

# The Talmid



Talmid תְּלִמִּיד a Hebrew word that means “a true disciple who desires to be what the Rabbi Jesus is.”

Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did. 1 John 2:6 (NIV)

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## The ASSURANCE of Our SALVATION Part 3

### *The Glory of God in the Plan of Salvation*

**John 17:1-5 (NASB)**

<sup>1</sup>“Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You,

<sup>2</sup>even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life.

<sup>3</sup>“This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

<sup>4</sup>I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You

have given Me to do.

<sup>5</sup>Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.”

So far, in considering this great prayer, we have been looking at the matter in general. We can now proceed to look at the actual subjects which our Lord dealt with in his prayer, the thoughts that were uppermost in his mind as thus he prayed to his heavenly Father. Let me remind you that the prayer can be divided into three main sections: the first is from **verses 1–5**, in which our Lord prays for himself; then in **verses 5–19** we have his prayer for his immediate disciples, those who were around and about him; and from there on he prays for the church universal.

In the first section, where our Lord prays for himself, we find that the essence of his petition is that the Father may glorify him, in order that he also may glorify the Father: ‘**Father the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.**’ In other words, his main concern at this point is that he may glorify God. That is the supreme thing, but, you notice, he tells us why that is so, and he does this in terms of God’s great purpose in the matter of our salvation. The whole idea here expressed is that our Lord is anxious that God’s glory may be manifested, and manifested especially in the salvation of men.

As a result, in these five verses we have one of the most marvelous displays of the whole gospel of salvation and of the plan of salvation which is to be found anywhere in the Scriptures. There is

nothing which is more characteristic of the Scriptures than the way in which here and there they give us a kind of complete synopsis, or compendium, of doctrine and theology. In this prayer, in particular, our Lord opens our eyes and instructs us with regard to some of the vitals and fundamentals of our faith. And as one can well anticipate, in view of the fact that it is our Lord himself speaking and praying, there is no more glorious statement of the gospel than you find in these five verses.

Why is it, do you think, that we hear so little today about the plan of salvation, the scheme, the whole object and purpose of it? I use the phrase that was so frequently used by our fathers but which, for some reason, is so infrequently used today. Our fathers delighted in looking at and contemplating, or, if I may use the words of **Isaac Watts**, *surveying, the plan of salvation*. I have no hesitation in saying that most of our troubles as Christian people, and the whole state of the church today, is to be explained very largely by our failure to consider the plan of salvation as a whole.

The trouble with us is, as I am never tired of pointing out, that we are so utterly subjective. That is the essence of the trouble with this modern generation to which you and I belong. Now I am not talking about people outside the church, but about ourselves, who are inside the church. It may be that we have all been influenced by the climate of thought and by this morbid interest in psychology and in analyzing ourselves, but whatever it is, we have become self-centered and that is the curse of this generation.

We are always looking at ourselves, at how things affect us and at what we want for ourselves. Now there are many possible explanations for that, which need not claim our attention now, but the fact of the matter is that we are slaves to our own habits and states and desires, and to our own likes and dislikes, and the result is that we approach everything from the standpoint of what it means to *us*. And the tragic thing is that we tend to approach the gospel of Jesus Christ in that particular way, with the result that we fail to realize the truth either about ourselves or about this wonderful salvation which we have, because we particularize on points. We look solely on what the gospel has to say ‘to me’, how the gospel can ‘help me’, and we fail, therefore, to hear what the gospel has to say about us, and we fail also to realize the scope and the greatness and the vastness of the gospel itself.

The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews described the gospel as ‘so great a salvation’. My suggestion is that we seem to be missing this greatness at the present time and that this is simply because, instead of looking at it as it is, and as it is displayed here, we look at ourselves and what it has to give us. The gospel is presented purely in this personal manner and we forget the greatness which we discover when we look at God’s plan of salvation as a whole, and when we allow the gospel to put it before our wondering gaze. You will find in many of our hymns that this idea of the greatness is most forcibly and magnificently expressed.

**Charles Wesley** says, ‘Tis mercy all, immense and free,’ and yet so often the impression is given that the gospel is something subjective and small, something which just does this or that. Thank God it does these things, too, for me, but it is not only that. If you are subjective in your approach you will often find yourself feeling unhappy, if you think of the gospel as something coming to you, or happening in your life, immediately you will be upset and you will have nothing to fall back on. The tragedy of the subjective approach is that it is essentially so selfish that eventually it fails us.

But if we take this objective approach to start with and then come on to the subjective we shall gain everything; we shall start on such a vast plan and scheme that we shall be taken up into it, and when anything goes wrong with us, we will relate it to the whole. So, to avoid that danger of the subjective, we must study the great subject which we have in these **five verses**. Not that we must study it for that reason only. It is our duty to study it and I want to impress that upon us all.

