many years we've been in the study of John, I couldn't remember. But I do know this; it seems like a very brief time. It has been an exhilarating and blessed experience for me, and I hope for you as well, and I'm a little reluctant to get into the 21st chapter and realize that the end is near. So with that in mind, I'm going to pause a little bit at the end of chapter 20, and over the next few weeks, I'm going to direct our attention to a theme that arises in the closing verses of chapter 20, and I'll tell you more about that later, because it's important for us all to understand it.

When we come to the end of chapter 20 the two verses that close the chapter, verses 30 and 31, we come to John's purpose statement. This is why he wrote this gospel, and it is why the other writers wrote as well. But, primarily, John speaks for himself. He writes in verses 30 and 31, "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."

John has two stated purposes for this gospel. One is evidential and the other is evangelistic. The first appeals to reason, the second appeals to faith. The first is that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, based on the evidence. The second is that you, in believing, may have life in His name; that's evangelistic. John lays out for us the evidence that Jesus is, in fact, God's anointed Messiah. He is God's Son. He is the only Redeemer. The evidence is here so that we may believe, and by believing have eternal life in His name.

Now let me be clear what John is saying throughout this gospel. There is no other name by which we can be saved from sin and eternal judgment. There is no other redeemer. There is no other way to God. There is no other door to heaven. There is no other one to reconcile us to God, only Jesus. He is the only Savior, the only source of escape from judgment, the only way to eternal life.

In chapter 8 of John's gospel and verse 24, our Lord essentially declared the exclusivity of His identity by saying this: "You will die in your sins unless you believe that I am He. You will die in your sins." If you do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will die in your sins. That's our Lord's negative expression of that truth of exclusivity.

The positive one is in chapter 14, verse 6: "Jesus said, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.'" John identifies this very foundational truth; there is no other revelation from God than the Bible. There is no other God than the one true living God revealed in the Bible. There is no other Savior than the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ revealed in the Bible.

There is no other way to escape eternal judgment than by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ through the gospel as revealed in the Bible.

Only one book, only one God, only one Savior, only one gospel. Apart from faith in Christ there is no escape from eternal judgment; therefore, it is critically important that God give us the evidence that Jesus is, in fact, that only Savior, and that the evidence appeal to our reason so that we can follow the evidence to that conclusion that He is the Messiah, the Son of God, the Redeemer, the Savior. And then that, because our reason has taken us to that conviction; our faith takes us to Christ Himself; and we believe and receive eternal life. You can discount all other religions in the world, they do not offer salvation. They are a lie and a deception. There is no other Savior. There is no other gospel. There is no other God than the God of Scripture. No other revealed book than the Bible.

Now John introduces the exclusivity and singularity of Christ by saying this in verse 30: "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book." If you take all the miracles that John records and add all the ones that Matthew, Mark, and Luke record, you have a list of about forty separate miracles that Jesus did. The record of those miracles is laid out in the four gospels. In particular, seven very special sign miracles are identified in John's gospel.

But that is by no means the sum of all that Jesus did. In fact, I'm sure there were many days when He did forty miracles in a day or more. There were many hours when He did seven miracles or more. For three years His life was marked by miracle, after miracle, after miracle in an explosion of divine power that essentially banished disease from the land of Israel for the duration of His ministry. The gospel writers, and in particular John, record just some of them as evidence for who He is, and it's important that you understand who He is and that you believe, because this is the only way to escape the consequence of your sins, eternal hell.

Just to remind you that I'm not making a guess at the volume of our Lord's miracles, look at the last verse in John's gospel. John, chapter 21, if you glance over to verse 25 you read this: "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written." That is a staggering statement that the world couldn't even contain all the displays of divine nature that Jesus demonstrated. His life was marked by these miracles.

Now when we talk about signs we're simply defining the purpose of a miracle. You could use the word "miracle," but using the word "sign" give us an indication of the purpose of the miracle. What's the purpose of a sign? A sign is to point to something. When you're at the sign you're not there. When you're at the sign, you're simply realizing that you're going in the direction of the destination. And when you're at the sign/miracle, you're at the point where Jesus is directing you to look at Him and see that this sign points to who He is. And verse 31 says, "These signs which have been written by John in this gospel have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."

