

The Gospel of John- Chapter 3

1. There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

A. There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus,

1. **man-** Gr. **anthropos**

2. **Pharisees-** means *separated ones*

a. *The Pharisees were the most numerous and wealthy sect of the Jews. They derived their name from the Hebrew word Pharash, which signifies to set apart, or to separate, because they separated themselves from the rest of their countrymen, and professedly devoted themselves to special strictness in religion. Their leading tenets were the following: that the world was governed by fate, or by a fixed decree of God; that the souls of men were immortal, and were either eternally happy or miserable beyond the grave; that the dead would be raised; that there were angels, good and bad; that God was under obligation to bestow special favor on the Jews; and that they were justified by their own conformity to the law. They were proud, haughty, self-righteous, and held the common people in great disrespect, [Joh 7:49](#). They sought the offices of the state, and affected great dignity. They were ostentatious in their religious worship, praying in the corners of the streets, and seeking publicity in the bestowment of alms. They sought principally external cleanliness, and dealt much in ceremonial ablutions and washing. -Barnes Commentary*

3. **Nicodemus-** Gr. means *ruler of the people*

a. *Three words come to mind in describing Nicodemus: religious, rich, and ruler. As a Pharisee, Nicodemus was extremely religious. We know this because the entire Pharisaical brotherhood, numbering six thousand, was dedicated to keeping the most minute regulations of the Old Testament law, as delineated by their fellow brotherhood, the scribes. It was the scribes' job to interpret the law and the Pharisees' job to implement it. As for riches, we know Nicodemus was wealthy because in John 19, we read it was he who brought costly myrrh and aloes to the tomb of Jesus.*

Thus, it is not surprising to read that Jewish tradition names him as one of the three wealthiest men in the nation of Israel. -Clarke Commentary

- b. Usually the rich do not seek after God, but Nicodemus was hungry to know the true God.
- c. We see Nicodemus attempt to defend Jesus in [John 7:50-51](#) when the other religious leaders were speaking evil of Him.

B. a ruler of the Jews

1. ruler- Gr. arche

- a. He was one of the “Sanhedrin,” or great council of the nation.

2. Jews

2. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

A. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him,

1. man- Gr. houtos- *this one*

2. night- Gr. nux

- a. The Holy Spirit leads John to record specifically that he came at night. This was significant. Undoubtedly, it was so that he would not be seen by anyone, especially fellow Pharisees!
- b. Jesus did not rebuke Nicodemus about his fear and that he came at night. Jesus meets us where we are.

3. said- Gr. epo

B. Rabbi- Gr. rhabbi- *my master or teacher*

1. *This was a title of respect conferred on distinguished Jewish teachers, somewhat in the way that the title “Doctor of Divinity” is now conferred. -Barnes Commentary*

- 2. At this point, Nicodemus only regarded Jesus as a teacher and nothing else.

C. we know that you are a teacher come from God

1. know- Gr. eido- *to know by perception*

- a. This implies other Pharisees acknowledged Jesus coming from God, but where were they? They were hiding out in fear. [John 7:12-13](#), [Joh 12:42-43](#) Nicodemus dared come to Jesus, albeit at night.

2. **teacher-** Gr. **didaskalos**

a. Jesus was much more than a teacher. He was the Son of God.

3. **come-** Gr. **erchomai**

4. **from God-** Gr. **apo theos**

a. Nicodemus saw Jesus coming from God, teaching us, instead of God coming to us teaching.

D. **for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him**

1. **do-** Gr. **poieo**

2. **signs-** Gr. **semeion**

a. The Jews looked for signs from those who were sent by God to them. This began with Moses onward.

3. **Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."**

A. **Jesus answered and said to him,**

1. **answered-** Gr. **apokrinomai**

2. **said-** Gr. **epo**

B. **Most assuredly-** Gr. **amen amen**

1. Again, only in John does Jesus use the double "**amen amen**" in making statements. In the other three gospels, Jesus uses the singular word **amen**. This is because in the gospel of John Jesus is seen as God. His word holds more weight than just a mere man.

C. **I say to you,**

1. **say-** Gr. **lego**

a. Jesus did not waste any time with small talk. He did not say, "How are you Nicodemus? How are your parents doing?" No, Jesus went straight to the heart of the matter, which was the heart of Nicodemus.

D. **unless one is born again,**

1. **born again-** Gr. **gennao anothen-** *born from above, anew, over again*

a. Salvation is not just being forgiven of our sins but a regeneration of our spirit. We are re-gened!
We are re-gene-rated! At salvation "baby got new genes!"

[Titus 3:5](#)

b. I have heard people use the phrase- "born again Christian".

This is saying the same thing twice! There is no other kind of Christian than one who is born again. If you are a true Christian that means you are born again in your spirit.

- c. In salvation it is our spirit that is reborn, not our soul and not our body. [Jas 1:18](#), [1Pe 1:3](#); [1Pe 1:23](#), [1Jn 3:9](#); [1Jn 5:1](#); [1Jn 5:18](#).

E. he cannot see the kingdom of God

1. **see-** Gr. **eido-** *see by perception or know*

a. This is seeing the unseen spiritual realm.