We claim that we are so busy that we have not the time to read. We know our forefathers used to read the doctrines, but we have not got the time. We want it all in a nutshell, and we want to go through the whole **Gospel of John** in one address. We want a bird’s eye view of the whole Bible, and the result is that we miss the doctrine. But here it is displayed, and because God has displayed it to us here, it is our duty to study it, in order that we may find some of the great possibilities that lie open to us. It is a tragedy that we tend to live as paupers in the spiritual realm, when God means us to be princes. But, above all, we study this in order that we may assert a confidence and a certainty and a steadfastness in our Christian lives.

Now you will find, if you analyze these **five verses**, that the main things they display to our wondering gaze are these. **First**, they show us something of the origin and the plan of salvation; **they then** direct our attention to the One by whom the plan has been carried out, **and**

**this leads** us into a consideration of the things that he has done, and **eventually shows** us the purpose and object of it all.

There it is, then, the whole purpose and plan of salvation. And now, of course, we must start with the first thing. That sounds a trite, almost ridiculous remark, and, yet, as I have been trying to show, it is essential that we should start at the beginning. Strangely enough, the Christian gospel—let me say this with reverence, lest I be misunderstood—the Christian gospel does not start even with the Lord Jesus Christ, it starts with God the Father.

The Bible starts with God the Father always, everywhere, and we must do the same, because that is the order in the blessed Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. You find that very thing emphasized and impressed here, for the statement is that salvation is entirely of God; this is the first thing we must always say when we begin to consider this question of salvation. Salvation is entirely of God, it is the gift of God: “**As You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life**” ([John 17:2 NASB](#)) —it is all there.

Let us therefore remind ourselves before we go any further that the gospel announces, at the very beginning, that man is absolutely helpless in the matter of his salvation, he can do nothing at all about it. The gospel is not a scheme or proposal to enable men to save themselves, nor is it a program which God has outlined, an example of which has been given in the person of the Son of God, telling us how we can raise ourselves and lift ourselves into heaven.

No, it starts by telling us that we cannot do it, we are all dead in trespasses and sins, we are utterly helpless, we are quite powerless, and while we were yet without strength Christ died for the ungodly. It was while man was in a state of complete bondage to sin and Satan and hell that God did something.

[\*\*Romans 5:6 \(NASB\)\*\*](#)

**“For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.”**

[\*\*Romans 5:8 \(NASB\)\*\*](#)

**“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”**

Now that is the very essence of this message. It is impressed upon us here at the beginning, indeed,

we find that our Lord goes on repeating it. The gospel is just the good news which tells us what God has done about us men, and about our salvation. I trust that no one still thinks of salvation as something that he or she has to arrive at for himself or herself. I hope nobody will think that church attendance, for instance, is going to gain them their salvation before God. That is a complete fallacy, for this message starts by saying that it is entirely and utterly of God, and salvation comes solely from Him.

“**The wages of sin is death**”—that is something that you and I have—“**but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord**” ([Romans 6:23](#)). That is how Paul says it, but our Lord says it here in the same way: “**As You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life**” ([John 17:2 NASB](#))

This [\*\*Gospel of John\*\*](#) has been saying it from the very beginning, it was the whole essence of the word to Nicodemus; you have to be *received*, then you have to be born again—it is all of God. ‘**God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son ...**’ The quotations are endless. But we must emphasize this at the very beginning. It is only as we begin to realize this that we can grasp something of the essential greatness of this salvation, that the great, almighty, eternal God should have done anything at all about it. But the message is that he has, and in the way that we are now going to consider.

It is, then, because of all that, that our Lord in his prayer here at the crucial moment, is concerned above everything else about glorifying God. “**...Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You**” ([John 17:1 NASB](#)) Now His main concern is not simply that *He* should be glorified. He is only concerned about that because of this greater thing: He is so anxious to glorify the Father that He wants the Father to glorify Him, He wants the Father to glorify Himself.

This is, of course, one of the most stupendous things we can ever contemplate. Our Lord’s one great desire throughout His life here on earth was to glorify His Father. He keeps on saying it. He has not come to do his own will, but the will of his Father who has sent Him. He speaks the Father’s words, He does the Father’s works, and His one concern is that He may never fail Him, that He may never falter in the great task that has been allotted to Him. He lives entirely and exclusively to glorify His Father. He has not come to show Himself, or to glorify Himself. ‘**He humbled himself**,’ wrote the apostle Paul and that is the whole meaning of that term,

for, in His abasing Himself, He put Himself as the Son in the Eternal Trinity, He glorified the Father; that was the whole purpose of His coming, and everything He has done was designed for that one and only supreme object—the glory of the Father, and, here, He prays for it.

