

The Gospel of John

The Gospel of John

Lesson #3
The Journey
Jim Hoffman

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Thought to Ponder

“In his earthly ministry people who were nothing like Jesus, liked Jesus, and Jesus liked people who were nothing like him.”

Unknown

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Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but **these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.**

John 20:30-31

3

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- John 1:1 and John 1:14 combine to deliver one of the most profound truths in all of history - that God would become a man.
- **John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**
- **John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

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4

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- The necessity of God himself visiting earth to redeem his people is only clear to us in the light of New Testament teaching.
- We almost take for granted the incarnation of Jesus as though we actually knew what had to be done, **“of course that was the only way to save mankind”.**
- But in real time no one on earth would have imagined the **“incarnation”** and **“substitutionary atonement”**.

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5

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- **Substitutionary Atonement** – “According to the Scriptures, sin must be paid for. When Jesus Christ died, he suffered as a substitute in the place of and on behalf of fallen humanity. Christ's death made it possible for men and women to be declared righteous, based on their faith in Him. Christ's death was not merely a statement against evil or an expression of love, but **a payment that satisfied God's demand.**” Moody Bible Institute

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6

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- Mankind would never have come up with a redemption plan like God's that was perfect and complete in every way.
- All of man's puny efforts to appease God have been based in a system that always fails, works.
- The proof of this is that in the 4,000 years leading up to the cross, not once did anyone suggest that God should die for man's sins.

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7

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- OT hint - Genesis 22:8 Abraham said, **"God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son."**
- The OT burnt offering demonstrated the payment for sin required more than a half-hearted position.
- The entire animal, except for its skin was consumed – the aroma of the burning animal ascended, as it were, to God for his pleasure.

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8

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- Heb 10:4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. 5 "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; 6 in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure".
- Not only were the OT sacrifices ineffective for salvation, but neither did they please God.

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- Since the blood of animals cannot atone for sin, and since atonement required an innocent substitute, the normal process of elimination leaves mankind with no hope.
- Animals won't do, and there are no innocent people.
- What if God would create another Adam to pay mankind's sin debt – AND the new Adam would be willing to die for the sins of others?

10

10

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- But didn't God command and require the sacrifices in the Levitical system? Yes, but the purpose was bigger than animal sacrifice.
- What Adam and Eve destroyed in a moment would require 4,000 years to fully remedy.
- Apparently, it takes four millennia to fully execute a plan **as radical and as perfect** as the cross.

11

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All the sacrifices of innocent little lambs in the Old Testament period were to demonstrate what we concisely refer to as "the Gospel" – that God will accept an innocent substitute for the sinner!

12

12

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- Why did it take so long to teach such a simple message?
- Because it is everything sinners are not – it is loving, sacrificial, and totally counterintuitive.
- Who would even consider sacrificing their own Son for those who are his enemies?

13

13

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• Romans 5:6 For while we were still weak, **at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.** 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in that **while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** 9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. 10 For if **while we were enemies we were reconciled to God** by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

14

14

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Gal 4:3 In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. 4 **But when the fullness of time had come,** God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, **so that we might receive adoption as sons.** 6 And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" 7 **So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.**

15

15

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• **Adoption** - We have been brought into God's family and made God's children. From God we have received "the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba! Father'". As far as our status is concerned, we are no longer "strangers and aliens" to the people of God but "members of the household of God". (Tabletalk Magazine)

16

16

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- One of God's purposes in adoption is to enlarge his family from three to many – not that we become little gods, but little Jesus'.
- Do not take this analogy too far – mankind will never become deity, but it is God's purpose that we become just like his human son, Jesus.
- **Rom 8:29** For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

17

17

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It is one thing for human parents to decide to adopt someone who will fit into the family and enhance it; God, however, purposes to adopt those who are the very opposite of Himself.

(humans never adopt their own, God only adopts his own)

18

18

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- Again, this week we see that we are heirs of God – when was the last time you heard a sermon or sat in a class on your inheritance?
- How can something of such magnitude be so ignored?
- And where are the “prosperity” preachers when we need them?

19

19

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Exactly what our inheritance is, is not well documented, but is spoken of as though it is totally obvious and needs no explanation.

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20

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Hebrews 1:2 But in these last days **he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things**, through whom also he created the world.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that **we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ**, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

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21

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Our adoption involves an inheritance. In line with the current legal provisions of Paul's day that enabled even a slave, once adopted, to inherit his master's possessions, Paul teaches that the Christian follows a similar course: a slave (to sin), a child, then an heir. How unexpected and how breathtaking is the gracious provision of God! The marvel increases with the news that we are co-heirs with Christ.

(The Expositor's Commentary)

22

22

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- We belong to God and everything God owns belongs to us. (wait, what?)
- It may not appear at this time that you are rich beyond imagination, **but you are!**
- Like all spiritual promises it's all about the timing – you don't look today like you will live forever in a healthy body, **but you will!**

23

23

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• 1st Cor 2:7 But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. 8 None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But, as it is written, "**What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him**" – 10 these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. 11 For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12 **Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.**

24

24

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• Matt 6:19 “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 **but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven**, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For **where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**”

• Col 3:1 If then you have been raised with Christ, **seek the things that are above**, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 **Set your minds on things that are above**, not on things that are on earth.

25

25

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• Ephesians 1:13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, **were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance** until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

• If the Holy Spirit is the down payment on our inheritance, then how great is our inheritance!

26

26

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Matthew 25:34

Then the King will say to those on his right, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father, **inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world**”.

27

27

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Heirs are usually members of the same family.



Heirs of God
and joint heirs
with Christ

Romans 8:17
Knowing-Jesus.com

28

28

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- Hebrews 2:10 For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. 11 For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. **That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers,** 12 saying, **“I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.”**

29

29

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Jesus is not ashamed to call us, **“brothers”** – we are equal participants in the household of God!

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- Matthew 12:50 For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven **is my brother and sister and mother.**
- Romans 8:29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order **that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.**

31

31

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- All of the preceding verses point to, dare I say it, our equality with Jesus in the family of God.
- Hebrews 1:2 But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, **whom he appointed the heir of all things**, through whom also he created the world.
- We ARE joint heirs with Jesus and everything that is his, is ours.

32

32

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Words mean things and “everything” means exactly that – we just have trouble taking it in because we consider who we are and recoil from such a staggering truth.

33

33

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- Exactly what our inheritance is, is not well documented, but is spoken of as though it is totally obvious and needs no explanation.
- We can say a few things in broad strokes that will have to satisfy our curiosity for now.
- We can say with certainty **we will inherit eternal life in an eternal kingdom** plus the results of this equation – “**what did you do with what you were given**”?

34

34

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- 1st Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you,** **5** who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

35

35

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Perhaps if we knew all that is ours in eternity we would be overwhelmed – perhaps we would be like Isaiah and John who were completely undone by the truth in front of them. So, we can either ignore our status as joint heir with Jesus with some false humility, or we can embrace it despite the fact we really can't fathom its full meaning.

36

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37