2. **kingdom-** Gr. **basileia**

a. The Jews of Jesus's day knew that the kingdom of God was near. Nicodemus no doubt had come to Jesus wanting to know about the coming of God's kingdom.

b. The kingdom of God right now is unseen. [Luke 17:20](#) We can only detect the spiritual realm through and by our spirit. However, without the new birth the human spirit is dead and cannot discern the spiritual things of God. [1 Cor. 2:14](#) We must be born again in our spirit in order to discern [see or know] the spiritual things of God. [1 Cor. 2:12](#)

4. Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

A. Nicodemus said to Him,

1. **said-** Gr. **lego**

B. How can a man be born when he is old?

1. **man-** Gr. **anthropos**

2. **born-** Gr. **gennao**

3. **old-** Gr. **geron**

a. An old person cannot be born again physically but thank God an old person can be born again spiritually! As long as your heart is still beating you have a chance to believe in Jesus and be born again.

C. Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?

1. **enter-** Gr. **eiserchomai**

2. **second time-** Gr. **deuteros**

a. Mothers everywhere are so thankful this is not possible!

3. **mother's-** Gr. **meter**

4. **womb-** Gr. **koilia**

- a. Nicodemus was just thinking naturally. He did not realize Jesus was speaking of his spirit needing a rebirth. The natural man does not understand spiritual things. [1Co 2:14](#)

5. **born-** Gr. **gennao**

5. **Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.**

A. **Jesus answered,**

1. **answered-** Gr. **apokrinomai**

B. **Most assuredly-** Gr. **amen amen**

1. Another instance of the double amen which is unique to the Gospel of John. The other gospels use only a single amen.

C. **I say to you,**

1. **say-** Gr. **lego**

D. **unless one is born of water and the Spirit,**

1. **born-** Gr. **gennao**

2. **water-** Gr. **hudor**

- a. This is speaking of one's natural birth, in which they are born of the water in the womb. This is the environment in which a natural baby is being birthed.
- b. This is not speaking of water baptism. Water baptism does not give new birth. It is an outward demonstration that one has died to the old man and is actually a new man.
- c. *Water baptism symbolizes death, not birth.* -Wiersbe

3. **Spirit-** Gr. **pneuma**

- a. This is speaking of one's spiritual birth in which they are born of the Spirit. This is the environment of the believer being reborn.
- b. In natural birth you have the sperm and egg as agents. In the new birth, the two agents are the Word of God and the Spirit of God.

E. **he cannot enter the kingdom of God**

1. **enter-** Gr. **eiserchomai**

- a. You only enter the kingdom of God by new birth, never by your meritorious works.

2. **kingdom-** Gr. **basileia**

- a. The new birth is an absolute requirement for someone to enter the kingdom of God.

6. **That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.**

A. **That which is born of the flesh is flesh,**

- 1. **born-** Gr. **gennao**
- 2. **flesh-** Gr. **sarx-** *denotes mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence, and therefore prone to sin and opposed to God*
 - a. This speaks of the natural birth coming from the seed of a natural father.

B. **and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit**

- 1. **born-** Gr. **gennao**
- 2. **spirit-** Gr. **pneuma**
 - a. God is a Spirit and He is the Father of spirits.
 - b. This speaks of the spiritual birth that comes from the Heavenly Father.

7. **Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'**

A. **Do not marvel that I said to you,**

- 1. **marvel-** Gr. **thaumazo-** *to be amazed*
- 2. **said-** Gr. **epo**

B. **You must be born again**

- 1. **must-** Gr. **dei**
 - a. This is not an option. One **must** be born again to enter the kingdom of God.
- 2. **born again-** Gr. **gennao anothen-** *born from above or again*
 - a. This is a spiritual birth, not a natural one.

8. **The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."**

A. **The wind blows where it wishes,**

- 1. **wind-** Gr. **pneuma**
 - a. *Perhaps at this moment in the evening a soft wind rustled the leaves outside the house or in the garden where they*

were talking. Jesus used the illustration of the **wind** to depict the effect of the Spirit in the person **born of the Spirit**. In Greek the same word (*pneuma*) can have several meanings: "Spirit," "wind," and "breath." God's Spirit, like the wind, has free movement and, like reviving breath, has power. Jesus used this illustration to show that the reality of the Spirit living in a person is evidenced by the effect of the Spirit on that person's life. People can control neither the wind nor the movement of God's Spirit. The image Jesus used describes the wonderful experience we can have of realizing that God actually moves in and through us by his Spirit. Just as we do not know the origin or the destination of the wind, we do not know or control the Spirit. What we do know are the effects of the wind and of the Spirit. Life in the Spirit is as radical and unexpected as being born of the Spirit.

-Life Application Commentary

2. **blows**- Gr. **pneo**

3. **wishes**- Gr. **thelo**

a. The manifestations of the Spirit are given as He wills, not as we will. [1 Cor. 12:11](#)

B. and you hear the sound of it,

1. **hear**- Gr. **akouo**

2. **sound**- Gr. **phone**

C. but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes

1. **tell**- Gr. **eido**- *to know by perception*

a. The Holy Spirit is invisible, just like the wind is invisible. We do not see the wind coming or going, but only the effects of it when it is present. This is the same with the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

2. **comes**- Gr. **erchomai**

3. **goes**- Gr. **hupago**

D. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit

1. **born**- Gr. **gennao**

2. **Spirit**- Gr. **pneuma**

a. A born-again believer is an enigma to an unbeliever. They see the difference in a believer but do not know from what source or by what means he is different or why they act the

way they do. That is why we must share the gospel with them so they know why we are different. The Spirit of Christ lives in us because of the new birth.

9. Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?"