But I cannot say a thing like that, of course, without deducing and adding that the whole purpose of your salvation and mine is that *we* should glorify the Father. Oh, that we might grasp this! I know that we are all guilty at this point—and I am as guilty as anybody else—of tending to think of God and the whole Christian salvation as something to solve our problems.

People come and talk to me, and it is generally put in that way: ‘What will salvation do for me?’ they ask. And the answer that is given so often in our evangelism is, **‘Believe the gospel, and it will do some marvelous things for you.’** I say, thank God that that is true, but, my dear friends, we should not put that first. The ultimate aim and object of our salvation is that we may glorify God.

The essence of sin is that we do not glorify God—let us be quite clear about this; the essence of sin does not lie in the particular acts or actions of which you and I and others may be guilty. Now that is where we go wrong. We think of sin in terms of particular sins and that is why respectable people do not think they are sinners. They utterly fail to realize that the essence of sin is not to glorify God, and anybody who does not glorify God is guilty of sin of the foulest kind.

Even though you may never have got drunk, though you may never be guilty of adultery, if you live for yourself and your own glory you are as desperate a sinner as those other people whom you regard as sinners. That was put very plainly by the prophet Daniel to King Belshazzar in [\*\*Daniel 5\*\*](#), when he pointed out to him that the essence of sin was not that he put wine in the holy cups of God and drank out of them with his wives and concubines, but that he had not humbled himself before the Lord, he had exalted himself and not given God the glory.

We can put this principle very briefly in this way. The first question in the shorter Catechism of the Westminster Confession is, **‘What is the chief end of man?’** and the answer is, **‘The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.’** So that I assert that the essence of salvation is to

bring us into the state in which we *do* glorify God. It does not matter what is happening, or what goes wrong for us, we are meant to glorify Him and live thus to His glory.

It is the object of salvation from which, therefore, I deduce this final principle, that the ultimate proof of the fact that we are Christians is that we desire to do that. The final proof of our salvation is not that we are happy whereas formerly we were unhappy. Christian Science or the cults can do that, and so can psychotherapy. These can take the miserable, and those who are worried and anxious, and can give them treatment so that they find that all their problems vanish and they are perfectly happy and contented; they have merely been able to forget their troubles and have undergone some change in their life. If that alone is the test of salvation, well then, I have nothing to say to the cults or to psychology.

But that is not the essential proof of salvation. **The essential proof is that the supreme object and ambition of the Christian’s life now is to live to the glory of God.** If we say that when a man is saved he becomes a partaker of the divine nature, that he is born again, and that Christ dwells in him, then it follows that a Christian is a man who becomes progressively more and more like the Lord Jesus Christ. And when I look at Him this is what I find: I find that He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He had great and terrible temptations pressing upon Him, but I find that in all circumstances, and in all places, He had but one great desire and that was to live to the glory of God.

Christianity is not something light and superficial that just does certain things to you, and gives you certain pleasant feelings. It is something that brings you into a relationship with God. You begin to fix your gaze on Him, and to be awed by His holiness. You approach Him with reverence and godly fear, you do not drop lightly into His presence. No, you address Him, as His Son did, as Father, holy Father, righteous Father, and over and above what may happen, and over and above your feelings of salvation, is this deep desire to live to His glory, to display it, to give yourself to it—the glory of God.

I want to take it a step further, in this way—the chief end of salvation is, as I say, that God may be glorified and that His glory may be displayed and acknowledged. The result of that is that it is the gospel of salvation that really reveals to us the *glory* of God. Our Lord puts that in the form of a petition. Here He is, just before the cross, the crucial moment is at hand. He knows something about the agony and the sweat of Gethsema-

ne, and His one desire is this: Father, enable Me to go on, give Me strength to bear, give Me all I need to do this, in order that Your great glory in this matter of salvation can be revealed and made manifest. I have come to do that, enable me to do it that your name may be glorified. That is His petition, that is His plea.

How, then, does the gospel of Jesus Christ thus manifest the glory of God in a way that nothing else does? Again, I would remind you that that is His chief purpose. Even before He is concerned about saving us, He is concerned about revealing the glory of God. Have you realized that, or have you always thought of salvation only as something that is meant to save men? It does do that, of course, but before that, it is meant to display the glory of God. It does so first of all by revealing the character of God.

The gospel of Jesus Christ displays, in a way that nothing else does, the *holiness and the righteousness* of God; the whole plan and scheme of salvation proclaims the fact that God cannot ignore sin. God cannot say, ‘Well, I will pretend I have not seen it; yes, they have sinned and gone astray and rebelled against Me, but I am a loving Father, I do not see things like that, it is all right, I will have them back.’ No, the gospel plan of salvation tells us that God—I say it with reverence—cannot do that. The holiness and the righteousness of His eternal being and character means that He cannot ignore sin. Sin is a reality, a problem (I say it again with reverence), even to God. It is something He sees and has got to deal with, and so He displays the glory of His being in His holiness and righteousness.

