The Gospel of John
**3.X—ETERNITY BEGINS NOW – JOHN 3:31–36**

**INTRODUCTION**

IN THE LAST 6 VERSES OF JOHN CHAPTER 3, VERSES 31-36, JOHN GIVES FIVE TRUTHS ABOUT JESUS TO HIS DISCIPLES AND TO US BEFORE GIVING HIS WARNING TO THE WORLD.

**Let’s explore these truths and an altar call by reading John 3:31–36:**

**John 3:31–36 (ESV)** **31**He who comes **from above is above all**. He who is of the ***earth*** belongs to the **earth** and speaks in an **earthly** way. He who comes from heaven is **above all**. **32**He **bears witness** to what he has **seen and heard**, yet **no one** receives his testimony. **33**Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that **God is true**. **34**For he whom God has sent **utters the words of God**, for he gives the **Spirit without measure**. **35The Father loves the Son** and has given all things into his hand. **36**Whoever **believes** in the Son has eternal life; whoever **does not obey** the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

Although some Bible scholars think that verses 31–36 continue the words of **John the Baptist** others attribute these words to **John the Apostle**. Today, I lean to these being the words of John the Baptist but, according to 2 Tim. 3:16, and 2 Pet. 1:21, it does not matter.

**2 Timothy 3:16–17 (ESV) 16All Scripture is breathed out by God** and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, **17**that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

**2 Peter 1:21 (ESV)** **21**For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as **they were carried along by the Holy Spirit**.

Assuming these are the words of John the Baptist, John is still conversing with his disciples who were perturbed and dismayed that people were leaving John’s ministry for Jesus’. John explained that as a best man and not the groom, he was pleased. In these last 6 verses, John the Baptist tells five truths about Jesus which also supports why Jesus must increase and John the Baptist decrease.

**V31** – **31**He who comes from above is **above all**. He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven is **above all**.

1. ***Jesus came from heaven to earth, so His teaching is above all human teachers.***

**John 8:23 (ESV)** **23**He said to them, “You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.

**We who are from the earth “speak in an earthly way”** “know in part and prophecy in part … we see in a mirror dimly” (1 Cor. 13:9,12).

**V32** **32**He bears witness to what he has seen and heard, yet no one receives his testimony.

#### *Jesus is an eye witness to the things he has seen and heard in heaven––things we know nothing about except heaven tell us and still no one receives.*

 **John 8:38 (ESV)** **38**I speak of what I have **seen** with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father.”

**John 8:26 (ESV)** **26**I have much to say about you and much to judge, but he who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have **heard** from him.”

**But few or none believed him**

**John 3:32–33 (NLT)** 32He testifies about what he has seen and heard, but how **few believe** what he tells them! 33Anyone who accepts his testimony can affirm that God is true.

**Matthew 16:21–22 (ESV)** **21**From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to **Jerusalem** and **suffer** many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and **be killed**, and on the **third day** be raised. **22**And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” Matt 17:22-23

**What kind of things has Jesus seen and heard?**

**Satan: Luke 10:18 (ESV) 18**And he said to them, “**I saw Satan fall like lightning** from heaven.

**Afterlife: Luke 16:22–24 (ESV)** **22**The poor man died and was carried by the angels to **Abraham’s side**. The rich man also died and was buried, **23**and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. **24**And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.’

**Relationships in Heaven: Luke 20:34–36 (ESV)** **34**And Jesus said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, **35**but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead **neither marry nor are given in marriage**, **36**for they cannot die anymore, because **they are equal to angels and are sons of God**, being sons of the resurrection.

**V33** **33**Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal (confirmation, approval, agreement) to this, that God is true.

1. **John the Baptist received Jesus testimony & publicly declared it to be true**

**John 1:29–34 (ESV)** **29**The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “**Behold, the Lamb of God**, who takes away the sin of the world! **30**This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’ **31**I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.” **32**And John bore witness: “**I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him**. **33**I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘**He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit**.’ **34**And I have seen and have borne witness that **this is the Son of God**.”

**V34** **34**For he whom God has sent **utters the words of God**, for he gives the Spirit without measure.

1. ***Jesus utters the words of the Father -*** *Jesus not only bears witness of the things he has seen and heard* **through the Holy Spirit but through the Holy Spirit he speaks the words of God and not his own**

**John 12:49–50 (ESV)** **49**For **I have not spoken on my own authority**, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. **50**And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.”

