Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

A Plan for Dying in Your Sins
Scripture: John 8:21-25
Code: 43-45

I know in the bulletin it says that I'm going talk about authority and preaching. But as I thought about that, Clayton already didn't follow the script anyway. So as I thought about that message, I decided to give it Friday night to the pastors. It seemed more appropriate to them, which should have been obvious to me in the first place. So that means that that's in history now and we can go back to the Gospel of John. Go back to the eighth chapter of the Gospel of John.

For those that are visiting with us, we're going through the Gospel of John. The purpose of the Gospel of John, these things are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that believing you might life in His name, that's John chapter 20, verse 31 and John gives purpose, this gospel is written that you might believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Savior, is the Son of God, God in human flesh and that by believing that you might have eternal life in His name. So everything in the Gospel of John focuses on believing who He is and believing in Him, in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now this morning we find ourselves in the eighth chapter, verse 21. That's where we left off and that's where we will begin. John chapter 8, verse 21 and I will actually read down through verse 25. "Then He again said to them, 'I go away, and you will seek me and will die in your sin; where I'm going, you cannot come."" So the Jews were saying, "Surely He will not kill Himself, will He, since he says where I'm going you cannot come." And he was saying to them, "You are from below. I am from above. You are of this world. I am not of this world. Therefore, I said to you that you will die in your sins for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." So they were saying to Him, "Who are you?" Jesus said to them, "What have I been saying to you from the beginning?"

I wonder how many times you have said to someone, "You will die in your sins." Probably not very many. That's what Jesus said three times to people who believed they were the representatives of God, that they were the agents of His kingdom, that they were privileged with the hope of heaven. "You will die in your sins." And He said it three times. Now what led up this? Well, by the time this dialogue occurred, everybody in Israel was aware of Jesus. It's about three years of ministry. We're only six months from the cross at this time. The miracles of Jesus are common conversation because they've literally gone from the south to the north and then back to the south. Ministry, for the first year in Judea, ministry for the second longer than a year in Galilea, back down to Judea for the final months. Everybody's talking about Jesus. They've been talking about Jesus since the ministry of John the Baptist because John was talking about Jesus and all Jerusalem and Judea was coming out

to John. He was common conversation. Obviously no one ever lived like Him. No one ever taught like Him. No one ever did what He did.

Amazing, unheard of miracles were going on on a daily basis through the duration of His ministry, unparalleled teaching, sufficient evidence to prove that He was who He claimed to be, the Messiah, the Savior, the Son of God. Now, by the way, John in his purpose of giving us evidence, only gives us samples, only samples of the ministry of Jesus. In chapter 20 verse 30, we read this, “Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book.”

The ones that John uses are just illustrations of the countless miracles Jesus did. In fact, there’s so many of them, chapter 21:25 says, “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.” Massive evidence supporting His claim to be the Son of God. So in light of the overwhelming evidence, unbelief in Jesus is inexcusable. Inexcusable. And that’s why he says, “You will die in your sins because you believe not on me.” It wasn’t that they didn’t have evidence. They never denied the evidence. They could not.

Perhaps John chapter 5, verse 40 gives us the best explanation. “And you are unwilling to come to me so that you may have life.” “You are unwilling to come to me so that you may have life.” Human will, human volition required to be activated toward Christ for salvation. It is that parallel truth to divine sovereignty which to us is incomprehensible. But is as true as is the sovereignty of God in salvation.

And by the way, even those who have never heard the gospel are without excuse. Romans 1 says that the creation itself so clearly reveals God that men who do not therefore acknowledge God and pursue God are without excuse. If those who’ve never heard the gospel are without excuse, then all the more inexcusable is the unbelief of those who have heard the gospel. That’s why Hebrews chapter 10 gives such a fierce warning, such a frightening warning. Let me read it to you chapter 10 and starting at verse 26, “For if we go on sinning willfully, that is by rejecting, after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries.” If you go on rejecting after you’ve heard the truth, there’s no hope. There’s no other salvation, only judgment.