But thank God, He does not stop at that, for the next thing He does is to reveal His *benignity*, His *mercy* and His *compassion*. You start with sin and the holiness of God, but if you leave it at that, if that were all, there would be very little difficulty about knowing what God would have done. He would simply have blotted out man from the world. He could have done it so easily—He could have consigned all the world, and all its designs, to perdition and eternal torment, and He would have been utterly justified in doing so. But the gospel tells us that He has not done so, He has done the opposite—why? it is because of His benignity, because of His mercy, which means His pity, for us, His sorrow for us, because of His compassion.

We shall be seeing later on how our Lord displayed all this in His own personal life. How often do the evangelists tell us that He looked upon and

had compassion upon some poor suffering person? It is because He was like His Father; the glory of God’s character is thus revealed in the gospel. He does not destroy our world, but rather He does something else—and this leads me to His wisdom.

Paul was very fond of emphasizing this when he addressed the clever philosophers at Corinth and others, too. Christ, he says, is the power of God, and the wisdom of God, and nowhere is the wisdom of God so gloriously and magnificently displayed as in this Christian gospel. Let me explain this. Here is man in sin, there is God in the heavens. God must recognize this and yet because of His character He does not blot us out. He is going to do something about it because of His mercy and compassion. How is He going to do it? The answer is the plan of salvation, this way that God employed, in His amazing wisdom. He sent His Son, and the Son came through the whole miracle of the virgin birth; He took human nature unto himself and lived as a man—the wisdom:

*Oh loving wisdom of our God!  
When all was sin and shame,  
A second Adam to the fight  
And to the rescue came.*

J. H. Newman

I am simply noting these things in passing. Have you ever stood in amazement as you have contemplated the loving *wisdom* of our Lord as displayed and revealed in the plan of salvation? Oh, we must go back to these things! We must come and look at the plan, its whole conception and the carrying out of it, and behold the perfection of the plan, contemplate, dwell upon it, meditate upon it, forget everything else for a while and give ourselves to this.

But not only that, I want to emphasize the way in which the **Gospel** displays the great *love* of God. You notice I draw a distinction between the benignity, the mercy and compassion, and the love of God. I feel we must do that, for, after all, the love of God is displayed in particular in this matter of salvation, in His actual sending of the Son, His sparing Him, if I may so put it, from the courts of heaven.

My dear friends, God is no philosophical concept! God is a person and, as a person, God is, and God loves, and the essence of the life of the blessed Trinity is the love of the Father to the Son and the Spirit, and the love of the Son to the Father and the Spirit, and the love of the Spirit to the Father and the Son. We cannot conceive of that perfect unity, that perfect bliss, that absolute love, and yet it is all found in salvation. ‘**God so loved the world that he gave ...**’—yes, and I put it negative-

ly, too, as Paul puts it in writing to the Romans: ‘**He that spared not his own Son.**’

It is there, you see, the love of God, in that He sent the Son of His love, the only begotten Son, into this cruel, sinful world; allowed Him to live life in that way as a man, and allowed Him to suffer ‘such contradiction of sinners against Himself’. And He placed your sins and mine upon Him on the cross in such a way that at that moment Father and Son were separated, and the Son cried out, ‘**My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?**’ When I believe that that is possible within the Father-heart of God, then I cannot believe the doctrine of the impassivity of God. I say that God in His love suffered in His Son, and it is there I see the marvelous love of God displayed. And this great **Gospel** manifests, too, the glory of God in revealing His character in this way.

But we should see also the way in which this plan of salvation reveals the *justice* of God. God, because He is righteous and holy cannot, even in His love, do anything that is unjust. God, says Paul in [Romans 3](#), must find a way of salvation which enables Him at one and the same time to be just, and the justifier of the ungodly. If God forgave sin without still ministering His own justice, He would no longer be God.

The marvel of this plan is that God, in putting our sins on Christ and dealing with them and punishing them there, can forgive us, and still be just. He has punished sin, He has not forgotten or ignored it. What happens in salvation is not that God says, Ah, they have sinned, I ought to punish them, but after all that would be rather hard. No, He does it through the Son, in the way I have outlined, and He is just. So, the plan of salvation displays to us the glory of God’s being by showing us the justice and absolute rightness of His holy character.