The end goal is eternal life only available in the name of Christ, only available to those who believe in Christ, because they have seen the evidence that He is who He says He is, the Messiah, the Son of God. "These signs" – says John in verse 31 – "these signs have been written" – by him under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the gospel of John – "that you may believe."

Now exactly what signs is he talking about? Some have suggested that there are many signs that point to Him as Messiah in a general sense. One would be His action of clearing the temple back in the beginning of His ministry, as recorded in John, chapter 2, when He went in and threw out the buyers and sellers and the moneychangers, and said that they had turned the house of God – the house of His Father, the house of prayer – into a den of robbers, and single-handedly, all alone, He threw thousands of people out of the temple. An amazing power display. A declaration really that He is God's anointed, and that He takes up God's cause, such as Messiah would surely do.

Others think that when He said, "As the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, so the Son of Man will be lifted up," in John 3 that He was pointing to Himself as the one who fulfills the Old Testament picture demonstrating the power of God to heal and restore those who have been smitten as God did in the wilderness. Others would say that even His anointing at Bethany, when He was anointed at the house of His friends, is a kind of sign that He is the Anointed One, the Messiah. Others have suggested that His riding into Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey as prophesized in the Old Testament by Zechariah is another sign pointing to Him, because it's the fulfillment, direct fulfillment of a prophecy. Others would say that His predicting His own death, which He did, and even the details around His own death, arrest, and the suffering, and the crucifixion, the fact that he predicted that is an indication that points to Him as Messiah.

Some would say that the crucifixion record in John's gospel is a series of signs pointing to Him because of the explicit fulfillment of prophecy recorded at the time of His death. And, surely, this is true; all of these things do point to Him as the Messiah, and so do the many times that He said throughout the gospel of John, "I am: I am the way, the truth, and the life. I am the living water. I am the bread. I am the Good Shepherd." All those "I am" statements basically declare the name of God who is I am, the eternally existing One. So all of that can be added to the signs that point to Christ.

But if we ask the question, "What exactly is John saying: these signs?" I think it narrows down to seven miracles that occur in the gospel of John. John records seven specific miracles up to and including the resurrection. There is an amazing kind of miracle after the resurrection in chapter 21 where the Lord demonstrates His control over fish, which demonstrates His sovereignty and power to activate the animal kingdom and make animals do anything He wants them to do – another divine characteristic. But leading up to where we are now in verses 30 and 31, there are seven miracles. These seem to be the signs that John has in mind.

Now let me tell you why these signs. Do you remember that Jesus on an occasion said, "If they don't believe the Scriptures, they won't believe though someone was raised from the dead,"

Someone was raised from the dead; three people during Jesus' ministry He raised from the dead, the third one being Lazarus. And then He Himself was raised from the dead and they did not believe, so it was true. But nonetheless they wanted signs. They wanted supernatural miracles. It was as if Jesus had to acquiesce to that desire on their part, because they required it. So kindly, mercifully, He granted it.

For example, in chapter 4 of John's gospel and verse 48, Jesus said, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe." This is a general characterization. If they were going to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, the only Savior, the Redeemer, they wanted

signs, they wanted supernatural evidence. This becomes a kind of constant requirement.

Over in chapter 5 and verse 36 we hear our Lord say, “But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John the Baptist; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish – the very works that I do – testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me. The works, the miraculous works are the signs that You require.”

In chapter 6, again, and verse 26, “Jesus answered them and said, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.’” That was after He had fed as many as 20,000 people. “All you’re doing now – I’ve given you signs – all you’re doing is chasing signs for your own gratification. You want the food. You want the healing. You want the deliverance from demons. You want the deliverance from death. You’re just chasing the signs.”

In verse 30 of that 6th chapter, “They said to Him, ‘What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform?’” always wanting more, more and more. There had been signs all along, miracles throughout His Judean ministry, miracles throughout His Galilean ministry, miracles throughout the final year of His return to Judea, and still they wanted more signs; it was never enough, never sufficient.