It was bad enough violating the Law of Moses. Anyone without set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy. How much severe a punishment do you think he will deserve who’s trampled underfoot the Son of God? The whole human race is without excuse because the reality of God has manifest into creation so that we can know something of His nature and power. The reality of God is also delivered to us through conscience, the law of God written in the heart. Man is without excuse. He is even further inexcusable in his unbelief if he has heard the gospel.

Well, in the case of these people who lived in the land of Israel during the ministry of Jesus, there was no excuse. We've heard the expression, he has nobody to blame but himself, that applies here. That's a biblical expression. Jesus said, "You will not come to me that you might have eternal life." And back in John 3 in that most familiar of all passages, verse 16, we read, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world but that the world might be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged. He who does not believe has been judged already." And I would just remind you of that, that if you're not a believer in Jesus Christ, there's not a future judgment for you, there's a past judgment.

People think, well, I'm going to live my life and God's going to rack up all the good things I did and the bad things and the good will outweigh the bad and I'll be fine in the end. And then God will render His judgment on the basis of the accumulated good in my life. No, the judgment has been made on you already. The judgment isn't future. You're under that judgment now because you do not believe. You've been judged already. There's not going to be a difference in the future in that judgment unless you believe in Jesus Christ and come out from that judgment to salvation.

This is the judgment that the light has come into the world, men love the darkness rather than the light where the deeds are evil. Did the light shine brightly in Israel for three years? Of course. Was the light manifest? Of course. But men love the darkness like insects scrambling back under a rock. As we come to chapter 8, the previous chapters in this incredible story of Jesus, this history, have detailed the manifestations of our Lord, which he gave to Israel. And they are more than sufficient to produce the necessary evidence of His claims being true. And he says in chapter 7, verse 17, this is an important brief verse, "If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God of whether I speak from myself." The word willing appears again in 5:40, you're not willing. In 7:17, "If you are willing, you will know the truth."

Comes back to human will. We can't set that aside. I know we love the doctrine of the sovereignty of God and salvation and it is clearly taught in Scripture. And parallel to that, and as I said, inscrutable to us is the reality that the sinner is responsible for his own will. Anyone seeing, hearing, experiencing the reality of Christ the way they had and not believing bears alone the guilt of that unbelief. In the face of more than sufficient evidence making unbelief inexcusable. In Galilee you remember, as we started through the Gospel of John, his ministry in Galilee was a large part of our focus. He proposed spiritual blessings. He proposed salvation on a spiritual level to the poor prisoners blind and oppressed and they're identified in Luke 4.

They wanted physical. Their messianic expectation was not satisfied in Him. They wanted an earthly leader, a temporal leader, an earthly king, an earthly provider, a warrior king, a defender of Israel and an executioner of their enemies. But they would accept Him if He healed the sick, cast out demons

and created food for the masses who were always hungry. He certainly was king material and they wanted to make Him a king. They tried by force to make Him a king ‘cause that would have been an ultimate welfare state. But when He demanded spiritual cleansing, confronted their sin, confronted the bankruptcy of their religion and spoke only of spiritual blessings and heavenly things, they left Him. They started fading away.

And then, when He started to talk about His own death, and them having to swallow His own death in the sense you have to eat my flesh and drink my blood, even His disciples, many of them, John 6:66, left Him permanently. We would conclude that over a year of ministry in Galilee drove the mobs away and even many of His own disciples ultimately left. In Jerusalem the pattern was the same, demonstrating His power He drew crowds wherever He went. They also were willing to make Him king, but then He there began to sift the mobs by presenting spiritual truth, demanding a recognition of sin, condemning their false religion, condemning their hypocrisy and the crowds began to melt away and they became indifferent and the leaders became angry and murderous. And six months from the occasion of John 8, they’re going to get their wish and the Romans are going to crucify Him.