A. Nicodemus answered and said to Him,

1. **answered-** Gr. **apokrinomai**
2. **said-** Gr. **epo**

B. How can these things be?

1. **can-** Gr. **dunamai**

- a. Nicodemus was not questioning the reality of what Jesus was saying. He was merely questioning how it could happen since it would clearly be a miracle and not something naturally occurring. This is the same thing Mary did when Gabriel said that she would conceive and give birth to a son without knowing a man. She asked how this would be since I had not known a man. She did not question how it could happen, but how it would happen.

10. Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?"

A. Jesus answered and said to him,

1. **answered-** Gr. **apokrinomai**

B. Are you a teacher of Israel,

1. **a teacher-** Gr. **ho didaskalos-** *the teacher*

- a. *The use of the definite article "the" indicates that Nicodemus was a renowned master-teacher in the nation of Israel, an established religious authority par excellence. He enjoyed a high standing among the rabbis or teachers of his day.*

-MacArthur Commentary

2. **Israel**

- a. The oracles of God were committed to Israel. As a teacher of these oracles, Nicodemus should have been acquainted with the notion of the new birth and God giving man a new heart and spirit.

C. and do not know these things?

1. **know-** Gr. **ginosko-** *to become familiar with*

- a. *As a teacher [of the Old Testament] he ought to have understood this doctrine. It was not new, for it was clearly taught in the Old Testament. [Psa 51:10](#), [Eze 11:19](#); [Eze 36:26](#). -Barnes Commentary*
- b. Religious people are blinded to the need for the new birth, or receiving a new heart and spirit. They think they are good and just need a little perfecting which they can accomplish and achieve themselves through their good works and efforts.

11. Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness.

A. Most assuredly- Gr. **amen amen**

B. I say to you,

1. **say-** Gr. **epo**

C. We speak what we know and testify what we have seen,

1. **speak-** Gr. **laleo**

2. **we know-** Gr. **eido**

- a. *After the use of the singular number in [Joh 3:3](#), [Joh 3:5](#), [Joh 3:7](#), [Joh 3:12](#), the plural here is noteworthy. It is not merely rhetorical - "a plural of majesty" - but is explained by [Joh 3:8](#), "every one that is born of the Spirit." The new birth imparts a new vision. This we therefore includes, with Jesus, all who are truly born anew of the Spirit. Jesus meets the "we know" of Nicodemus ([Joh 3:2](#)), referring to the class to which he belonged, with another "we know", referring to another class, of which He was the head and representative.*
-Vincent Word Studies

3. **testify-** Gr. **martureo**

4. **seen-** Gr. **horao**

- a. A witness shares what they have seen and heard.

D. and you do not receive our witness

1. **receive-** Gr. **lambano**

2. **witness-** Gr. **marturia**

- a. As believers we are to share what we have seen and heard personally about Jesus. No one can argue your testimony!

12. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

A. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe,

1. **told-** Gr. **epo**

2. **earthly things-** Gr. **epigeios-** *upon or in the earth*

a. *Things that happen here on earth such as the wind, can be “sensed”—that is, felt and heard. Jesus has spoken in an “earthly” analogy, and if Nicodemus could not believe that, how could he possibly believe if Jesus were to tell him what is going on in heaven? -Life Application Commentary*

3. **believe-** Gr. **pisteuo**

B. how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

1. **believe-** Gr. **pisteuo**

2. **tell-** Gr. **epo**

3. **heavenly things-** Gr. **epouranios-** *upon or in heaven*

a. *Things pertaining to the government of God and his doings in the heavens; things which are removed from human view, and which cannot be subjected to human sight. -Barnes*

b. As Jeremiah says, "If running with the footmen has wearied you, how will you run with the horses". [Jer. 12:5](#)

c. At this point, Nicodemus had a choice: to either humble himself and learn or be offended by what Jesus was saying. This might have been a test Jesus was giving him. We do not know what Nicodemus' reaction was immediately after this. We know he was a believer later on.

13. No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.

A. No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven,

1. **ascended-** Gr. **anabaino**

a. This means to go up of their own accord or by their own power. Elijah was caught up into heaven in the Old Testament as were Paul and John in the NT. They were taken up by the will of God and by His power.

2. **heaven-** Gr. **ouranos**

3. **came down-** Gr. **katabaino**

a. No man has come down from heaven to represent God to man, except Jesus Christ.

4. **heaven-** Gr. **ouranos**

B. **that is,**

C. **the Son of Man who is in heaven**

1. **Son-** Gr. **huios**

2. **Man-** Gr. **anthropos**

a. Jesus used this term for Himself 84 times!

b. Notice that this Son of Man, which is a title of His humanity, had His origin in heaven, which speaks of His Deity! Jesus was 100% man but also 100% God in one person. He is unique.. [1 Cor. 15:47](#)

c. Notice that Jesus said, the Son of Man who is in heaven. Jesus ascended into heaven as a man and sat down at the right hand of God. There is a glorified man at the right hand of God right now!

3. **heaven-** Gr. **ouranos**

14. **And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,**

A. **And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,**

1. **Moses-** means *drawn out*

2. **lifted up-** Gr. **hupsoo**

3. **serpent-** Gr. **ophis**

a. The serpent speaks of the curse. God cursed the serpent in Genesis.

b. The serpent was made of brass. Brass in the Bible stands for judgment.

c. This together speaks of the judgment due because of the curse of sin.