And, finally, it displays to us, again in a way that nothing else does, the *power* of God. The power of God was manifested in the incarnation when He prepared a body for His Son and worked the miracle of the virgin birth—what a marvelous power! But not only that. I rather prefer to think of it like this: it is as we look at God in Christ and all that He did in Him through this plan of salvation, that we see His complete power to master everything that is opposed to Himself, everything that is opposed to the best interests of man and everything that is opposed to the best interests of this world.

For the fact is that the whole problem has arisen

in this way. One of the brightest of the angelic beings that were created by God, rebelled against God, and raised himself up against Him. That is the origin of Satan. He is a power, a person, an angel of great might. He is as great as this: that he deluded a man and conquered him, thereby making himself the god of this world, and the ‘**prince of the power of the air**’ ([Ephesians 2:2](#)). There has never been a man in this world who has been able to stand up to beat him in fight and in combat. The power of the devil is something that we seriously underestimate, for he is such a power that he does not feel ashamed to pit himself against God Himself. He verily believed he had overturned all the work of salvation when the Son of God went to the cross.

But, says Paul in [Colossians 2](#), it is there he made his greatest blunder, for by the cross God, ‘**disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him**’ ([verse 15 NASB](#)). Christ met Satan face to face in single combat and routed him; at the cross He fulfilled the promise given to man at the beginning, when Adam was told that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head—it was in the plan of salvation. Ultimately, therefore, the power of God is a great power to rout Satan and all his cohorts, and it assures us that finally he will be cast into the lake of fire and every evil will be destroyed and burnt out of existence.

We see thus, at the very beginning of this prayer, that the primary object of this great and wondrous gospel is to display the glory of God. ‘**Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You**’ ([John 17:1 NASB](#)). How much time do we spend in contemplating this glory, in looking at it? Oh, let us study it! Let us forget ourselves and our moods and states and feelings and desires, and just stand back for a moment and meditate upon it. Let us contemplate the plan and the scheme of salvation and feel ourselves lost in wonder, love and praise.

*Continued in next edition...*

## CORAM DEO (Before the face of God)

# PSALMS OF PRAYER AND PRAISE

### Psalm 2: Messianic Psalm

#### **Psalm 2:1-12 (NASB)**

<sup>1</sup> “Why are the nations in an uproar And the peoples devising a vain thing?  
<sup>2</sup> The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying,  
<sup>3</sup> “Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!”  
<sup>4</sup> He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them.  
<sup>5</sup> Then He will speak to them in His anger And terrify them in His fury, saying,  
<sup>6</sup> “But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain.”  
<sup>7</sup> “I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.'  
<sup>8</sup> ‘Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Your possession.’  
<sup>9</sup> ‘You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.’”  
<sup>10</sup> Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth.  
<sup>11</sup> Worship the LORD with reverence And rejoice with trembling.  
<sup>12</sup> Do homage [Kiss] to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!”

This psalm is the most quoted psalm in the New Testament. There are several “voices” or “speakers” in the psalm. Verses 1–2 are the author’s voice: “*Why are the nations in an uproar And the peoples devising a vain thing?*” This psalm is written by one who saw restlessness, discontent, and rebellion. This is a rebellion of the masses of the world against God.

Verse 1 mentions two groups of people

aligned against God: first, the heathen, who rage. “Heathen” to a Hebrew author is a non-Jew, that is, a Gentile. The second group is “the people.” To the Hebrew author, “people” meant Hebrews like themselves. So the author begins this psalm by asking, “**Why would anyone (Jew or Gentile) rage against God?**”

Why is the world against God and His Christ? Multitudes blindly follow godless power, wealth, and intellect represented among the kings and rulers of the earth. Rulers of all ages, from ancient Pharaohs to Hitler in Germany, have opposed God and His people. Acts 4:27–28 NASB explains this psalm’s fulfillment when the rulers of Jesus’ day opposed Him, even from birth.<sup>27</sup>

*“For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,<sup>28</sup> to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.”*

The rebels speak in verse 3. “**Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!**” Those in rebellion believe God restrains rather than frees people. Yet true freedom to live abundantly comes in obedience to God not in disobedience. Liberation is never an end in itself. True freedom comes in recognizing God’s laws as superior to any other way of life as verse 11 states: “**Worship the LORD with reverence And rejoice with trembling.**”

The author speaks again in verses 4–5, giving God’s reaction to the disobedient: He laughs. It is a laugh of derision from the Creator as the created seeks to rebel. Omnipotent God cannot be usurped. In wrath God shows His displeasure with rebellion.

God’s plan will be accomplished. It cannot be thwarted. Verse 6 is God speaking: “**But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain.**” God does not consult anyone. He is self-sufficient and all-powerful.