This literally fulfills the comment of John at the beginning of his story. “He came into His own and His own people received Him not.” But they were responsible for what they heard. The offer of salvation was clear, the evidence was compelling, they made their choice. Most reject it. Some, along the way, believed. Back in chapter 6 and verse 14, “When the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said,” this being the feeding of that crowd that was probably between 20,000 and 25,000 people, when some of the people saw this, they said, “This is truly the prophet who is to come into the world.” In other words, this is the Messiah. And they took that from Deuteronomy 18 which was the prophecy of Messiah in which He would be identified as a prophet. Some believed, certainly.

If you go to the end of the chapter in verse 69, you hear the words of Peter for himself and the apostles and other followers of Jesus who had remained, “We have believed and have come to know that you are the Holy One of God.” Chapter 7, verse 40, “Some of the people therefore, when they heard these words were saying, ‘This certainly is the prophet.’” Again, identifying the messianic prophecy of Deuteronomy 18. “And others said, ‘This is the Christ.’ ‘This is the Messiah.’” So along the way there were people who were believing, not many because on the day of Pentecost how many were gathered in the upper room? A hundred and twenty. That shows you how many people rejected the clear evidence.

So in the eight chapters that we’ve looked up to now, John shows how first Galilee and then Judea, Jerusalem rejected their Messiah. What began as hopeful ended up in hostility. It is this trend in rejection, this escalating animosity towards Jesus that drives Him to say what He says in what we read starting in verse 21.

Let's go back to verse 21. He said again to them, "I go away and you will seek me and will die in your sin. Where I'm going you cannot come." That's as blunt as you can get with unbelievers, right? "You will die in your sin." But you noticed it said again. Could it be that this is a very routine thing for Him to say? Certainly. But specifically, if you go back to chapter 7, verse 34, there he said, "You will seek me and will not find me and where I am, you cannot come." Verse 36, they respond, "What is this statement that he said, 'You will seek me and will not find me and where I am you cannot come?'" We have at least that specific indication that He had said this kind of thing frequently, maybe very frequently.

His ministry was to talk about the kingdom and talk about salvation, but it was not absent a warning component. This is about as stern and direct as a warning gets. "You will die," that's enough. Just to say to someone, "You will die," is the wakeup call. "You will die in your sins," that is you will die unforgiven. You will die unforgiven.

"And where I am going you cannot come." Oh, he had said where he was going. He said, "I came down from heaven." Chapter 6, "I am the bread of heaven, came down from heaven." He said this over and over and over. "I came from the Father. I came from the Father." He even said, "I go back to the Father. I return to the Father." But where He was going they would never go. He would die, but where he would go when he would die would be a place they would never see. "I go away. You will seek me." We talked about that, didn't we, a few weeks ago? That part of the horror of hell, and there are a lot of components to this suffering of hell, the fact that you're still sinful and still wretched, only your sin is totally unabated and therefore hell is forever because you still are sinful and so you're always painful and so you're always paying for a continuing sinful life.

Hell is also bitterness. Hell is also a completely exploding conscience without relief. But hell is also seeking for what you can't find. That's why there's weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth. "You will seek me." Do you think people in hell are seeking salvation? Do you think people in hell would want to be delivered? Listen to the language of a man in hell. "Send someone to dip his finger in water and cool my tongue for I'm tormented in this flame." All the seeking is useless. "You will die in your sins. And where I go you will never come." You're going to hell, I'm going to heaven.

How do you die in your sins? How does this happen? In verse 22 to through 25, our Lord shows four realities that guarantee you'll die in your sin. This is really a potent portion of Scripture. And so serious that it's as serious as it gets. We're talking about eternity in heaven or hell. If I had put a title in the grace today, it would have been How to Die in Your Sins.

So here's how. First, be self-righteous, be self-righteous. Go to verse 22. So the Jews were saying, "Surely He will not kill Himself, will He? Since He says, 'Where I am going you cannot come.'" You say, well, what is there in that about self-righteousness? That entire statement demonstrates the self-righteousness of the Jews. Primarily when you see the word Jew in the Gospel of John it's referring to

the leaders, the scribes and the Pharisees, but it embraces all the people who followed in their pattern, in their religious system. Their scorn is palpable here. Their mockery is obvious here. They didn't need a redeemer. They didn't need a savior. They resented His attacks on their hypocrisy. They resented His indictment of them as sinners in need of a savior. This is the essence of self-righteousness. It looks at a savior and mocks the whole idea.