4. **wilderness-** Gr. **eremos**

a. *The Son of Man came from heaven and became flesh in order to die—but his death would have special importance. That significance had been “taught” by God throughout the experiences of his chosen people. To illustrate this, Jesus compared his coming death to a story well known to Nicodemus, for it came from Jewish history. According to*

Num 21:6-9, while the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness, God sent a plague of snakes to punish the people for their rebellious attitudes. But God also gave the remedy for the poisonous snakebites—he told Moses to erect a **pole** upon which he was to attach a **bronze snake**. Those bitten by the poisonous snakes could be healed by obeying God's command to look up at the elevated bronze snake and by believing that God would heal them. Their healing came when they looked upon this lifted-up, bronze snake.

-Life Application Commentary

B. even so must the Son of Man be lifted up

1. **Son-** Gr. **huios**

2. **Man-** Gr. **anthropos**

3. **lifted up-** Gr. **hupsoo**

a. Jesus used this incident to picture His coming salvation work on the cross. To be **lifted up** in Jesus' time—according to the usage in John (see Joh 8:28; Joh 12:32-34)—was a euphemism for death on the cross (the victim was literally lifted up above the earth); it also spoke of his subsequent glorification. In Num 21:6-9, the perishing Israelites looked upon the lifted-up snake and lived. Similarly, salvation happens when we look up to Jesus, believing He will save us. God has provided this way for us to be healed of sin's deadly bite. The Israelites were spared their lives; the believer in Jesus is spared eternal destruction and given **eternal life**.

-Life Application Commentary

b. Jesus became sin on the cross. 2 Cor. 5:21

c. Jesus became a curse on the cross to deliver us from the curse. Gal. 3:13

15. that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

A. believes- Gr. **pisteuo**

1. Jesus said those who believed in Him would not perish. Today we have universalists saying that you do not have to believe in Jesus because He will cause all men to not perish. They actually pervert the words of Jesus and the gospel.

B. **perish**- Gr. **apollumi**- *to destroy utterly; perish, to be put to death, to be lost*

C. **eternal life**- Gr. **aiionios zoe**

1. This is repeated in the next verse which is the most famous verse in the Bible. [John 3:16](#)
2. Universalists say the Greek word *aiionios* means only for an age. They say that when the Bible speaks of eternal fire and hell is but only for an age and then will cease and all will be saved in heaven even the fallen angels and Satan. However, to be intellectually honest you must apply that definition everywhere the word is used. Here it is used in connection with eternal life. So, if it is only for an age, then the life God offers us in salvation is only for an age. Hogwash! Don't give heretics any of your time or attention!

16. **For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**

A. **For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,**

1. **loved**- Gr. **agapao**

- a. This is the most famous verse in the Bible and the first most children learn in children's church. It contains solid theology that we need today! There are whole systems of theology that go against this verse. Learn this verse, and you will learn solid theology!
- b. This is God's kind of love. It is not based upon the object loved but upon the one who is loving. God is love. He loved the world not because the world was lovely or loveable, but because He is love.
- c. It is impossible for God not to love you because you have nothing to do with it. He is love, so He loves you.
- d. Please note that love does not equate to **acceptance**. God loves all men, even those in hell right now; however, not all men are or will be accepted by Him. You must accept Jesus and be born again to be accepted by God. God can't accept unrighteousness and still be righteous. No, all must be made righteous to be accepted by a Holy and Righteous God. We are made righteous by faith in Jesus Christ.

2. **world**- Gr. **kosmos**- *the world, the aggregate of mankind*

a. This is every human that is living on the earth right now. You must accept Jesus while you are in the world. Once you leave this world, you lose your opportunity to accept salvation.

3. **gave-** Gr. **didomi**

a. Jesus was the greatest gift given to humanity. A gift must be accepted or rejected, or it no longer is a gift. God does not force salvation on anyone. Salvation is not issued to anyone, it is received as a gift.

4. **only begotten-** Gr. **monogenes-** *single of its kind, only born*

a. Jesus is unique. He is the only one qualified to be the Savior of mankind. He is the only one that is fully God and man who can equally touch both and bring both into eternal covenant. Jesus is the only one born of a virgin untainted by original sin. He is the only one who lives their entire life without sin. He is the only one that has been resurrected and glorified among men. He is the only mediator between God and man. He is unique!

5. **Son-** Gr. **huios**

B. that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life

1. **Whoever-** Gr. **pas-** *all*

a. A large majority of Christendom buys into what is called Calvinism, which says Jesus only died for a select elect. These are the ones God chose to be saved. The rest He has chosen to send to hell. This is hellish theology and is from the pit of hell itself!

b. The Bible teaches differently. It teaches that Jesus died for all men- all the world, not a select few. [Joh 3:16](#); [2Co 5:14](#); [1Jn 4:14](#); [Joh 1:29](#); [Joh 3:17](#); [Joh 4:42](#); [Joh 6:51](#); [Joh 12:32](#), [2Co 5:18-21](#), [1Ti 2:6](#); [1Ti 4:10](#), [Heb 2:9](#), [1 Joh 2:2](#), [1Jn 4:14](#).

c. All are invited to salvation. [1Ti 2:4](#) All can receive salvation by believing in Jesus and what He did for them. Unfortunately, not all have or will.

2. **believes-** Gr. **pisteuo**

a. Believing is a must for salvation. We are given faith-righteousness when we are born again.

3. perish- Gr. *apollumi*

a. Notice, not perishing is directly connected to believing in Jesus. If you do not believe in Jesus and receive Him as Savior then you will perish, my friend. You do not have to perish. You can be saved. Will you believe in Jesus and receive Him right now?

b. It is not God's will that anyone perishes. [2 Pet. 3:9](#)
Unfortunately, God's will is not always fulfilled because He gave free will to man and will not violate it, even if it ends up with people perishing. At the root of freedom is choice. If choice is taken away then slavery exists. God has given every man and woman free choice.