In the 10th chapter, verse 36, “Do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’? You’re accusing Me of being a blasphemer because I said I’m the Son of God.” Then He adds, “If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.” This is late in His ministry, day after day after day of miraculous signs; and when He claims to be the one the signs declare Him to be, they accuse Him of blasphemy. And verse 39 says, “They were seeking to seize Him, to arrest Him, to kill Him, but He eluded them.”

The signs were presented so that you might believe that He is the Messiah, the Son of God. But John had in mind seven great miracles. Let’s go back to chapter 2 for just a moment. We’re not going to rehearse all the details, you’re familiar with these miracles.

The first sign came in chapter 2 where Jesus did His first miracle in His public ministry at Cana. Up until this point in His life, at least 30 years of life He had never done a miracle. Here is the first miracles, and He turns water into wine. It is a creative miracle. It is a massively creative miracle. You know the story.

Verse 11 says, “This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.” You have the sum of the whole thing right there. He did a sign, it was a public sign; it manifested His glory, that is the very glory of God incarnate in Him; and His disciples believed in Him. That’s the whole point that John reiterates in chapter 20, verse 31. “These signs are given so that you may see His glory as the Messiah, the Son of God, and believe in Him.” And that’s what happened. That’s the first sign, this beginning of His signs.

If you will look over to chapter 4, you will see the second miracle in John’s gospel. The second described, and even identified as a sign. This is the healing of a nobleman’s son, verse 47 says, who was ill to the point of death, to the point of death; and this is where Jesus said, “You people see

signs and still you will not believe.” He healed that son very near death, and down in verse 54 we read, “This is again a second sign that Jesus performed when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.” So now we know the signs are specific detailed miracles.

The third one occurs right away in chapter 5. In chapter 5 is the healing of the lame man at the pool of Bethesda. He had been there for 38 years. He was paralyzed in some way for 38 years, and there was a superstition that the first one in the water when the angel stirred the water – it’s superstition to be sure – the first one in the water would be healed. He had no one to help him get in the water, so he languished there with his 38-yearlong condition. Jesus came along, healed him instantaneously and told him to stand up, pick up his pallet and walk after not taking a step for 38 years. This is an incredible miracle of complete restoration and rehabilitation. This would fit into the category of the water turned to wine, and the healing of the nobleman’s son as a third sign.

When we come into chapter 6, we come to the fourth sign, and here we see Jesus’ power over nature. We saw that He had the ability to create wine. We saw that He had the ability to heal, restore, and rehabilitate, which is a creative miracle, a man who had been lame for 38 years. And we saw that He had been capable of healing the nobleman’s son from a deadly disease instantaneously – this is divine power. And now we see how He dominates natural law, because in chapter 6, the opening fourteen verses, He creates food to feed up to 20,000 people. He just creates food. All He has to start with is two fish and five biscuits, but He feeds up to 20,000 people, gives them all they can possibly eat, and has twelve baskets left over for the twelve apostles. Then subsequent to that, He walks on water and stills a storm on the sea of Galilee. Power over nature: power to create, power over illness, power over deformity, power over nature.

Then in chapter 9 we see the next sign, He heals a man who was born blind, blind from birth it says about him. You’re familiar with that amazing story. And then the next sign would be chapter 11, which is raising Lazarus from the dead, and he has been dead for days, his body is in a state of decay, and yet Jesus raises him from the dead. Power over death, power over blindness, power over nature, power over deformity, power over illness, power to create. This is evidence that He is God, the Son.

The final sign comes in chapter 20 and it’s the resurrection. But to see that as a sign you have to go back to chapter 2. Back in chapter 2 and verse 18, “The Jews were saying to Him, ‘What sign’ – verse 18 – ‘do You show us as Your authority for doing these things?’ – this is right after He cleared out the temple – ‘What sign do You show us that demonstrates Your authority?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ The Jews then said, “It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?’ But He was speaking of the temple of His body. So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.”

