

HARD TO BELIEVE

Help From Jesus Christ for Doubters and Skeptics

6. Darkness and Light

LOOK UP AND READ: John 3

Really, the issues of faith and doubt, belief and unbelief, Christianity and atheism, boil down to a choice. And the choice is between light and darkness. Now an unbeliever might challenge this assertion, but it is exactly what Jesus taught, and should be considered carefully. Remember that He pinpointed the problem of unbelief as being in the heart (Read again Luke 24:25). It is the heart that chooses either submission to God or rebellion against Him. When we seek Him with all of our heart, He will be easily found (See Jeremiah 29:13). The Book of John presents the issue as a choice between light and darkness. This is significant because the purpose of writing the Book of John was to persuade people to “*believe that Jesus is the Christ*” so that “*believing ye might have life through his name*” (John 20:31). Be sure to read the whole third chapter of John, and then consider three things.

- A. Jesus “*was the Light of men.*” Nicodemus, “*a ruler of the Jews*” and “*a master of Israel*” (vs. 1 and 10), “*came to Jesus by night*” (v. 2) already convinced that He was “*a teacher come from God*” (v. 2), but not yet converted to believe in Him for his own salvation. At the beginning of their discussion, Jesus told Nicodemus that he “*must be born again*” (vs. 3-7), and stated that this second birth occurs only when a sinner puts his faith in “*the Son of man*” (vs. 8-15) and the Son of God (vs. 16-17). Jesus claimed to be the only way to God (See John 14:6). The new life, which is eternal life, is found only in Him. Listen to what He said about Himself.

“I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.” (John 6:35)

“I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” (John 8:12)

“I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?” (John 11:25-26)

He not only shows us the way; He *is* the Way. He not only gives us the light; He *is* the Light. John 1 speaks of Jesus Christ when it says,

“In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”
(vs. 4-5)

“That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” (vs. 9-13)

Jesus is the Light which enlightens every heart with truth. However, every man can and will choose whether or not to receive the truth. This is not the acquisition of knowledge through scientific research; it is the reception of truth by direct contact with God. Everybody has had contact with God. Whether we continue in darkness or come to the Light is determined by what we choose to do with the truth God has given us.

B. *“Condemned already.”*

The way to salvation is laid out clearly in John 3:1-17. As sinners born with a sinful nature (Note Ephesians 2:1-3), we must *“be born again”* to *“see the Kingdom of God.”* Being *“born of the flesh”* makes us sinners condemned to Hell. We must be *“born of the Spirit”* (vs. 6-8) in order to go to Heaven. This happens when we trust (*“whosoever believeth in him”*) in Christ to save our souls. He can do this because He was *“lifted up”* on the Cross to die for our sins, and then rose triumphantly from the dead (vs. 14-15). Before putting his faith in Christ, the sinner stands condemned for the wrong he has done (Note vs. 18 and 36). When he puts his faith in Christ, all of his sins are cancelled by the blood Jesus shed in order to pay for them, and he gets everlasting life as a free gift. To refuse to believe on Jesus is to choose to be condemned. Unsaved sinners are condemned for this sin, but also for their rejection of the Light that was given to them. Read again verse 19.

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

C. *“God is true.”*

John the Baptist reasoned with the people of his day about choosing to trust in Jesus Christ. Read again John 3:22-36. *“He that cometh from above”* has testified the truth. Most people do not receive his testimony, but he who does *“hath set to his seal that God is true.”* One who chooses to receive the Light and to trust in the Light that has been given (Jesus Himself) has *proof* that *God is* and that *God is true!* The choice to believe on the Son of God gives the believer life and assurance of eternal life (see again v. 36). The choice is yours. Will you love darkness and live away from God by choice, or will you come to the Light and find life in Jesus?

