

# The Tragedy of Unbelief

## John 4:43-45

- 39** And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me all that I *ever* did.”
- 40** So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.
- 41** And many more believed because of His own word.
- 42** Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard *Him* and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.”
- 43** Now after the two days He departed from there and went to Galilee.
- 44** For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.
- 45** So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast.

The New King James Version. (1982). (Jn 4:39–45). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

## Introduction

“Unbelief is a great force. The power of unbelief is so great that it extends throughout all eternity. In fact, it has massive force, unbelief does.

For example, Eve exercised unbelief in the Word of God and brought the entire human race down into a curse and eternal judgment.

Noah was a preacher of righteousness warning the world, the world would not believe and the world of unbelievers brought down a Flood upon their own heads that drowned all of humanity with the exception of Noah and his three sons and their wives and his own wife. Unbelief caused the destruction of the whole human race and all creatures and all life living on the earth.

It was unbelief on the part of Israel in the wilderness that caused them to die there before ever entering into the Promised Land.

And the story of Israel’s ongoing unbelief even after they entered the land of Canaan is clear for all to read in the Old Testament. They were judged again and again by God for their apostasy and their unbelief.

Being a little more individual and looking at the power of unbelief, we remember Aaron’s unbelief led to three thousand people being slaughtered.

You might remember Sennacherib’s unbelief, the Gentile king, led to his assassination by his own sons after an angel of the Lord had massacred 185 thousand of his troops.

And, of course, there is the unbelief of Judas which led to his suicide and his everlasting punishment.

The Pharisees and the scribes were unbelievers to the very end with few exceptions.

And like all other unbelievers, their unbelief resulted in them dying in their sins and forfeiting heaven and gaining hell.

The New Testament has a lot to say about believing. It has a lot to say about faith. But it has an awful lot to say equally about unbelief. In the familiar words of

**John 3:16**, “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life, for God did not send His Son into the world to judge the world but that the world might be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged, but he who does not believe is judged already because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

It was unbelief that brought a curse on all of humanity.

It was unbelief that broke up the fountains of the deep and brought down the rain from heaven and drowned the entire human race.

And it is unbelief in the Son of God that catapults people into eternal hell.

Unbelief activates divine wrath.

Unbelief activates divine judgment.

It is a force, this unbelief.

In the eighth chapter of John’s gospel, John has a lot to say about believing and not believing, that’s why we find so many references there to this. **He said to them in John 8:21**,

“I go away and you will seek Me and will die in your sin. Where I am going, namely into heaven, you cannot come.”

So the Jews were saying, “Surely He will not kill Himself, will He? Since He says where I’m going you cannot come?” And He was saying to them, “You are from below, I am from above, you’re of this world, I am not of this world, therefore I said to you, ‘You will

die in your sins for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.” The warning that our Lord gave many, many times. “Believe in Me or perish...believe in Me or perish.”

Second Thessalonians chapter 2 warns about the devastating, eternal consequence of unbelief.

**Romans 11:20** talks about the horrible tragedy of Israel’s unbelief.

**Revelation 21:8** talks about the fact that no unbelieving person will ever enter into heaven.

And so, I say unbelief is a mighty force. It has brought a curse on the whole human race. It drowned all of humanity. It activates the judgment of God. And it brings about the forfeiture of eternal life, it brings about eternal judgment.” JM

John 12:35-50

Then Jesus said to them, “A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going.

**36** While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.” These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.

**37** But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him,

**38** that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke:

“Lord, who has believed our report?

*And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”*

**39** Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again:

**40** *“He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts,*

*Lest they should see with their eyes,  
Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,  
So that I should heal them.”*

- 41** These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him.
- 42** Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *Him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue;
- 43** for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.
- 44** Then Jesus cried out and said, “He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me.
- 45** And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me.
- 46** I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.
- 47** And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.
- 48** He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.
- 49** For I have not spoken on My own *authority*; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak.
- 50** And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.”

## Review

### Woman at the Well

# Lesson

## I. The Setting

**39** And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me all that I *ever* did.”

**40** So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.

**41** And many more believed because of His own word.

**42** Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard *Him* and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.”

**43** Now after the two days He departed from there and went to Galilee.

John 4:3

**3** He left Judea and departed again to Galilee.

**4** But He needed to go through Samaria.

Jesus make his way thru Samaria for the divine purpose of meeting the Woman at the well saving her and eventually saving a large number of the Samaritans.

And in this the truth of the statement that He is the Savior of the World is made clear

**39** And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him Jesus leave a Revival in the land of Samaria Where many had believed on Him just by the word of the Woman and the word they heard from Christ. No miracle other than a display of Omniscience

So Jesus continues is journey to Galilee to go to his people, the Jews .

## **II. The Statement**

**44** For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.

Now on the way there's a very interesting comment made by John in verse 44. He goes into Galilee for Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country. It...why does John put that in there? It's a very interesting thing. It just kind of gets in the middle of verses 43 and 45 and you have to ask why is it there? It could have said there He went forth into Galilee and when He came to Galilee...so what's verse 44 doing in there? "For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in His own country."

Did He go in to prove that? Didn't He have a purpose of proving a proverb? You know that proverb, "Familiarity breeds contempt." Or as some have said, "This is the proof of man's corruption that he never values what he's familiar with." We would say that, "Ah, a prophet has no honor in his own country. All experts come from out of town." Did Jesus go to Galilee to prove that? Is this prophetic? Is John telling us that He's not going to have any more success there than he had in Judea? Jesus' work in Galilee would prove that true.