“What sign do You show us?” He says, “Resurrection after three days.” Chapter 20 records that sign. He had the power Himself to rise from the dead to conquer death. Those are the signs. Those are the signs that John details as evidences that this is the Messiah, the Son of God.

What is the purpose of this? Let me just kind of narrow it down a little bit. What is the purpose of it? It is to demonstrate the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ.

At the very beginning in John, chapter 1 and verse 14, we read John saying, “The Word became flesh,” – meaning Christ – “dwelt among us, and we saw His glory.” And what glory was it? “It was glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

“We saw the glory of God” – as Paul puts it – “shining in the face of Jesus Christ.” What is the purpose of the signs? To put the glory of God in Christ on display. Again in chapter 2, back to Cana for a moment, it says that ‘He manifested His glory, and the disciples believed in Him.’ It was about putting divine glory on display.

In the 9th chapter, there was this man, again, the man blind from birth, “And the disciples said, ‘Rabbi,’ – to the Lord – ‘who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?’ Jesus answered, ‘It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.’” This man is healed, again, to put God on display, to manifest the glory of God.

The same was the story with Lazarus, chapter 11, verse 4, “This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God,” – and specifically – “so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.” All these signs are to display the glory of God manifest in the Son of God who is God. They are public displays of divine power that have no human explanation to demonstrate that Jesus is God, He is the Messiah, He is the Son of God. He deserves the same glory that goes to God.

Now what was the response? What was the response? John says that, “I write these things so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.” Did the people who saw them believe? Were there people who believed? There were. In fact, from the very beginning there were people who believed, chapter 1, verse 41, the early disciples who became His apostles.

In chapter 1, verse 41, Andrew says, “We have found the Messiah.” And in verse 49 of that chapter, Nathanael says, “You are the Son of God.” There are those two terms: Messiah, Son of God. Andrew said, “You’re the Messiah. Nathanael said, “You’re the Son of God. You are the King of Israel. You are the Anointed One, the Messiah.” So the early followers of Jesus obviously believed that.

And then there’s that incredible story with the Samaritans in chapter 4. Our Lord discloses who He is to the Samaritan woman, verse 25, “The woman said, ‘I know that Messiah is coming (who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.’ Jesus said to her, ‘I who speak to you am He.’”

What was her response? “She left her waterpot, went to the city and said to the men, ‘Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?’ They went out of the city; they were coming to Him.”

Down in verse 39, “From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, ‘He told me all the things that I have done,’ – supernatural knowledge. “So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. Many more believed because of His word; and they were saying to the woman, ‘It’s no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world.’” They believed.

The early followers of Jesus in Judea believed. The Samaritans believed. That nobleman whose son Jesus healed believed. At the end of that healing, at the end of chapter 4, “The father knew that it was the hour in which Jesus said to him, ‘Your son lives’; and he knew he had healed him at the very hour that the servant told him he got well. And he, the nobleman, believed and his whole household.”

There were crowds in chapter 7. Jesus was always in a crowd. There were crowds in chapter 7; some of them believed. “Some were saying,” – verse 40 – ‘This is the Prophet,’ – the Prophet like unto Moses prophesied in Deuteronomy 18, a messianic prophecy. “Others were saying, ‘This is the Messiah. This is the Christ.’ Others were saying, ‘Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He? Isn’t He supposed to come from Bethlehem?’ So a division occurred in the crowd because of Him. Some were believing; some wanted to seize Him again.” There were some in the crowd apparently who believed.

Back to verse 26, they even asked the question, “The rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they?” Some initially must have believed genuinely.

The man who was blind in chapter 9, what was his response after he was healed? He didn’t know who healed him. He didn’t have faith to be healed, Jesus healed him sovereignly. “Jesus looked him up and found him,” chapter 9, verse 35 – “and said, ‘Do you believe in the Son of Man?’ He answered, ‘Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?’ Jesus said to him, ‘You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking to you,’ – Son of Man, a messianic title – “and he said, ‘Lord, I believe.’”