The Son speaks in verse 7, stating what God said to Him, “...*You are My Son; today I have begotten You.*” The Anointed of verse 2 and the Son of verse 7 can be none other than Jesus Christ. Christ is translated from the word meaning “Anointed.”

Verses 8–9 are the voice of God, speaking to the Son. These statements span both the first and second coming of Jesus. <sup>8</sup> ‘**Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Your possession.’** <sup>9</sup> ‘**You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.’”**

Those who accept Jesus as Savior are spared the rod of iron but there is a time when those who reject Jesus will face his wrath. We will be held accountable for our response to the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross. Either He dies for our sin or we die. The choice is ours.

The choice is poetically described in [verse 12](#). “*Do homage [Kiss] to the Son*” means to show homage and tribute. A kiss in eastern custom is a sign of respect. We have a choice: to experience the blessing of believing God’s Son as our Savior or to reject Jesus and experience God’s wrath. We choose life or death.

This psalm is intended to celebrate the appointment and final triumph of Messiah as King. The heathen nations are represented as foolishly opposing it. They agree among themselves to rebel. God will accomplish His purpose, scorning those adversaries who are rebellious. The decree goes forth that the anointed King is enthroned and is made heir of all things even to the uttermost parts of the earth. The psalm ends with words of counsel and admonition to earthly rulers. It exhorts them to submit to the glorious King and warns of inevitable ruin for those who resist.

Neither David nor Solomon totally fulfill the role of king about whom this psalm speaks. This psalm looks toward final fulfillment of Christ’s righteous reign. The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ (See [Revelation 11:15](#)).

#### [Revelation 11:15 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>15</sup>“Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.”

**Study Procedure:** Read the Scripture references before answering questions. Unless otherwise instructed, use the Bible only in answering questions. Some questions may be more difficult than others but try to answer as many as you can. Pray for God’s wisdom and understanding as you study and don’t be discouraged if some answers are not obvious at first. Do not read study notes for this lesson until AFTER you have completed your questions.

**Review:** What do you understand more thoroughly after last week’s lesson?

#### **FIRST DAY: Read [Psalm 7](#)**

1. How do [verses 3–5](#) appear to be the cry of an innocent person?
2. Read [Genesis 18:25](#)b. In [verses 6–13](#), give phrases that show “*the Judge of all the earth*” will do right.
3. What do [verses 14–16](#) teach? Can you give any examples?

#### **SECOND DAY: Read [Psalm 8](#)**

4. (a) What examples does the psalmist use to show God’s name is excellent?  
(b) What is man’s role in God’s grand scheme?
5. Read [Matthew 21:8–11; 15–16](#). Who is worthy of praise?
6. Read [1 Corinthians 15:20–28](#). Who could [Psalm 8:6](#) refer to? In what way?
7. Read [Hebrews 2:5–9](#). From this reference, how was Jesus crowned with glory and honor?

#### **THIRD DAY: Read [Psalm 9](#)**

8. (a) List the four phrases beginning “**I will**” in [verses 1–2](#) (Scripture does not say “when I feel like it”).  
(b) Discuss the difference between “**a matter of the will**” versus “**a matter of feelings**” in dealing with life’s situations.
9. (a) What does the psalmist remember about the past in [verses 3–6](#)?  
(b) Of what is the psalmist sure for the future in [verses 7–10](#)?
10. Read [Romans 12:19](#). What does the Romans reference teach about getting revenge? Give verses from [Psalm 9](#) to support your answer.

#### **FOURTH DAY: Read [Psalm 10](#)**

11. What is the psalmist’s emotion in [verse one](#)? Describe a time you felt like this.
12. Using today’s vocabulary, rewrite some phrases from [verses 2–10](#).
13. Despite “feelings” to the contrary, what do [verses 14–18](#) emphatically declare to be true? Describe a time

you experienced this truth.

## FIFTH DAY: Read [Psalm 11](#)

14. (a) What is the psalmist's bold statement in the face of trouble?

(b) What are others advising him to do?

15. In answer to the question of [verse 3](#) where does the psalmist look?

16. (a) What does God hate?

(b) What does God love?

(c) Using [Romans 3:23](#) and [Romans 6:23](#), tell what this means to you.

## SIXTH DAY: Read [Psalm 12](#)

17. (a) Read [1 Kings 19:9–14](#). What phrase from this psalm echoes Elijah's statement?

(b) Have you ever had an “Elijah complex?” Describe it.

18. The psalmist is honest with God. What is his complaint?

19. (a) Do you lie about others? Would you want everyone to hear what you say about them?

(b) Who can tame the tongue? Read [James 3:5–10](#).

20. (a) In contrast to man's words, what are God's words like?

(b) Upon whose words do you rely most, man's or God's?

