

# The Book of John - 21

**Introduction:** We finished the first half of **John chapter 3**, which brings us to the testimony from John the Baptist found in **verses 22-36**. John's fuller testimony concerning the Lord Jesus Christ is found here.

Let's read **verses 22-36**.

John is said to be the hinge of the door moving from the **Old Testament** to the **New Testament**. In **Acts 19**, we have an account of John's continuing influence on the people. Let's read together **Acts 19, verses 1-5**.

First, You will notice that we are given **the background of this testimony**. There are two different locations indicated here.

The first states that *"After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there **he tarried with them, and baptized.**" vs. 22*

We notice in **verse 22** here an important truth concerning **fellowship** and **discipleship**. Are people ill-equipped to serve the Savior? If they are, it is because they are not spending time with Him. Are people ill-equipped to minister to others? If they are, it is because they do not submit themselves to Christ in true discipleship. This is key to Christian growth is being with the Lord. And second to this is the **outgrowth of labour from our time with the Lord**. You will notice in the text that the labor of the ministry is indicated here in the final words *"...and baptized..."* We will see later on in **John 4:2** that the Bible makes clear for us that Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples. *"2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)"*

**I want you to understand that nothing the Lord did in His earthly ministry was arbitrary.** The following location is identified as well, along with who is involved.

**John 3:23** *"23 And John also was baptizing in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized."*

There is a point made by the Holy Spirit to show us that **there was much water here**. The word 'baptize' in **verses 22 and 23** is a **transliterated word** that means to immerse, plunge, or dip. There would come a time in the future when the baptism found in **verse 22** would take on more significance identifying us with the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**In Romans 6:4, the Bible says,** *"4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."*

Not only do we see **the background of the testimony**, but:

Secondly, **the timing of the testimony**. John 3:24, **“24 For John, was *not yet* cast into prison.”**

The design of this statement is to tell us that this incident took place between the time of the Lord entering into His public ministry but before **John’s imprisonment and execution**. Think about the important testimony this was concerning John, who faithfully continued to serve the Lord. Many get disillusioned with serving others when the limelight of men is not on them... this was not the case with John. When you think about John the Baptist, He could have decided to retire after the Lord came on the scene. Instead, we read that **he demonstrated faithfulness** until the end.

Secondly, we understand that those who stand for the Lord shall suffer persecution. Why did persecution come to John the Baptist? He was persecuted because John stood up for the Lord Jesus Christ and for righteousness.

Thirdly, we see that the Word of God gives us **the question that prompted the testimony**. The question was concerning purifying and whether men should go to John or the Lord Jesus Christ. Were they to go to John to make their hearts clean or Jesus?

Notice what the Bible says,

**John 3:25-26** *“25 Then there arose a question between some of John’s disciples and the Jews about purifying. 26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, **to whom thou barest witness**, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.”*

Here we see the sin of pride, jealousy, and contention in ministering to men. I am reminded of **Mark 9:38-40**.

*“38 And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us. 39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. 40 For he that is not against us is on our part.”*

According to John 15:26, the Spirit of truth has recorded for us a testimony of John Himself to clear up any confusion concerning his ministry versus the Lord Jesus Christ. There are **seven points** in this passage concerning the Lord and John the Baptist that folks needed to know.

The first is mentioned in **verse 27**. *“27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, **except** it be given him from heaven.”*

**Jesus alone is God's appointed Messiah, and John alone was God's appointed forerunner.**

Our service to the Lord is at **the will of the Master**. As we serve and minister to people, **it is not of our own design** but at the good pleasure of our Lord.

Notice what John states in **verse 28**.

**John 3:28** tells us, *"28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him."*

Imagine the temptation once again put before John to place Himself in the forefront... But yet John remained **in submission to the Lord**.

Secondly, **the Lord Jesus Christ alone is the bridegroom.**

**John 3:29** *"29 He that hath the **bride is the bridegroom**: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled."*

In **Revelation 22:17**, the Bible says, *"17 And **the Spirit and the bride** say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."*

Who is the bride? The bride of Christ is the church.

In the New Testament economy, there are only three divisions of people. **I Corinthians 10:32** gives us those divisions, *"32 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:"* There is **the Jew, the Gentile, and the church**. In **Ephesians chapter 5**, Paul deals with this great mystery, and that is the church. **Ephesians 5:32** *"32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."*

What is the relation of Christ to the church? He is the bridegroom, and we are the bride. John expresses here dogmatically that He is the **friend of the Bridegroom**, rejoicing for Him. He further emphasizes the Bridegroom's voice and the priority of hearing Him. In the **5th chapter of John, in verse 23**, the Bible says, *"That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him."* (**John 5:23**) Notice what John states at the end of **verse 29**, *"...this my joy therefore is fulfilled."* **Knowing these things was pivotal for John**. He states, *"He must increase, and I must decrease."*

This is every Christian's supreme mission: for the Lord Jesus Christ to have **preeminence** in everything.

Thirdly, **the Lord Jesus Christ was from above.**

**John 3:31** *“31 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.”*

John purposely uses the word ‘**above**’ **three times**, emphasizing the supreme position of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is from above and above all.

Again, the Lord Jesus Christ is **uniquely qualified to speak of those things from above** because He is from above. It is interesting to see how easily folks are gathered to **one who has claimed to be dead** for a time and “been to heaven,” and yet their testimony is contrary to the Bible. And yet the Lord Jesus Christ, who is from above and above all, spoke of those things which are recorded for you and me in His word of what He had seen and heard, according to **verse 32** of our text.

**John 3:32** *“And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.”*

**The Lord Jesus Christ is God’s spokesman.**

Notice the words in **verse 33**, John 3:33 *“33 He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.”*

Then also in **verse 34**, *“For he whom God hath sent **speaketh the word of God...**”*

According to what we find in this text, most men reject the testimony of the Lord. The phrase in **verse 32**, which states, *“and no man receiveth his testimony...”* indicates that few received the testimony of the Lord in that day. It was said of the Lord Jesus later on in **verse 46 of chapter 7** that *“... Never man spake like this man.”* Those that do receive the testimony of Christ set a seal upon it that God is true.

In **John 6:29**, we find these words, *“29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”*

Sixthly, we discover that **the Lord Jesus Christ alone is the second person of the Trinity.**

The Bible says in **John 3:34**, *“... for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.”*

Men of the Old Testament were empowered by God by the Holy Spirit, as was

needed for the work of God to be accomplished. The Holy Spirit came upon people, enabling them to perform God's work. In the New Testament, following Acts chapter 2, the Holy Spirit resides in every Christian. But we find as we study the Scriptures that folks have differing gifts and differing measures of these gifts. This is not so with the Lord Jesus Christ, for He is fully God and yet also fully man. This statement speaks to the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

John's testimony, lastly, declared that it is **the Lord Jesus Christ alone that determines man's destiny.**

**Verse 36** tells us, *"36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."*

When we deal with the Great White Throne Judgment in the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ in **Revelation chapter 20 (11-15)**, we will discover that the lost at that judgment will be judged by their works. The books will be opened, and in them, men's works are recorded. This judgment is not a trial but a judicial pronouncement of a guilty verdict. But there is also one other book that is used in that particular judgment. It is the Lamb's Book of Life. There is no express use of this book except to display perhaps that the names of the lost are not written in it. The determining factor is stated in **verse 36**.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.... those who believe not, the Bible says, shall not see life...