Now was that a true faith? I think the next line seals it: “And he worshiped Him.” The Jews only worshiped God, the true God. That man who had been born blind became a true worshiper of the true God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In chapter 6 His disciples affirm the genuineness of their faith, verse 66: “Many of His disciples withdrew, were not walking with Him anymore. So Jesus said to the twelve, ‘You don’t want to go away also, do you?’ Simon Peter said, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have believed and come to know that You are the Holy One of God.’” The disciples believed.

Martha believed. Martha, the sister of Lazarus, she believed. Chapter 11, “Jesus says to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live even if he dies. And everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this, Martha?’ She said, ‘Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even he who comes into the world.’” She believed exactly what John said was His purpose, to bring people to believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God.

There were even some rulers who believed, chapter 12, verse 42, “Many of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear they’d be put out of the synagogue.” At least two of these sort of silent believers show up to bury the Lord and declare themselves as His true followers: Joseph of Arimathea, whose tomb He was buried in; and Nicodemus.

There were believers: the first followers, the Samaritans, the household and the nobleman, some in the crowds, the blind man, the disciple who followed Jesus, Martha, some rulers. And then there were people who believed in a superficial way; they were the ones asking the questions that we took

note of, trying to figure out if He really was the Messiah or not.

The Passover crowds were fickle in their faith. Chapter 2, verse 23, “When He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs.” So they believed; they saw the signs and they believed. “But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself know what was in man.” He knew their faith was not a saving faith, it was not a legitimate faith, it was not a true faith. It was a superficial and false faith.

And then the crowd that was fed in chapter 6; many of them walked no more with Him, walked away. There’s the temple crowd in chapter 7 that are believing and yet not believing: “Maybe He is; maybe He isn’t.” They’re vacillating.

“Many in the crowd” – it says in verse 31 of chapter 7 – “believed in Him; and they were saying, ‘When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He? He can’t do more than this.’ And the Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things.”

So this is a kind of muttering faith; it’s just they’re kind of mumbling about, “Is it true? Is it real? Is He the one?” They’re not sure. It’s a faith that is not a full faith.

At the end of chapter 10 it says, “Many believed in Him there. Many believed in Him there.” But what kind of faith was it? A vacillating faith, you know the kind that is behind the statement of our Lord, “Many will say to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and I’ll say to them, ‘Depart from Me, I never knew you, you workers of iniquity.’” So there were some with superficial faith, about such ones our Lord spoke, and John recorded His words in the 8th chapter.

In the 8th chapter and the 31st verse, “Jesus said to those Jews who had believed Him, ‘If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine. You believe to some degree,’ – the devils believe and tremble, James said – “you believe to some degree, but your faith will only manifest its validity if you continue in My word to know the truth and love the truth.”

Down in verse 42 He describes those who have God as their Father, “If God were your Father, you would love Me. So you would follow My word, you would love Me. You would hear My word, you would love Me. But some of you” – He says in verse 43 – “cannot hear My word, because you’re of your father the devil.” And verse 45, “I speak the truth, you don’t believe Me.” Verse 47, “He who is of God hears the words of God; and for this reason you do not hear them, because you’re not of God. You believe, but you don’t believe savingly.”

This is very concerning; there are people who believe superficially in Christ; whole realms of Christianity are occupied by such people, but it’s not saving faith. So you have those who genuinely believe because of the signs, those who superficially and temporarily believe because of the signs. But most, most did not believe. Most did not believe, in spite of the signs, and they were aided and abetted, of course, by the leaders of Israel who didn’t believe in the face of the signs.

When Jesus spoke in the 5th chapter in verse 16 He says, “For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath.” He was doing signs that demonstrated His deity, and they were stuck on their own rules about the Sabbath.

“And He answered them, ‘My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working. I’m working the way God works. I’m doing the works of God,’ and for this reason, the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.” The whole reason for the signs was to show He is equal to God. When He did the signs and showed He was equal to God and claimed to be equal to God, they called Him a blasphemer and they sought to kill Him. This is the common response.

Chapter 7 says they tried to kill Him a couple of times. Chapter 8, the end of the chapter, they tried to kill Him. Chapter 10, the end of the chapter, they tried to kill Him. Most did not believe.