4. everlasting life- Gr. *aionios zoe*

a. Again, this is not just for an age or a period of time, but forever without end! That is great news if you are saved, but most tragic if you are not, because the perishing is also forever without end.

17. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

A. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world,

1. send- Gr. *apostello*

a. The Father did not send Jesus to make war on the earth, but to reconcile the world.

2. Son- Gr. *huios*

3. world- Gr. *kosmos*

4. condemn- Gr. *krima- to judge, decide*

a. All men are condemned by their own consciences because of sin. Jesus did not come to condemn men but to save men.

5. world- Gr. *kosmos*

B. but that the world through Him might be saved

1. world- Gr. *kosmos*

a. The "world" is mentioned three times in this verse. The Holy Trinity wants the whole world to know that they want to

save them all! The Father does! The Son does! The Holy Spirit does!

2. through Him

- a. Salvation only comes through Jesus Christ and no other. No other name under heaven is salvation found in except the one Jesus Christ!
- b. You have to come through Jesus Christ by faith to the Father, or you do not come at all! You do not come through your works. You do not come through any religious founders. You do not come through Mary or any of the saints that have died. You only come to the Father through His Son, Jesus Christ.

3. might

- a. Jesus said "might" be saved, not "will" be saved. The word might is used, showing it is available for all, but not all will necessarily be saved because salvation must be accepted by faith in Jesus

4. saved- Gr. **sozo-** *to save, rescue; to preserve safe and unharmed, to bring safely to, to cure, heal, restore to health, preserve from being lost, to deliver from, set free from, in NT to rescue from unbelief, convert, to bring within the pale of saving privilege, to save from final ruin*

- a. This is an all-inclusive term that includes all benefits of God's salvation body, soul, and spirit in this life and in eternity.

18. "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

A. He who believes in Him is not condemned,

1. believes- Gr. **pisteuo**

- a. The biblical concept of believing is not mere mental assent to Jesus' existence and what He did, but it contains the idea of being persuaded and relying upon Him.

2. condemned- Gr. **krino-** *judged*

B. but he who does not believe is condemned already,

1. believe- Gr. **pisteuo**

2. condemned- Gr. **krino**

3. already

a. *By conscience, by law, and in the judgment of God.*

-Barnes Commentary

b. The sentence of condemnation has already been given to Adam and all that was in him. [Joh 3:36](#) The only way you get out from under that sentence of condemnation is by believing in Jesus. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. [Rom. 8:1](#)

C. because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God

1. believed- Gr. **pisteuo**

a. In the last verse the word "world" is used three times. In this verse, we see the word "believe" is used three times. The world can only be saved by believing in Christ. The three uses of this word in this verse bring out the great emphasis that salvation is only by faith in Jesus. Salvation is not automatic for all people.

2. name- Gr. **onoma**

a. A person's name represents their standing and merits. We believe in Christ's standing and merits before God and not our own.

3. only begotten- Gr. **monogenes**

a. See comment on [verse 16](#) concerning this Greek word.

4. Son- Gr. **huios**

19. **And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.**

A. **And this is the condemnation,**

1. **condemnation-** Gr. *krisis- judgment*

B. **that the light has come into the world,**

1. **light-** Gr. **phos**

a. Jesus is the light of the world. [Joh 8:12](#)

2. **come-** Gr. **erchomai**

3. **world-** Gr. **kosmos**

C. **and men loved darkness rather than light,**

1. **men-** Gr. **anthropos**

2. **loved-** Gr. **agapao**

- a. This is a strong word that conveys loving from one's own nature and not loving because an object demands it. Usually, this word is used for God's love.
- b. Unbelievers love to sin because they are sinners by nature. It is their nature to sin and to love sin.

3. **darkness-** Gr. **skotos**

- a. This is spiritual darkness.

4. **light-** Gr. **phos**

- a. People hide what they do because their conscience tells them that it is wrong and it is manifestly wrong to others. Therefore, they do them in the dark where it is hard to see and actions are concealed.

D. **because their deeds were evil**

1. **deeds-** Gr. **ergon**

2. **evil-** Gr. **poneros-** *wicked, harmful*

20. **For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.**

A. **For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light,**

1. **practicing-** Gr. **prasso-** *do by habit, lifestyle*

- a. A true born-again believer will not practice evil as a habitual lifestyle.

2. **evil-** Gr. **phaulos-** *foul, vile, corrupt, good-for-nothing, depraved, worthless*

3. **hates-** Gr. **miseo**

4. **light-** Gr. **phos**

5. **come-** Gr. **erchomai**

- a. [Jer 9:6](#), [Hos 5:4](#)

B. **lest his deeds should be exposed**

1. **deeds-** Gr. **ergon**

2. **exposed-** Gr. **elegcho-** *to put to proof, to test; to convict, to refute, confute, to detect, lay bare, expose, to reprove, rebuke, to discipline, chastise, pass. to experience conviction*

- a. This word contains the ideas of exposing a wrong for all to see it as being wrong beyond all shadow of doubt, then

convicting the person who has done the wrong, and then reproving or rebuking them.

b. This is a function of the ministry of the Word of God. The teaching of the Word of God will expose, convict and rebuke wrong. [2 Tim. 3:16](#) No wonder why some today are teaching that we do not need the Bible. They want to live in darkness and error and not have it exposed by the Word.

21. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

A. But he who does the truth comes to the light,

1. **does-** Gr. **poieo**

2. **truth-** Gr. **aletheia**

a. This is contrasted with those who do "evil" in the previous verse. So evil and truth are opposite principles. Evil is rooted in deception and lies.

3. **light-** Gr. **phos**

a. Truth and light go hand and hand. Lies and darkness also go hand and hand.

B. that his deeds may be clearly seen,

1. **deeds-** Gr. **ergon**

2. **clearly seen-** Gr. **phaneroo-** *to make plain or manifest to the sight*

C. that they have been done in God

1. **done-** Gr. **ergazomai**

2. **in God**

a. This means what is done is by God's direction, in God's view, for His purposes, and is accomplished by the assistance of His grace.

22. After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He remained with them and baptized.

A. After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea,

1. **disciples-** Gr. **mathetes**

2. **came-** Gr. **erchomai**

3. **land-** Gr. **ge**

4. **Judea-** *land of Judah*

a. *While the previous episode with Nicodemus took place in Jerusalem ([Joh 2:23](#)), which was part of Judea, the phrase here means that Jesus went out into the rural areas of that region. -MacArthur Commentary*

B. and there He remained with them and baptized

1. **remained-** Gr. **diatribo**

2. **baptized-** Gr. **baptizo**

a. Jesus did not Himself administer the ordinance of baptism, but His disciples did it by His direction and authority.

[Joh 4:2](#).

b. This was a seamless handover of the baton from John, who had been baptizing, to Jesus' disciples, who took on the ministry of baptizing. As in a race, one runner is still running while handing the baton over, and the other starts to run, so we see here that John was baptizing, but so were Jesus' disciples. John would soon cease baptizing after being put in prison and executed.

23. Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized.

A. Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim,

1. **baptizing-** Gr. **baptizo-** *to dip or immerse*

2. **Aenon-** *means fountain or spring*

a. *The word "Enon," or "Aenon," means "a fountain," and was doubtless given to this place because of the fountains there. On the situation of the place nothing certain has been determined. Eusebius places it eight Roman miles south of Scythopolis or Bethshan, and 53 miles northeast of Jerusalem. -Barnes Commentary*

3. **Salim-** *means peace*

a. John was ministering at the "fountain of peace".

b. This is where our most fruitful ministry will take place. It will be at the fountain of peace. When we are in the will of God doing what He has assigned for us it will give us peace inwardly. When we are out of place we will lack peace inwardly. There can be turbulence outwardly but we can minister from a place of peace inwardly.

B. because there was much water there

1. water- Gr. **hudor**

- a. *Why did John baptize in Aenon? Was it because he had received heavenly instructions to minister there? No. Was it because he was fulfilling Old Testament prophecy? No. John baptized in Aenon "because there was much water there". Too often, we make finding the will of God very difficult. I believe we would do well to demystify the process of discovering what God wants us to do. John simply went where the water was. His location was perfectly suited to what God had instructed him to do."* -Courson Commentary
- b. There is no mention of John being told by the Lord to go to Aenon. He went where there was water. If we will delight ourselves in the Lord then we can trust following the desires that are in our heart. Go where the water is!

C. And they came and were baptized

1. came- Gr. **erchomai**

- a. Notice they came. God always operates with and honors the free will of man. He does not force anyone to accept him. That is why universalism teaches that all people are saved no matter if they want to be or not is so false. It violates the free will of man that God has given to all.

2. baptized- Gr. **baptizo**

24. For John had not yet been thrown into prison.

A. thrown- Gr. **ballo-** *to cast or throw*

- 1. This is a forceful word!

B. prison- Gr. **phulaka**

- 1. *As he afterwards was by Herod, for the sake of Herodias, because he reproved Herod for taking her to be his wife, when she was wife to his brother Philip; see [Mat 14:3](#); and this circumstance shows, that these things were done before that journey of Christ into Galilee, mentioned in [Mat 4:12](#).* -Gill Commentary

25. Then there arose a dispute between *some* of John's disciples and the Jews about purification.

A. arose- Gr. **ginomai-** *to begin, started*

a. Disputes and problems will arise from seemingly nowhere like a summer storm.

B. dispute- Gr. **zetesis-** *a seeking; an inquiry, a question; a dispute, debate, discussion, a subject of dispute or controversy*

1. *What the precise subject of this dispute was we do not know. From what follows, it would seem probable that it was about the comparative value and efficacy of the baptism performed by John and by the disciples of Jesus. The word "purifying" may be applied to baptism, as it was an emblem of repentance and purity, and was thus used by the Jews, by John, and by Jesus. About this subject it seems that a dispute arose, and was carried to such a length that complaint was made to John.* -Barnes Commentary
2. We should not enter into disputes with the world, especially with those in religion. These usually do not bear any fruit at all.

C. disciples- Gr. **mathetes**

1. Here we see that John still had disciples following Him although he had introduced Jesus as the Messiah. Some left John and followed Jesus, but some did not. Some will never follow Jesus but they will stay committed to their own religious upbringing. Some Christians are more devoted to a dead church they grew up in than following Jesus and experiencing the fullness of life He is offering them. Is this you my friend?

D. purification- Gr. **katharismos-** *ceremonial cleansing, purification*

1. This has to do with various washings and baptism in water was a means of ceremonial purification.

26. And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified—behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him!"