So they say with scorn and sarcasm, "Surely He will not kill Himself, will he?" And why would they say that? Well, I'll tell you why. Josephus tells us, the Jewish historian, that among the Jews the worst sin was suicide. Suicide. According to Josephus a person who committed suicide didn't just go to Hades, the place of the dead who didn't know God, but went to the lowest, darkest point of Hades most remotely removed from what they called Abraham's bosom, the place where Abraham went, where the people who knew God went. And that person who committed suicide would go to the place the farthest away from Abraham's bosom, Abraham's presence and the presence of righteous people. Far away. And the person would be assigned to be in the darkest corner of Hades forever.

So Jesus gives them a warning. "You're going to die in your sins." They are offended because they don't see themselves as what? Sinners. They see themselves as righteous. Jesus had said, "Look, I didn't come to call the righteous. I can't deal with you, but sinners to repentance." That was always the issue with these religious leaders. They refused to recognize their true condition so they mock Jesus and say, "Oh, He's going to kill Himself and He's going to go to the farthest, deepest, darkest corner of Hades completely and forever removed from where we're going to go, the presence of Abraham where all the righteous people are."

Amazing how deaf to this warning self-righteous people are, that they mock the Son of God. Mock the Son of God. Just really frightening. Ignorant mocking. They laughed when they should have cried. And they laughed until they died and then they cried. And they're still crying. So confidentially self-righteous they mock the idea of a savior and they mock the idea of sin. Ha, are you kidding? Die in our sins? Self-righteousness is so deadly. It is a guarantee that you will die in your sins and go to hell forever.

What do I mean by self-righteous? The idea that you're good enough for heaven. That you're trusting in your own religion, your own rituals, ceremonies, morality, goodness. You know, the apostles got this message. And when they started writing the New Testament, boy, they were very strong on this message. If there's one thing you find when you begin to listen to the sermons of the apostles in the Book of Acts and you begin to read the letters the apostles and those with them wrote throughout the rest of the New Testament, they understood that nobody would be saved by works. That salvation was a matter of faith alone and that God in grace and mercy granted His own righteousness to the believer as a covering. By the deeds of the law, Paul writes, no one will be justified. In fact, Paul says to the Galatians, "If you break one law one time, you've destroyed the whole law and you're cursed. And your only hope is Jesus Christ who became a curse for us."

Romans 10, Paul says, “The Jews go about to establish their own righteousness.” That’s what the gospel does. Every religion, I don’t care what name it is, what title it is, what form it comes in, all religions are the same, they are the religion of human achievement to one degree or another. Your works contribute to your salvation, to your heaven, to your relationship to God. And that is the devil’s lie. “For by grace are you saved through faith that not of yourself, it is the gift of God.” Not of works. Not of works. Jews, they not only believe they could earn their salvation, they believed they had. They had. At the end of His ministry during the Passion Week, Jesus called them tombs painted white full of dead men’s bones. Don’t trust in your good deeds. Don’t trust in your religion. Don’t trust in your morality. You will die in your sins. And where our Lord went into the glory of heaven you will never go.

I read a very sad letter to the editor from a Melbourne, Australia newspaper some years ago. This is someone who wrote the newspaper after Billy Graham had preached in Melbourne. And this is what a letter to the editor said. This is quoting the man who wrote it, “After hearing Billy Graham and viewing him on television and seeing reports and letters concerning his mission here, I am heartily sick of the type of religion that insists my soul and everyone else’s need saving, whatever that means. I have never felt that I was lost nor do I feel that I daily wallow in the mire of sin although repetitious preaching insists that I do. Give me a practical religion that teaches gentleness and tolerance that acknowledges no barriers of color or creed, that remembers the aged and teaches children goodness and not sin. If in order to save my soul, I must accept such a philosophy as I have recently heard preach, I prefer to remain forever damned.” And he signed his name. And he got his wish.