The sum of it I think is maybe simply expressed in chapter 12, verse 37, “Though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him.” He gave them what they demanded, yet they were not believing. “This fulfilled the word of Isaiah the prophet:” – back in Isaiah 53 – ‘Lord, who has believed our report? To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?’ – they would not believe – “For this reason they could not believe.”

As Isaiah says in chapter 6, “God has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts so they would not see with their eyes and perceive with their heart and be converted and I heal them.” These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory and spoke of Him in chapter 6. They would not believe, God judged them, and they could not believe.

It’s still that way. Johns says, “I’ve written this gospel; here are the signs that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ.” There are those who believe savingly, there are those who believe superficially, and there are those that look at the signs and refuse to believe.” For us, we stand with Andrew: “We have found the Messiah.” We stand with Nathanael: “We have found the Son of God.” This is a burden for John.

Turn over to 1 John for a moment. Later he writes epistles, and he still has the same burning evangelistic desire in his heart that people will acknowledge Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, the Redeemer, the only Savior. And so as he writes his first letter it’s about Christ, and he calls for faith in Him. Look at chapter 2, for example, verse 22, just a couple of them. “Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son doesn’t have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.” John is saying, “If you reject the only Christ, the only Son of God, the only Savior, you’re doomed, you don’t know God at all. You’re denying God when you deny His Son. Anyone who does that is the antichrist.”

Chapter 3 says it again down in verse 23, “This is the commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ.” This is the commandment from God: “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ,” that’s His commandment. “If you keep that commandment you abide in Him, and He in you” – verse 24.

Look at chapter 4 across the page: “Don’t believe every spirit,” – every religion, every supposed supernatural revelation – “but test the spirits to see whether they’re from God.” How do you know when something is from God and isn’t a part of the many false prophets and prophecies that have gone out in the world? Here’s how you know: “By this you know the Spirit of God is the source: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does

not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.” Reject Christ and you are anti-Christ and anti-God. Anyone who says that Christ is not the Son of God, not God in human flesh, is antichrist, does not know God.

Chapter 5, verse 1, “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.” Verse 11, “And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.”

And verse 20, “We know that the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This one is the true God and eternal life.” John just saying the same thing over and over and over about the exclusivity of Christ, the only Savior.

In the second epistle of John look for just a moment at verse 3: “Grace, mercy and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.” Verse 7: “Many deceivers have gone out into the world,” – all forms of religious deception – “those who do not acknowledge that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, that God is incarnate, this is the deceiver and the antichrist.”

Verse 9: “Anyone who goes beyond and doesn’t abide in the teaching of Christ does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. Don’t let anybody who says anything else in your house, or you’ll be a partaker of his evil deeds.” John’s again saying, “This is it. One source of truth, revelation, the Bible; one God, the God of the Bible; one incarnate Savior, the Son of God, the Messiah. No salvation in any other but Him.”

If you don’t believe in Him, you die in your sins and go to hell. He alone is the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to God but through Him. We live in this time of pluralistic deception where people live with the illusion that all religions are the same. One religion is from God, all the rest are from Satan.

Now back to John 20 for just a closing comment. Why the term “Messiah”? How are we to understand that term? It’s the word “Christ” in the Greek, but it’s “Messiah” in the Hebrew; “Christ” used 500 times in the New Testament.

How are we to understand what that means? If you don’t understand what that term “Messiah” and “Christ” means, you don’t see the full picture of the meaning of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. It is a massively important term that draws from all throughout the Old Testament. So next week we are going to look at the term “Messiah” and see all that it is means. Let’s bow together in prayer.

We thank You for our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank You for the grace that has been extended to us in the gospel. We thank You that You have offered us life eternal, everlasting blessing, joy, full forgiveness of all our sins forever, fellowship with You in an unimaginable and everlasting bliss that gets better every moment forever.

Lord, You’ve given us the Savior, You’ve given us salvation, and we’re here to honor Him in the way that He instructed us to honor Him. And now the God of peace who brought up the great shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant through Jesus Christ to whom be the glory

forever and ever, and everyone said, amen.

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