A. And they came to John and said to him,

1. **came-** Gr. **erchomai**
2. **said-** Gr. **epo**

B. Rabbi- Gr. **rhabbi-** *master, teacher*

1. Jesus was called rabbi, but so was John by His disciples. Jesus is the only true master and teacher.

C. He who was with you beyond Jordan,

1. **Jordan-** means *descender*

D. to whom you have testified,

1. **testified-** Gr. **maturomai**

E. behold- Gr. **idou-** *look!*

F. He is baptizing,

1. **baptizing-** Gr. **baptizo-** *to dip or immerse*

G. and all are coming to Him!

1. **all-** Gr. **pas**

a. This is an overstatement. How often do we and others make overstatements to enlarge our point?

b. We saw in [verse 23](#), it said that people were coming to John to be baptized. Probably the amount of numbers coming had decreased but they were still coming. Here John's disciples magnify the decrease in the amount coming to John by saying- **ALL** are going to Jesus!

c. How often do we get into a competition mindset in the church? Pastors often compare the size of their church with other churches. They smile when theirs are larger than others and frown when others are bigger than theirs. This is carnality and flesh, folks!

d. These disciples lost sight of the ministry vision of John which was to point people to Jesus, not their own ministry. How often do we do the same in the ministry today? We focus on our ministry and how many are coming to our ministry instead of pointing people to Jesus and making it all about Him. The ministry today is FROM Jesus, is all ABOUT Jesus, and is FOR Jesus.

27. John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven.

A. John answered and said,

1. **answered-** Gr. **apokrinomai**

2. **said-** Gr. **epo**

B. A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven

1. **man-** Gr. **anthropos**

a. This means mankind- both male and female.

2. **receive-** Gr. **lambano**

a. We have nothing that we did not first receive. [1 Cor. 4:7](#)

- b. Many are not content to receive from heaven, they are taking from man. Many today are taking positions on the earth that God did not give them. If you take a position or make room for yourself you must keep yourself there.
- c. Many today are taking the best seats and rooms for themselves and not waiting to receive them. [Luke 14:7-11](#)
- d. This is a great principle to live by "Do not go where you are not invited and do not take what you are not offered."

3. given- Gr. didomi

- a. Everything we have comes by the gift of God's grace.

4. heaven- Gr. ouranos

- a. In other words it only comes from God.
- b. John was correcting his disciples by saying that Jesus could not be having the genuine success He was having if it was not given to Him by God.

28. You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent before Him.'

A. You yourselves bear me witness,

1. bear witness- Gr. martureo

- a. It is good that others can bear witness to your humility and service to Christ!

B. that I said,

1. said- Gr. epo

C. I am not the Christ,

- 1. We all need to have that revelation! We are not the Christ. Religion makes you your own savior.

D. but

E. I have been sent before Him

1. sent- Gr. apostello

- a. We must understand our calling and remain in that lane. Problems come when we get out of our lane. This happens by presumption and pride.

29. He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice.

Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled.

A. He who has the bride is the bridegroom,

1. **bride-** Gr. **numphe**
2. **bridegroom-** Gr. **numphios**

B. but the friend of the bridegroom,

1. **friend-** Gr. **philos**

- a. *The special friend, appointed to arrange the preliminaries of the wedding, to manage and preside at the marriage feast. Somewhat analogous to our 'best man,' but his duties were very much more considerable. -Cambridge Commentary*
- b. In the church today, ministers [even though they too are a member of the bride of Christ] are to stand in this function and role regarding the bride of Christ and the bridegroom -Jesus. Paul served in this role as a minister. [2Co 11:2](#)
- c. Ministers are not to attract the bride to themselves but the friend of the bridegroom helps connect the bride- [the church] to the bridegroom [Jesus].

C. who stands and hears him,

1. **stands-** Gr. **histemi**

- a. This shows that he is ready to serve at a moment's notice if called upon.

2. **hears-** Gr. **akouo**

- a. Obedience means to hearken to what is spoken.

D. rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice

1. **rejoices greatly-** Gr. **chairo chara-** *rejoices with joy*

2. **voice-** Gr. **phone**

- a. Every minister who is a friend of the bridegroom- Jesus, is to listen and hear the voice of Jesus and rejoice in hearing His voice. They then are to relay what He hears to the bride- the church.
- b. Minister, if you are not rejoicing in studying the Word and in hearing what the Spirit is saying, you are not operating as a good friend of the bridegroom.

E. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled

1. **joy-** Gr. **chara**
2. **fulfilled-** Gr. **pleroo**

- a. Once the bride and groom are united in marriage, the job of the friend of the bridegroom was completed. John was ready to depart from the scene.
- b. John's joy was not in the recognition of men or their praise, but that the people connected to and followed Jesus. A true minister will find their joy in the same thing. This is purity.

30. He must increase, but I must decrease.

A. He must increase,

1. increase- Gr. **auxano-** *to grow*

- a. The Lord cannot get any bigger than He is, but He can appear bigger in people's eyes. As long as we try to make ourselves look big to others we obscure the greatness of our Lord.

B. but I must decrease

1. decrease- Gr. **alotta-** *to decline in importance, to be lowered*

- a. We need to point people to Jesus and then we need to get out of the way and let the people look at Jesus and His greatness.
- b. It is sad to see how today's modern marketing campaigns for ministries and magnify individuals instead of the Lord.

31. He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.

A. He who comes from above is above all,

1. comes- Gr. **erchomai**

2. above- Gr. **anthen-** *from above, from a higher place*

- a. [Joh 8:23](#)

3. above- Gr. **epano-** *over, more than*

- a. He is above all because He is the Lord of all. [Act 10:36](#)

B. he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth,

1. earth- Gr. **ge**

- a. John is speaking of himself first and then of all men that are not born again.

