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We see once again that Jesus is the Light of the world (**1:4-5,9, 8:12, 9:5, 12:46, 1 Jn. 2:10**). **:36b-37 :36b These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself (was hidden) from them** [same as **8:59**]. **:37 But though He had performed so many (attesting) signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him.** Jesus spoke, then was hidden from the crowds. We don't know how.

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The imperfect tense '**they were not believing**' indicates that there was a constant and progressive unwillingness to accept Jesus with a genuine, living faith. It was the facing of a fact in the public ministry of Jesus. "Statistically nobody would say it was a great success." It's interesting, Jesus' opponents never denied the reality of these signs. They just refused to believe in Him.

I believe God's 'sign' today is through the Body of Christ, the one Body of Christ. We are to love one another and recognize we are one with one another and practice these things. These will be convincing truths that will cause people to be confronted with the Person and words of our Lord Jesus. Sadly, we don't see much practice of Biblical love and unity among His people today!

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The prophet Isaiah expressed his surprise at the blindness and deafness of the people. How can this be? God's words had been delivered to them, but the people continually rejected Him and him. They had also ignored the Lord's mighty arm by which He had done these signs. The Jews were the first to hear and believe God's good news. They refused to do so. Eventually they could not believe. Truth rejected leads to hardened hearts and blindness and error and death. And yet, "in His sovereign grace, God has brought good out of that rejection (read **Rom. 11:11**: salvation has come to the Gentiles too!)."

"We must try to think ourselves back into Isaiah's heart and mind. He had proclaimed the word of God and put everything he had into his message. And men and women had refused to listen. Isaiah's words spring from a broken heart. They are the words of a man bewildered by the fact that his message seemed to make people worse instead of better." Isaiah had been sent by God to prophesy, but he was forewarned that his preaching would bring no results. Their hearts were callous to the message of God (see **Eph. 4:17-19**). "That act of absolute humility before God is somehow so difficult for us!"

The Bible indicates "Use it or lose it." (**Mk. 4:25**) If you don't exercise faith when you have the opportunity, you will gradually lose the ability to do so. If you refuse to act on the truth you have, you will eventually lose the ability to recognize it. Those who willfully harden themselves shall be hardened. "As it was with Pharaoh, so it was also with Israel. God ratified a decision and an attitude, to which men had come of their own choice. But God's judicial hardening of Israel did not stop the culpability of those who refused to believe in Jesus as the Christ." The word of the cross was scandalous to the Jew and absurd to the Greek. "There's no wisdom or power in the message of the cross," was their thinking (see **1 Cor. 1:17b** and following).

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All of the words and signs of Jesus failed to cause many to confess Him. Why? Because of fear—of the same thing that had happened to the former blind man in **Jn. 9:34**: the religious leaders had put the man out! These rulers refused to confess Jesus as Christ for they loved the approval of men rather

than the approval of God. Fear and men's approval—the motives that controlled them. Day in, day out (imperfect tense), they were not confessing.

So not only would they have been ostracized from Jewish religious and social life, the religious leaders also feared losing **“our place & our nation (11:48).”** Yet, **“It is always better to be right for eternity than to be right for a time.”**

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Jesus equated belief in Him with belief in His Father (**14:1**). This shows the impossibility of believing in the Father apart from believing in Jesus. To Philip, Jesus would say, **“He who has seen Me has seen the Father (14:9).”** When we are dealing with Jesus, we are dealing with God. This is the God of the Bible we meet when we meet Jesus.

**:46 “I have come as Light into the world, so that (Grk. hina) everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.”** This verse points to both Jesus' preexistence and His mission throughout creation (**1:5,9**). He will open the eyes of any who are willing to admit that they are blind & that they need the always-shining Light of the world. **“Believing is not just a matter of intellectual assent; it is a matter of active obedience,”** of taking the next step. **“Christians have an understanding of the nature of man that no secular psychologist has. We can make moral judgments about which others are confused. We can say with assurance that divorce is bad; gay is not good; drugs are harmful; abortion is wrong. We are dealing with people trying to figure out who they are and what life is all about. They grab hold of anything that will make them feel good. They hope to find fulfillment in relationships with other people. Into this multifaceted confusion and darkness, the Light of Jesus shines,”** many times through you and me, and, of course, His words.

**:47 “If anyone hears My sayings (rhēma) & does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.** Rhēmata = not the logos, but the sayings, the individual words of Jesus. How is a person judged if Jesus didn't come to judge the world? By the very words that having heard, he/she refuses to believe and obey. The main purpose of Jesus' first coming was not to condemn but to save the world! **“It was not the wrath of God which sent Jesus to us; it was His love, so we would cast ourselves completely in faith upon the only One who can meet the deepest needs of our hearts, forgive our sins, and shine light into the darkness of our confusion.”**

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It is impossible to believe in God if one does not believe in Jesus and in His rhēma and logos by which one will be judged in the last day. By our attitude to Jesus we show who we trust and therefore judge ourselves. Someone remarked: Unbelief is **“a calculated refusal to listen to the truth as it is in Jesus and acknowledge His claims on your life.”** The Father said, **“This is My beloved Son. Listen to Him!” (Mt. 17:5).** God does not condemn us for what we have not heard but for ignoring what we have heard. All have some truth about the God of the Bible (**Rom. 1:19-20**).