It’s just a frightening reality. You will die in your sins. Then in verse 23, he says to them, “You are from below. I am from above.” Let me just make it real simple. Self-righteous religion is from the pit. It’s what he’s saying. What an irony, what a blow. They’ve just said, “You’re going to Hades, to hell, to the darkest place.” He says, “That’s where you’re from. Your unbelief, your hypocrisy, your religion are right from hell.” Over in verse 44, he says, “You’re of your father, the devil. And you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning. He doesn’t stand in the truth. There’s no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature. He’s a liar and the father of lies. And because I speak the truth, you do not believe me.” You’re from below. You’re under the power of Satan. Ephesians 2, right? You’re under the power of the prince of the air. You buy his lies and his deception.

1 John 5:19 says, “The whole world lies in the lies in the power of the evil one.” Any unbeliever, anyone who does not believe in Christ is trusting in his own efforts, works, goodness, morality, religion is a dupe of Satan and he’s headed forever to the very hell from which his religion has come. On the other hand, Jesus says, “I’m from above.” That’s the distinguishing mark between Christians and nonbelievers. We’re from above. Our home is heaven, right? We’re citizens of heaven, aliens in this world. We’re blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly in Christ, Jesus.

Apart from Christ, you're from below. That's the origin of your worldview and religion. So if you want to die in your sin, just trust yourself. Trust your good works, your morality, your religion. Be self-righteous. Secondly, be worldly. Verse 23, in the middle of the verse, "You are of this world." I'm not of this world.

Here's another guarantee that a person will die in sin. "Consumed by the world, living in the world, loving the world, embracing the world, drawing satisfaction out of the world," what do you mean by the world? What do you mean? The word is *Kosmos*, it's the opposite of chaos. Chaos is disorder, confusion. *Kosmos* is order, structure. It's not talking about the planet physically, geographically, geologically. It's talking about the system, the ideologies, the world system, the thought patterns, attitudes. It is the invisible intelligent system that runs the human fallen race right into hell. Invisible, spiritual system of evil. It is oppose to God.

As we heard from Al Moller on Thursday night, it suppresses the truth constantly. Constantly, Romans 1, suppressing the truth, suppressing the truth, exchanging the truth for a lie. This is what it does. Spiritual system of evil. We use the term world that way. We talk about the world of sports and the world of politics and the world of education and we mean the complex of it, the ideologies of it, the structure of it, the system itself.

All unconverted people are in that system. It is hostile to God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, Christians. It is hostile to godliness and it promotes materialism, humanism, illicit sex, carnal ambition, pride, greed, self-pleasure, self-desires. Its opinions are wrong, its aims are selfish, its pleasures are sinful, its influence is demoralizing, its politics corrupt, its honor's empty, its smiles fake and its love fickle. That's the system. And it will be destroyed.

Look at 1 John 2:15, "Do not love the *kosmos* nor the things in the *kosmos*." We're not talking about Yosemite. We're not talking about Niagara Falls. We're not talking about a sunset or a sunrise. My wife had me on the back porch taking a picture of the sunrise today. We're not talking about that. We're not talking about a delicious meal and happy friendship. We're not talking about that. We're talking about the complex, the corruption orchestrated by Satan and his minions. Don't love that. If anyone loves the *kosmos*, the love of the Father is not in him. That it's mutually exclusive from being a Christian.

James 4 says, "Friendship with the world," is what, "enemy with God." All that is in the *kosmos*, here's how what the *kosmos* boils down to: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life. And it's not from the Father, but it's from the *kosmos* and the *kosmos* is passing away and also it's lust. But the one that does the will of God lives forever.

