

## JOHN – HEART EXPOSED

### Introduction

- This gospel gives reasons for faith
- Also shows contrasting reactions – perversity of human heart
- This passage – begins with ‘life-giving light’ – ends with polar opposites
- In the process Jesus teaches many things
- We also see there is no meeting of minds in sense that
  - Jesus knows the truth about himself and is honest so thinks they should believe him
  - They do not want to believe that he is anything more than the carpenter from Nazareth. Will never understand him
  - Familiar!

### They challenge Jesus’ testimony – 13-20

- ‘Why should we believe you?’ – assume Jesus is like other men trying to impress
  - Good at hiding faults – if we fall out it is always other person’s fault
  - Good at pretending to ourselves – we like to think we are better than we are
- Jesus responds
  - Is true
  - He knows
  - They cannot know – ‘from below in origin and character’
    - Do not have the mind of God
    - Have no love for God so are blind to what he is doing
  - The Father also testifies of him
    - His character – evidently from God
    - His works – evidently from God
- They ridicule
  - ‘Where is your Father?’
  - Chosen not to regard the evidence of who Jesus is
  - Presuppose that Jesus is mere human they think their position is the only one – and they can mock what seems to be his evident delusion
- Note how arrogant it is to judge the message of God – whether the person of Jesus or the teaching he gives
- Note how far astray we go when we refuse to believe the truth

### Jesus warns he will abandon them – 21-27

- A time comes when God leaves sinners to themselves (Proverbs 1:23-27) – so Jesus says. ‘I am going away ... you cannot come’
  - This is the penalty for unbelief – no more striving of the Spirit of Truth – left to wander in darkness of their own making
- He warns of the consequence of that
  - ‘You will die in your sin’
    - ‘I am He’ – reference to the expected Messiah
  - The penalty still owed because they reject their Redeemer
  - The spiritual disorder of sin still holding them because they have rejected the Light of the World who gives his holy Spirit
- Their response shows they still refuse to receive the truth

- 'Who are you?'
- Jesus – 'from the beginning'
  - The earliest prophecies speak of him
  - All his signs point to who he is
  - Yet they refused to see

### **There will be a reversal of fortunes – 28-29**

- A time will come when his identity will become obvious
  - 'When you lit up the Son of Man'
  - A reference to his crucifixion
  - But also what follows – 'God has highly exalted him'
  - People see
    - Pentecost – Jesus giving the Holy Spirit
    - The transformation of believers and society
  - 'The Father has not left me alone'
    - They thought God must be opposed to him
    - In fact they were the ones abandoned by God
- This is a warning about relying on our own assumptions –
  - The outcasts would enter the kingdom of heaven and they would find themselves cast out.
  - Laodicea thought they were rich and increased with goods and needed nothing – Christ was about to spew them out of his mouth
  - How we need to humble ourselves before him and ask, 'Lord, is it I?'
- It is also an encouragement to humble believers who serve Christ among people who despise him and them
  - 'I am with you always, to the end of the age'; 'I will never leave you nor forsake you'.
  - 'He is near who justifies me' (Isaiah 50:8).
  - 'Whoever confesses me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven' (Matthew 10:32).

### **New believers need teaching – 30-38**

- Despite the hostility to Jesus there were some who believed on him (v 30-31)
  - We should learn that the noise of Islam and secularism – the 'Pride' events that are blazoned on our TVs – is not the whole of reality
  - People are coming to Christ – as in Elijah's day
  - Satan's din cannot hinder the prayers for mercy or silence the thanksgiving of a redeemed sinner
- The gospel of Jesus creates division – society likes to think it can be united – but, 'I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed'.
- Jesus teaches them
  - To continue in his word
    - Only then will they really be disciples – it is not an event but a life – beware of thorns choking the word
  - Then they will know the truth
    - Once in Christ we must learn what he has done and will do
    - Love God with your mind – not just an experience – learn!

- There is a world of difference between a family member and a servant
  - Servant may have contract terminated – for the family member it is home, this is who they are
  - If we receive Jesus the Son of God and are one with him we become family members – the relationship is changed
    - We are no longer in danger of being cast out because of our sins
    - Our position does not depend on pleasing God – though our comfort will
  - This is freedom from
    - Condemnation – even though we still often sin
    - The Law’s penalty
    - Satan’s grasp
    - Death (eventually)
- When Jesus’ opponents heard they resented what they took as criticism
  - ‘We were never slaves of anyone’ – ‘We are Abraham’s children’ , implying they already had a privileged place in God’s sight
  - But is adoption into God’s family a matter of ancestry? Or a matter of grace being shown to us?
  - Jesus pointed out the irony – though Abraham’s children (expected to follow his footsteps) they were conspiring to kill Jesus the Son of God
  - Therefore they should ask. ‘Who is my real father? Is it Abraham – then act like him? Is it God – then act like him – is it ...?’
    - Jesus gets them to consider who they really are

### **Polar opposites – 39-58**

- Child of God or child of Satan – that is the question
- Again they claim that God is their father – verse 41
- Jesus points out reasons for contradicting their self-image and their profession to be God’s people
  - Brotherly love would welcome him as one of themselves, as the only-begotten of the Father who was promised as the seed of Abraham v. 42
  - They are prejudiced against his message – v. 43
- He shows what they are really like – ‘your father the devil who was a murderer from the beginning and a liar’ – we assume Satan lies to himself as well as to others, and believes it
  - They preferred the lie to the truth
- It concludes with Jesus asserting he existed ‘I AM’ before Abraham – asserting divinity
  - It should have led them to worship and receive him gladly
- And they tried to stone him
- He came to give life more abundant – they came only to kill and to destroy

### **Conclusion**

How careful we should be to welcome, study, and practise the words of Christ – He is the Light of Life.

Beware protecting your self-image – it hinders us from receiving the correction of the Word and can lead to resentment against Jesus – pray ‘Search me O God’