**The Spirit without measure (limit)**

**Luke 4:18–19 (ESV)** **18**“The **Spirit of the Lord is upon me**, because he has **anointed me** to **proclaim** good news to the poor. He has sent me to **proclaim** liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, **19**to **proclaim** the year of the Lord’s favor.”

**What about us**

**Psalm 51:5 (ESV)** **5** Behold, I was brought forth in **iniquity**, and in **sin** did my mother conceive me.

**Ephesians 4:30 (ESV)** **30**And do not **grieve** the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

**1 Thessalonians 5:19 (ESV)** **19**Do not **quench** the Spirit.

**V35 35**The **Father loves the Son** and has given all things into his hand.

**Matthew 17:5 (NKJV)** 5While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is **My beloved Son**, in whom I am **well pleased**. **Hear Him**!”

**Summary**

Vs 31 Jesus is from heaven and above all

Vs 32 Jesus has first-hand knowledge and few receive it

Vs 33 Where Jesus’ testimony is received; God is witnessed as true

Vs 34 Jesus speaks the words of God by the Spirit w/o limit

Vs 35 Jesus is loved by the Father

**V36** **36**Whoever **believes (G4100- pisteuo)** in the Son has eternal life; whoever **does not obey (G544- apeitheo)** the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

Not **will have** eternal life but **has** eternal life – reconnected to God

**John 3:36 (NKJV)** 36He who **believes** (G4100 – pisteuo – piss stew oh) in the Son has everlasting life; and he who **does not believe** (G544- apeitheo – a pie tha o) the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

Moved from believe (G4100 – pisteuo) to does not obey (G3588 - apeitheo)

**James 2:19 (ESV)** **19**You believe that God is one; you do well. **Even the demons believe**—and shudder!

“The New Testament portrays belief in the gospel as obedience to God, an essential element of saving faith”

**John 3:16–19 (ESV)** **16**… **17**For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. **18**Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but **whoever does not believe is condemned already**, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

“Believe in Jesus and have eternal life; or, do not obey Jesus and remain under God’s wrath inherited from birth.

Help me to understand the Father’s love for His son and for mankind

I have one more story to share with you:

At a Sunday evening church service, the pastor introduced a guest minister to his congregation to share whatever was on his heart that evening. The elderly guest stepped to the pulpit and began to speak. “A father, his son, and a friend of his son were sailing off the Pacific Coast when a fast approaching storm blocked any attempt to get back to shore. The waves were so high that even though the father was an experienced sailor, he could not keep the boat aright, and the three were swept into the ocean as the boat capsized.”

The old man hesitated for a moment, making eye contact with two teenagers who seemed interested in the story. He continued, “Grabbing a rescue line, the father had to make the most excruciating decision of his life ... to which boy would he throw the other end of the life line? He had only seconds to make his decision. The father knew that his son was a Christian and he also knew the son’s friend was not. The agony of his decision could not be matched by the torrent of the waves. As the father yelled out, ‘I love you, son!’, he threw out the life line to his son’s friend. By the time the father had pulled the friend back to the capsized boat, his son had disappeared beneath the raging swells of the ocean, never to be recovered.”

By this time the two teenagers were sitting up straight in their pew, anxiously waiting for the next words to come out of the old man’s mouth. “The father,” he continued, “knew his son would step into eternity with Jesus, and he could not bear the thought of his son’s friend stepping into eternity without Jesus. Therefore, he sacrificed his son to save the son's friend. How great is the love of God that He should do the same for us. I urge each of you to accept His offer to rescue you and take hold of the life line He is throwing out to you.”

With that the old man sat down and the pastor delivered a brief sermon with an invitation but no one responded to the appeal. Within minutes after the service ended, however, the two teenagers were at the old man’s side. “That was a nice story,” politely started one of boys, “but I don't think it was very realistic for a father to give up his son’s only life in hopes the other boy would become a Christian.”

“Well, you’ve got a point there,” the old man replied, glancing down at his worn Bible. A big smile broadened his narrow face and he once again looked at the boys and said, “It sure isn’t very realistic, is it? But I’m standing here today to tell you this story is but a glimpse of what it must have been like for God to give up His Son for me. You see, I was that father and your pastor is my son’s friend.”

**ALTAR CALL**