So if you're part of the *kosmos*, if you're clinging to the world, if you're hearing the gospel like Matthew 13:22 and you're that soil – remember that soil where the thorns come up and choke out the word and it says what are the thorns? The thorns are the love of the world and the deceitfulness of riches. It's going to choke it out. Sinful, selfish, worldly souls live under the prince of the power of the air, the prince of this world, this system. They are separated from Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God by an infinite gulf. This is the kingdom of Satan, this is the kingdom of darkness. What happens to someone who comes to Christ, you're not of this world, you've been delivered from this present world?

In fact, in his wonderful prayer in John 17, Jesus makes it very obvious that we have been transformed and drawn out of the horrors of the world. Verse 14, "I've given them your word and the world, the system, the *kosmos* hates them because they're not of the *kosmos* even as I am not of the *kosmos*." Verse 16, "They're not of the *kosmos*," again, even as I'm not of the *kosmos*.

So want to die in your sins? Be worldly. Cling with all your might to the system with all its evil. Run your life by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. Be dominated by your corrupt desires. There's a third reality that guarantees you will die in your sin. Be faithless. Be faithless. Verse 24, "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." Isn't that amazing? There's only one thing, one thing, that prevents you from dying and going to hell forever in an unforgiven condition. Only one thing. That is faith in Jesus Christ. It's not an accumulated morality or religion. One thing rescues you from hell. This is the key. You will die in your sins. You will die in your sins. You will die in your sins. Three times. Unless you believe that I am – open-ended. That I am who I claim to be. That I am who I am.

Eternal destiny comes down to a decision about one person. Isn't that amazing? Why do we preach Christ? Why do we preach Christ? Because he's the one person. No man comes to the Father but by me. There's no salvation in any other. I am the way, the truth and the life. You must believe that I am.

And that's Jesus identifying himself with a tetragrammaton, the Old Testament name for God, the I that I am. And all through the Gospel of John he applies I am to himself. I am the way, the truth, the life. I am the bread. I am the resurrection. I am the life. I am. This again is a claim to deity. The sin question leads to the Son question.

There's only way to escape judgment and that's to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is John's message again and again. Some people call this the gospel of belief. And at the very beginning we talked about how many times the Greek word for believe in verb form or in noun form or infinity form, participial form just used all through this and that it culminates in 20:31. These things are written that you may believe salvation's by grace alone on God's part through faith alone on our part.

So just be unbelieving, just don't believe. Like the man in Australia who would rather be damned forever than believe. Just reject Christ, that's all it takes. That's pretty simple to understand. You think about that against the backdrop of the almost incomprehensible complexity of multiple religions across the world, all these people doing all these kind of crazy things trying to get to heaven or to get to wherever they think they're going to go that's going to be the good place, the happy hunting ground, nirvana, whatever. And it all comes down to one person. One person. You want to die in your sins? Refuse to believe in Jesus Christ. Refuse to believe that He is who He said He was. Came to do what He did. Refused to believe it. Savingly believe it. Fully believe it. Secondly, just hang onto the world with a tight grip. Just love your lusts and pride and the system that appeals to them. And trust your own goodness. You'll end up in hell. And then there's a last note and it's obvious. Be obstinate. Just keep up the rejection. This is really pretty amazing, verse 25, so they were saying to him, "Who are you?" And you just want to say, "Are you kidding?" "Who are you?" What they mean by that, who in the world do you think you are? You just told us we're sinners. You just told us we're going to die and we're going to go to hell. Who do you think you are? I can understand them saying that. They thought they were the citizens of heaven, the kingdom of God, the representatives of God himself. They were the most proud religionist on the planet. You just told us that we're going to hell. Who in the world do you think you are? I mean the hubris here is stunning to them. It's little wonder that they wanted to kill Him. They should have known. What a ridiculous thing to say, "Who are you?" with all the evidence that was in.

Go to chapter 9. I love this, these leaders always tracking Jesus. And in chapter 9 Jesus heals a man born blind. And so the leaders, the Pharisees go after the man who can now see, the Pharisees. And the Pharisees talk to this man who's now in some kind of incalculable euphoria 'cause he can see and he never has. So they come and they revile him in verse 28. They reviled him. And they said, "You're His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He is from." How many times had He told them where He was from?