21. Give some examples of the truth in [verse 8](#). Read [Isaiah 5:20](#).



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# 1 John 1 - Overview

## Part 1

In this study we will begin the overview of [1 John 1](#). Once again, it is critical that we understand that one of the overriding elements of the entire [1 John](#) letter is that John is dealing with false teachers who have consistently undermined the deity of Christ. The majority of the false teachers are known as “Gnostics” and the primary false and destructive teaching that they have infused into the church deals with their denial of the Incarnation when God the Son became the God-Man forever. We have studied the Incarnation on many occasions and certainly we realize that without the virgin birth there is no Christianity. Christ was not a “phantom” Christ, or just an apparition or ghost as the Gnostics taught. In fact, that is why John is so emphatic in the first four verses – “we have heard, we have seen with our eyes, we have looked upon, our hands have handled” (v1). The disciples did not spend three years of their life with a ghost or a spirit apparition / phantom. So, I think that we can successfully surmise that any teacher that undermines either the person of Christ or the work of Christ is to be identified as a false teacher and is to be opposed by the believer and the church. The entire letter of [1 John](#) will constantly be dealing with the various attributes that this false doctrine of Gnosticism has infused within the church. The unfortunate part is that at the time of John writing this letter, the false teaching had already been

embraced by a segment of the early church to which John is writing. In fact, in [1 John 2:19](#) John indicates that a number had actually left the church to follow the false teachers. One of the fallouts of their false teaching is that they had developed a doctrinal stance that said that it was okay for a person to live in sin without it violating or affecting their personal fellowship with God. I.e., their doctrine provided them a spiritual license to sin. So, it should be clear and obvious as to the problems that John was addressing with these false teachers.

Now, with that as our backdrop, we want to do an overview of [1 John 1](#), and in beginning I want us to discern to whom the little pronoun “we” is referring. We are going to have to drill through some grammatical rock here in order to get to the right understanding of this chapter. The word “we” is used 20 times and in every verse of [1 John 1](#). In parts of [1 John 2](#), John switches and uses the pronoun “he” (v4,6,9), and the reason is because John is creating a contrast between two kinds of individuals – the “we” and the “he”. In reality, it is this ongoing contrast that sets the stage for the entire letter in identifying those who are true teachers / believers vs. those who are false teachers / believers. When John uses the pronoun “we”, generally he is clearly identifying what we would call true believers. For instance, in [1 John 1:1-4](#) it is clear that John is **NOT** talking about false believers when he uses the word “we”.

**<sup>1Jn 1:1</sup>That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life-- <sup>2</sup>the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us-- <sup>3</sup>that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.**

However, when he gets to [1 John 1:5-10](#), there is a nuance in the Greek language that we have to be very careful with, and one that the casual reader may not readily identify. In some cases, John is clearly talking about believers – such as [1 John 1:9](#) which says,

**<sup>1Jn 1:9</sup>If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Obviously, that is not something that can take place in the life of an unbeliever. What makes the use of the word “we” in the other verses a little more difficult to understand comes when John uses the phrase “*if we say*” in v6, 8, and 10. That phrase is what is called a “deliberative subjunctive”. The subjunctive mood is the mood of possibility. What that means is that John is proposing something that is hypothetical. It would be similar to us saying, “*If we say that we are going to go to the beach, then we need to start making some plans for the trip.*” I.e., we have not yet gone to the beach and we may not go to the beach. It is just a supposition that we might go, not an established fact that we have gone. So, what John is doing by using the subjunctive verb tense in those three verses is presenting a hypothetical person who says three things. They say that they are having fellowship with God (v6), that they have no sin (8), and that they have not sinned (10). However, the point that John is actually making is that this hypothetical person claims to have things in common with God, have common likes and dislikes, and have a common nature as God, but their life does not reflect what they claim to have. I.e., in v6 he says that they “**walk in darkness**”, in v8 “**the truth is not in them**”, and in v10 they “**make God a liar because His word is not in them**”. To make John’s point even stronger, the verb tense for “**walk in darkness**” is in the present subjunctive active tense which simply means that the individual is walking in darkness habitually and continually as a pattern of their life. That statement, and the doctrine that will be developed in [1 John 3](#), clearly indicate that this kind of individual is not saved. This is not just an isolated bad day or a bad moment that someone is having, but this is in the present tense which means that this is happening all the time. Now listen carefully, all of this is gleaned from the verb tenses and verb moods that John is using here. The individual that John is addressing here is someone who says one thing, but he is walking and ordering his life and his behavior in the sphere of darkness, or sin.