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Genuine faith in Jesus (His Person, His Word, His words) gives us eternal life. See **Jn. 17:3**. Eternal life, in the words of Jesus, is a description of a kind of life, which has the eternal quality of connection with God Himself; it means unceasing, forever, without end. This is because the word of Jesus is the word of God. It is not His own invention but is the utterance of God Himself, the unveiling of reality as it truly is. By that reality we must all stand or fall. The revelation is given, however, not in order to bring condemnation but to give life. To believe in Him and to 'keep' His word is to walk in the light and so to have eternal life. John ends his story of the public ministry of Jesus with an appeal for belief. If you are not a believer in Jesus, have you caught a glimpse of who He is and what His words mean? If you have, I urge you to respond to it today. There is no promise that you will see it so clearly again.

As we conclude Jesus' public ministry in John's Gospel, keep in mind the Father's and Jesus' love for the Jews. Read **Rom. 9:4-5**. It was from the Jewish people that the Messiah came. He gave them first opportunity to believe in and follow Him. Yet tragically, when Jesus came, they rejected Him. But the story does not end there. Because of His great love for the Jewish race, God will one day redeem a remnant of His chosen people, and so all Israel will be saved (**Rom. 11:26**). Isn't it good we know about Jesus and we believe in Him and His words? How would you like to respond to Him today? Joel

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**:38-41 :38 This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?" :39 For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, :40 "HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I HEAL THEM." :41 These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him.** Why would the hearers of Jesus not believe in Him when the signs so unmistakably accredited His claims? People purposely rejected Yahweh, Jesus, & Their words. John gives 2 causes for Israel's unbelief, "one divine and the other human." In **:38**, John quotes **Is. 53:1**, and in **:40**, he refers to **Is. 6:9f**, which is also quoted in **Rom. 10:16**. God "judicially brought on them a blinding of eyes and hardening of hearts." And, in **John 12**, they stubbornly failed to believe in and receive Jesus as their Christ.

**:40** These words from **Is. 6:10** are quoted by Jesus (**Mt. 13:10-17, Mk. 4:12, Lk. 8:10**) and by Paul (**Acts 28:26-27, Rom. 11:8**; also see **2 Cor. 3:14**).

The prophet Isaiah expressed his surprise at the blindness and deafness of the people. How can this be? God's words had been delivered to them, but the people continually rejected Him and Him. They had also ignored the Lord's mighty arm by which He had done these signs. The Jews were the first to hear and believe God's good news. They refused to do so. Eventually they could not believe. Truth rejected leads to hardened hearts and blindness and error and death. And yet, "in His sovereign grace, God has brought good out of that rejection (read **Rom. 11:11**: salvation has come to the Gentiles too!)."

"We must try to think ourselves back into Isaiah's heart and mind. He had proclaimed the word of God and put everything he had into his message. And men and women had refused to listen. Isaiah's words spring from a broken heart. They are the words of a man bewildered by the fact that his message seemed to make people worse instead of better." Isaiah had been sent by God to prophesy, but he was forewarned that his preaching would bring no results. Their hearts were callous to the message of God (see **Eph. 4:17-19**). "That act of absolute humility before God is somehow so difficult for us!"

The Bible indicates "Use it or lose it." (**Mk. 4:25**) If you don't exercise faith when you have the opportunity, you will gradually lose the ability to do so. If you refuse to act on the truth you have, you will eventually lose the ability to recognize it. Those who willfully harden themselves shall be hardened. "As it was with Pharaoh, so it was also with Israel. God ratified a decision and an attitude, to which men had come of their own choice. But God's judicial hardening of Israel did not stop the culpability of those who refused to believe in Jesus as the Christ." The word of the cross was scandalous to the Jew and absurd to the Greek. "There's no wisdom or power in the message of the cross," was their thinking (see **1 Cor. 1:17b** and following).

**:41** Isaiah saw the essence of who Yahweh is (**Is. 6:1**); he also foresaw the rejection of the Christ, as **Is 6:1-5,10, 9:6-7, 52:13-15, 53:1-12** show. "John unambiguously ties Jesus to the God/Yahweh of the OT. Jesus' cross and resurrection and exaltation portray both suffering and healing, rejection and triumph, humiliation and glory." Since **:41** refers to Jesus, it makes Him the author of the judicial hardening of Israel. That fits His role as Judge.

**:42-43 :42** Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue; **:43** for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God. Many of the leaders believed (including probably Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (**19:38-39; Mk. 15:43; Lk. 23:50-52**)). **Acts 6:7** mentions (after Jesus' death and resurrection) a great company of priests.