I love this guy's answer. This is my kind of guy. He said, "Well, here is an amazing thing that you do not know where He is from and He opened my eyes." Well, we know that God doesn't hear sinners. They had concluded Jesus was the sinner and they were the righteous.

Do you think they know their own hearts? Hypocrites always know their own hearts. They know that they're white on the outside and full of dead man's bones on the inside. They know that. They know they're living a lie. They know their corruption. But they wouldn't admit it. They called Jesus a sinner. Back to conclude in chapter 8. So they say, "Who are you?" And Jesus said to them, just this, "What have I been saying to you from the beginning? Are you deaf? What have I been saying to you from the beginning? Haven't you been listening? I've been telling you again and again and again who I am." Remember the conversation in John 5 where he claims to work the way the Father works, to be one in nature with the Father, one in work with the Father, one in will with the Father, one in truth with

the Father, one in honor with the Father? “What have I been saying to you from the beginning?”

So what are we dealing with here? Stubbornness? Being obstinate? Just plain hardhearted. This is dangerous. Go to chapter 12 and I’ll close there. Verse 36. Well, verse 35. So Jesus said to them – this is another conversation. And this conversation is right near the end of His life months later. “A little while longer the light is among you. Walk while you have the light so that darkness will not overtake you. He who walks in the darkness doesn’t know where he goes. While you have the light, believe in the light so that you may become sons of light.” Just another pleading appeal. Believe in the light while you have the light. Now watch how fast this happens. “These things Jesus spoke and He went away and hid Himself from them.” From the time that He said, “Believe while you have the light,” it may have been hours, may have been days and He was gone. He was gone.

He never commits himself to unbelief. They wouldn’t believe. They wouldn’t believe. Stubborn, stubborn, refuse to believe, refuse to believe. And now, guess what? They can’t. Verse 37. “Though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him.” This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the Prophet which he spoke, “Lord who has believed our report and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed.” For this reason they what? Could not believe. Would not believe. Could not believe. The light was there. They refused the light. The light is hidden. Goes dark. They couldn’t believe for Isaiah said again, and it quotes Isaiah 6, “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts so that they wouldn’t see with their eyes and perceive with their heart and be converted and I heal them.”

Is that not interesting to you? The light became blinding. These things Isaiah said because he saw his glory and he spoke of him. When Isaiah said that, he was speaking of Christ and how He would render judgment on unbelieving Israel. Good news is verse 42 he say, “Oh, many of the rulers believe.” Not so good. Because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him for fear they’d be put out of the synagogue for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God. Those Pharisees not only were stubborn unbelievers themselves, but they laid that influence on so many others.

He really turned out the light. Not long even after this situation in chapter 8, just months, and after the comment in chapter 12, hours, maybe days. So how do you die in your sins? Be self-righteous, be worldly, be faithless, be obstinate. But to do this, you will be required – if you’ve been here – to stumble over the cross and stumble over the resurrection heartlessly trampling under feet the Son of God and counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing.

There is another alternative put down in verse 30, “As he spoke these things, many came to believe in Him. To them He says, ‘If you continue in my word, you’re truly disciples of mine.’” Can’t tell at the moment, right? ‘Cause so many fall away. If you continue you’re a real believer. Well, there were 120 that were faithful. It’s a warning message and it’s as serious as serious gets. Can’t convey how urgent

it is for us to hear this and to pass this message on. I know it’s hard to say to someone, “You will die in your sins,” but that’s exactly what Jesus says. Now you can trust Him for the results, can’t we? Do we have to convey to sinners the urgency of this? It’s not about Jesus fixing your life and making you feel better about yourself and your world you live in. It’s much more urgent than that.

I don’t know where you are before the Lord. Many of you I do, of course, but there are some of you here I have no idea what your spiritual situation is. I just warn you because that’s what I’ve been called to do, to discharge the message as faithfully as I can and leave it to your heart and you will be held responsible for what you do with regard to Jesus Christ.

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