At this point in John’s letter, because of the subjunctive mood of the verb, it is still only a hypothetical situation – not necessarily a reality. So, what John is doing here is developing what I call an “obvious argument” that comes to an “obvious conclusion”. That is his method of teaching – identifying the obvious and bringing attention to it. In essence he is clearly pointing to the false teachers. Now, what John has said in v6, 8, and 10 is exactly what the false teachers were teaching. They were teaching that a believer can live in sin and still be

right with God. That was a very fundamental theological error that they were claiming and contending for. That may be a very convenient doctrine for someone to teach, but it certainly is not biblical. Just because someone says the right thing does not mean that they are doing the right thing – and that was John’s obvious point.

So, sandwiched in between each of those three hypothetical assumptions, John gives two other subjunctive verbs in v7 and v9. Please appreciate that these two hypothetical situations are contrasts with the three verses that start with “**if we say**”. He says in v7, “**But if we walk in the light...**” Once again, this is a hypothetical situation, but in this case it is pointing to the true believer, to the true teacher. The other three verses were hypothetically negative, but these two verses are hypothetically positive. The same is true in v9 when he says, “**If we confess our sins...**” then we receive God’s forgiveness and cleansing.

As he continues his argument that leads to an obvious conclusion, **1 John 2:1** and **1 John 2:3** seem to clearly indicate that he is referencing believers.

**1Jn 2:1** **My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.**

In that verse, the “we” is clearly referring to both John and his “**little children**”. **1 John 2:3** says,

**1Jn 2:3** **Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.**

The “**we know**” is in the indicative mood which is a statement of fact. However, the word “**if**” is still a subordinating conjunction indicating possibility and not reality. I.e., the way that a believer knows that he knows God personally and intimately is that he simply is obedient to the Word of God. This is not perfection, but direction. Right now, today, you should be able to honestly testify in your life that you are not consistently and habitually living in known sin against the Word of God. Will we fail? Yes! Will we sin at times? Yes! However, it is not the habit of our life – and we should take comfort in that very simple fact.

In the flow of what John is teaching, **1 John 2:3** is John’s concluding statement before he changes the pronoun to “**he**” in **1 John 2:4,6, and 9**. The point in all of this is that John is creating a significant con-

trast and distinction. He is saying something about true believers and something about false believers. Everything here is a contrast – and that is how he is going to argue all the way through **1 John**. By creating the contrast, John is clearly referencing those that are not true believers and in this case those who are false teachers. John wants his audience to fully appreciate that the differences and distinctions between true believers and false believers, between true teachers and false teachers, and between truth and error is very detectable, recognizable, and distinguishable. There is always underlying evidence as to what is not of God and what is of God – and John does not want us to be confused about it in any way whatsoever. So, he creates this very strong “contrast” to help us identify that which is of God and that which is not of God, and that which is true and that which is false.

Now, I believe that it is important at this point to address an issue that from my perspective as a teacher simply needs to be clarified. There are many Christians who hold some form of false doctrine in their belief system, but that does not mean that they are not true believers. For instance, many of the Pentecostal and Holiness denominations believe that a believer can lose their salvation. Obviously that is very unfortunate for them, but it does not mean that they are not saved. They very much believe in the person of Christ and in the work of Christ on their part, but for the majority of their life they have been taught this very false doctrine related to eternal security, or the lack thereof. The Church of Christ teaches that the individual who receives Christ must be baptized before they can “officially” be saved. All of that is based on one or two verses in Scripture that have been mistaught and misunderstood. Obviously, that is a gross theological error, but I believe that there are many in that denomination who are just as saved as we are, and we should treat them with both spiritual dignity and respect. If I was personally engaged in a conversation with one of them, I would not be attacking their personal salvation, but simply addressing what was a false teaching in their denomination. Southern Baptists, of which I am a part, have certainly had bad theology in various areas – but that does not mean that the individuals were not saved. The reason that I mention all of this is because the real focus should not so much be on individual believers, but on those who fabricate and press false doctrine on others – i.e., the false teachers. They are the focus here – not those who have a genuine and sincere love for Christ in spite of certain false doctrines that they have been taught all of their life.

When my wife and I were at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, there was an incredibly nice couple who lived above us in our first apartment. They attended the

Church of Christ and invited us to attend their church one Wednesday evening – which we did. At that point in my Christian life, I had no idea what the Church of Christ believed. However, I have no doubt that both the husband and the wife were saved, but they still adhered to this doctrine of “baptism” as being a must for salvation. They had grown up under that teaching all of their life and it was a deeply embedded part of their Christian moorings, but in my mind they were very saved. Now, all of this is an important distinction for us to keep in mind as we migrate through [1 John](#). John’s complaint and protest is with the false teachers. They are the villains and the spiritual outlaws in this letter. They are the ones misleading and misguiding. They are the ones who are both formulating and articulating false doctrine, and in the process misleading many into their false doctrine.

*Continued in next edition...*

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