All of the words and signs of Jesus failed to cause many to confess Him. Why? Because of fear—of the same thing that had happened to the former blind man in **Jn. 9:34**: the religious leaders had put the man out! These rulers refused to confess Jesus as Christ for they loved the approval of men rather

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than the approval of God. Fear and men's approval—the motives that controlled them. Day in, day out (imperfect tense), they were not confessing.

So not only would they have been ostracized from Jewish religious and social life, the religious leaders also feared losing **“our place & our nation (11:48).”** Yet, “It is always better to be right for eternity than to be right for a time.”

Don't let the fear & approval of others lead you into darkness, falsehood, death.

**:44-50** are a summary of Jesus' public ministry to Israel, which was now done. In **chapters 13-17**, Jesus would be alone with His 11 apostles preparing them for what lies ahead. We will also learn how to deal with life as it comes.

**:44-45 :44 And Jesus cried out (a loud voice, even scream with deep emotion) and said, “He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me but in Him who sent Me. :45 He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me.”** Jesus does not whisper but cries out! You can almost see and hear Jesus shouting out in this last moment!

Jesus equated belief in Him with belief in His Father (**14:1**). This shows the impossibility of believing in the Father apart from believing in Jesus. To Philip, Jesus would say, **“He who has seen Me has seen the Father (14:9).”** When we are dealing with Jesus, we are dealing with God. This is the God of the Bible we meet when we meet Jesus.

**:46 “I have come as Light into the world, so that (Grk. hina) everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.”** This verse points to both Jesus' preexistence and His mission throughout creation (**1:5,9**). He will open the eyes of any who are willing to admit that they are blind & that they need the always-shining Light of the world. “Believing is not just a matter of intellectual assent; it is a matter of active obedience,” of taking the next step. “Christians have an understanding of the nature of man that no secular psychologist has. We can make moral judgments about which others are confused. We can say with assurance that divorce is bad; gay is not good; drugs are harmful; abortion is wrong. We are dealing with people trying to figure out who they are and what life is all about. They grab hold of anything that will make them feel good. They hope to find fulfillment in relationships with other people. Into this multifaceted confusion and darkness, the Light of Jesus shines,” many times through you and me, and, of course, His words.

**:47 “If anyone hears My sayings (rhēma) & does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.** Rhēmata = not the logos, but the sayings, the individual words of Jesus. How is a person judged if Jesus didn't come to judge the world? By the very words that having heard, he/she refuses to believe and obey. The main purpose of Jesus' first coming was not to condemn but to save the world! “It was not the wrath of God which sent Jesus to us; it was His love, so we would cast ourselves completely in faith upon the only One who can meet the deepest needs of our hearts, forgive our sins, and shine light into the darkness of our confusion.”

**:48 “He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings (rhēma), has one who judges him; the word (logos) I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.** Jesus' mission was intended to stimulate belief and rescue humans from darkness. Those who reject the truth Jesus taught condemn themselves

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(8:37,43,47; 14:24, Mt. 7:24-27, 13:19-22, Heb. 12:25).

It is impossible to believe in God if one does not believe in Jesus and in His *rhēma* and *logos* by which one will be judged in the last day. By our attitude to Jesus we show who we trust and therefore judge ourselves. Someone remarked: Unbelief is “a calculated refusal to listen to the truth as it is in Jesus and acknowledge His claims on your life.” The Father said, “**This is My beloved Son. Listen to Him!**” (Mt. 17:5). God does not condemn us for what we have not heard but for ignoring what we have heard. All have some truth about the God of the Bible (Rom. 1:19-20).

:49-50 :49 “**For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment (injunction, order, command) as to what to say and what to speak.** :50 **I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me.**” Jesus is the Word and whatever He speaks is what the Father gave Him to say. Exactly the same thought is found in 7:16.

Genuine faith in Jesus (His Person, His Word, His words) gives us eternal life. See **Jn. 17:3**. Eternal life, in the words of Jesus, is a description of a kind of life, which has the eternal quality of connection with God Himself; it means unceasing, forever, without end. This is because the word of Jesus is the word of God. It is not His own invention but is the utterance of God Himself, the unveiling of reality as it truly is. By that reality we must all stand or fall. The revelation is given, however, not in order to bring condemnation but to give life. To believe in Him and to ‘keep’ His word is to walk in the light and so to have eternal life. John ends his story of the public ministry of Jesus with an appeal for belief. If you are not a believer in Jesus, have you caught a glimpse of who He is and what His words mean? If you have, I urge you to respond to it today. There is no promise that you will see it so clearly again.

As we conclude Jesus’ public ministry in John’s Gospel, keep in mind the Father’s and Jesus’ love for the Jews. Read **Rom. 9:4-5**. It was from the Jewish people that the Messiah came. He gave them first opportunity to believe in and follow Him. Yet tragically, when Jesus came, they rejected Him. But the story does not end there. Because of His great love for the Jewish race, God will one day redeem a remnant of His chosen people, and so all Israel will be saved (**Rom. 11:26**). Isn’t it good we know about Jesus and we believe in Him and His words? How would you like to respond to Him today? Joel

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