But even more specifically, see the word "country" there, His own country? That's a very interesting word and a very important word. It is a word with the *patri* in it which is father in Greek or Latin, his fatherland, the place his ancestors came from. It's used six times in the gospels and it always refers to Nazareth. And you know the story, what happened to Him when He went to Nazareth? He preached one sermon, what did they try to do? Stone Him to death, execute Him. So is that explaining the fact that He's going in there to prove that point or is John giving us a prophecy that He will receive no honor in His own town? That's true

### **Mt 13:54–58**

**54** When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "Where did this *Man* get this wisdom and *these* mighty works?"

**55** Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?

**56** And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this *Man* get all these things?"

**57** So they were offended at Him.



But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house.”

**58** Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

### **Lk 4:24**

**24** Then He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country.

This was known by Jesus as indicated

### **Jn 1:10–11**

**10** He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

**11** He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

### **Jn 1:5**

**5** And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

### **Jn 3:32**

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

### **Lk 19:14**

**14** But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We will not have this *man* to reign over us.’

### Ac 7:51–52

“*You* stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers *did*, so *do* you.

**52** Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers,

## **III. The Spurning**

**45** So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast.

**Received him** - Received him kindly, or as a messenger of God. They had seen his miracles, and believed on him.

**dechomai: to receive**

**Original Word:** δέχομαι

**Transliteration:** dechomai

**Definition:** I take, receive, accept, welcome.

**1209** *déxomai* – properly, to receive in a welcoming (receptive) way. **1209** (*déxomai*) is used of people welcoming God (His offers), like receiving and sharing in His salvation (1 Thes 2:13) and thoughts (Eph 6:17).

**1209/dexomai** ("**warmly receptive, welcoming**") means receive with "ready reception what is offered" (Vine, Unger, White, NT, 7), i.e. "welcome with appropriate reception" (Thayer).

[The *personal* element is emphasized with **1209** (*déxomai*) which accounts for it always being in the Greek *middle* voice. This stresses the *high level of self-involvement* (interest) involved with the "welcoming-receiving." **1209** (*déxomai*) occurs 59 times in the NT.]

This reception was a kind warm welcome, but not believing  
They received but did not believe  
as a whole with a few exceptions Most did not believe .....

It wasn't for the lack of miracles that they did not believe  
because although...

John only gives two miracles in sixteen months in Galilee...  
two. He only records two. He was there for 16 months  
and did them daily. John gives us this one about the  
nobleman and the feeding of the five thousand men  
plus men and children in chapter 6. John's very  
selective. But there were many other miracles that we  
read in Matthew, Mark and Luke who also record His  
Galilean ministry. He healed a demon-possessed man.  
He healed Peter's mother-in-law and He healed many  
others who believed on Him. He healed a leper who  
received Him as Messiah, healed a paralytic, healed  
more and more. The word multitudes appears. He  
healed a Centurion's servant, raised a widow's son,  
healed Jairus' daughter, the woman who touched Him,  
two blind men, a dumb man and on and on and on it

goes. Fed five thousand, fed four thousand, walked on water, calmed a storm...all kinds of miracles. John only gives us just a couple. But there were relentless miracles day after day after day and basically was met with unbelief...it was met with unbelief.

Miracles were abundant but the heart of the people were unbelieving .

Mt 11:20–24

- 20** Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent:
- 21** “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.
- 22** But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.
- 23** And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.
- 24** But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.”

## Lk 4:14–30

Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region.

**15** And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

**16** So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.

**17** And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

**18** *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,  
Because He has anointed Me  
To preach the gospel to the poor;  
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,  
To proclaim liberty to the captives  
And recovery of sight to the blind,  
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;*

**19** *To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”*

**20** Then He closed the book, and gave *it* back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

**21** And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

**22** So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, “Is this not Joseph’s son?”

- 23** He said to them, “You will surely say this proverb to Me, ‘Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.’ ”
- 24** Then He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country.
- 25** But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land;
- 26** but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, *in the region* of Sidon, to a woman *who was* a widow.
- 27** And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.”
- 28** So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,
- 29** and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff.
- 30** Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.

With all the Words and Miracles The Heart of men were unwilling to believe.

This is a natural response to the gospel  
this is what men do naturally

So why is this the case

How can so many miracles be done and so many words be given and so much proof be put forth and large numbers of people choose to reject the claims of Christ and the Gospel

How is it that in face of all the evidence can man Die in unbelief.

First of all Lets make it clear what is is not

1. It is not because we don't have evidence
2. Its not be because there Haven't been enough miracles
3. Its not because The Bible has been proven wrong
4. Its not because Evolution is True
5. Its not because All Religions are true and there are many ways to Heaven

The reason is very simple

The Heart of Man

### **Jn 3:18–21**

**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.

**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.

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

**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.”

**Jn 8:44–47**

- 44** You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and *does not* stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.
- 45** But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.
- 46** Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?
- 47** He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."

**Je 17:9**

- 9** "The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*,  
And desperately wicked;  
Who can know it?

**Ps 53:1**

- 1** The fool has said in his heart, "*There is* no God."  
They are corrupt, and have done abominable iniquity;  
*There is* none who does good.

**Mt 15:19**



**19** For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

The problem with unbelief is not an intellectual one but a moral one.

Men love their sin. They love their self righteousness. They love self.

So they have no desire to submit in belief to Christ.

last Warning

### **Heb 3:12–14**

**12** Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;

**13** but exhort one another daily, while it is called “*Today*,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

**14** For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,