2. earthly- Gr. **ek ge-** *out of or from earth*

- a. We are born from above so we are heavenly people.

[1Co 15:48](#)

3. speaks- Gr. laleo

- a. We are born from above so our speaking should be heavenly.
- b. When we speak in tongues we are speaking heavenly languages.

C. He who comes from heaven is above all

1. comes- Gr. erchomai

2. heaven- Gr. ouranos

- a. We are born here and then go to heaven. Jesus eternally was from heaven and came down to earth.

3. above- Gr. epano

32. And what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony.

A. And what He has seen and heard,

1. seen- Gr. horao

2. heard- Gr. akouo

B. that He testifies,

1. testifies- Gr. martureo

- a. A witness is someone who has seen and heard something.
- b. We should witness what we personally have seen and heard about Jesus. Our personal testimony is our most powerful and effective witnessing tool.

C. and no one receives His testimony

1. receives- Gr. lambano

2. testimony- Gr. marturia

- a. This was true up to this point. John said this at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Even His disciples did not fully know who Jesus was at this point.
- b. Even John would soon have doubt about Jesus' true identity!
[Luke 7:20](#) So, he is included in his own statement.

33. He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true.

A. received- Gr. lambano

B. testimony- Gr. marturia

C. certified- Gr. sphragizo- to set a seal upon as a token of its authenticity or approvedness

1. To “seal” something is to make it sure; to acknowledge it as ours; to pledge our veracity that it is true and binding, as when a man seals a bond, a deed, or a will. Believing a doctrine, therefore, in the heart, is expressed by “sealing it,” or by believing it we express our firm conviction that it is true, and that God who has spoken it is true. We vouch for the veracity of God, and assume as our own the proposition that it is the truth of God. -Barnes Commentary

D. true- Gr. aletheia

1. So putting the last verse and this verse together, up until now no one had certified God as true.
2. God is true and every man is a liar. [Rom 3:4](#)

34. For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure.

A. For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God,

1. **sent-** Gr. **apostello**
2. **speaks-** Gr. **laleo**
3. **words-** Gr. **rhema**

- a. Those who are sent from the Lord to minister need to speak His words, not their own words.

B. for God does not give the Spirit by measure

1. **give-** Gr. **didomi**
2. **Spirit-** Gr. **pneuma**

- a. When you are full of the Spirit you will always speak God's Word and be in line with it. The Spirit and the Word agree.
- b. Those who claim to have a special relationship with the Holy Spirit and discredit the Bible or portions of it are deceived and deceptive.
- c. In this verse we see the Trinity. He [**Jesus**] was sent by God [**the Father**] and was given **the Spirit** without measure.

3. measure- Gr. **metron**

- a. Since the Spirit was given to Jesus without measure, this speaks of God's trust of Jesus was without measure.
- b. God will not entrust to us things if we have proven ourselves untrustworthy. He loves us and others too much to see us destroy ourselves and others. Unlimited power would end

up destroying someone who was not completely trustworthy. With sinful man- absolute power corrupts absolutely.

c. Jesus was and is the only man God trusted to have unlimited powers.

35. The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand.

A. The Father loves the Son,

1. **loves-** Gr. **agapao**

2. **Son-** Gr. **huios**

a. God loves us with the same love He loves His Son. [Joh 17:23](#)

B. and has given all things into His hand

1. **given-** Gr. **didomi**

2. **hand-** Gr. **cheir**

a. Not only does the Father love the Son, but He also implicitly trusts His Son in order to place all things into His hand.

b. We can love our toddler, but not trust putting anything and all things into his hands!

36. He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

A. He who believes in the Son has everlasting life

1. **believes-** Gr. **pisteuo**

a. There is a requirement for everlasting life- it is believing in Jesus. There is no other way to get around this. It is firmly fixed in the Word of God.

2. **Son-** Gr. **huios**

3. **everlasting life-** Gr. **aionios zoe**

a. This is the third time this is stated in this chapter. All three members of the Trinity are saying this- Those who believe in Jesus have everlasting life.

B. and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life,

1. **not believe-** Gr. **apeitheo-** *to be unpersuaded*

2. **Son-** Gr. **huios**

3. **see-** Gr. **optanomai**

a. Universalists will point to this one phrase and say those who do not believe in Jesus will not see life although it is theirs in

the spirit. They will end up in the unseen heaven. However, their point comes crashing down by the next phrase- but the wrath of God abides on them. How is the wrath lifted? It is by faith in Jesus.

- b. Once you die your chance to believe in Jesus is gone. It is given for man to die once and then the judgment. [Heb. 9:27](#) What judgment you are in is determined by what you did with Jesus in this life. If you believe in Jesus in this life, then you will be at the Judgment Seat of Christ, where your reward is given. [1 Cor. 3:10-15](#) If you do not believe in Jesus in this life, you will be at the Great White Throne Judgment and be cast into the lake of fire forever and ever.

[Rev. 20:11-15](#)

4. life- Gr. zoe

C. but the wrath of God abides on him

1. wrath- Gr. orge

2. abides- Gr. meno

- a. Universalists never use this verse because it debunks their theology. Universalists say that all people will go to heaven even if they do not believe in Jesus. This verse says the opposite. It says those who do not believe in the Son, the wrath of God abides on them. This does not sound like going to heaven, does it?