The Word Saves

Bible Background • JOHN 12:27–50
Printed Text • JOHN 12:44–50 | Devotional Reading • JOHN 5:19–24

AIM for Change

By the end of this lesson, we will **RECOGNIZE** that Jesus is God, **DESIRE** a closer relationship with God through choosing to follow Christ, and **SHARE** with others the opportunity to come into the light of Christ

In Focus

Dr. Tiffany Garrett had been a physician for many years. She believed medicine was her calling and could not see herself doing anything else. In Tiffany’s relationship with God, she viewed God’s ways as truth and best. She often prayed, “God, let Your will be done in my life.” However, as God began to reveal the light of His will, Dr. Garrett struggled with living out her prayer.

She wanted to obey what God was revealing to her through prayer, but she did not agree with God’s plan. God was calling Tiffany to the mission field in Uganda. She would serve as a team member with the missionary team from her local church. She toiled within herself about what her parents, friends, colleagues, and everybody that knew her as a medical doctor would think. Dr. Garrett was divided in her heart about the decision. She could hear this Scripture in her head, “But all who reject me, and my message will be judged on the day of judgment by the truth I have spoken.” Tiffany willingly surrendered. Twenty years later, Tiffany reminisced on her struggle to follow the direction God revealed to her. She reflected on all the miracles God performed in her personal life, the people who received salvation. That one decision to follow God’s will for that season of her life. She reminisced about all the times she wondered if she had made the right decision.

Dr. Garrett concluded that trust, belief, and obedience to the Lord is never a mistake.

*What miracles or divine opportunities are you missing out on because you are rejecting the directions of the Lord? Who might come to know Jesus if you say YES?*

Keep In Mind

“I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.”

(John 12:46, KJV)
**KJV**  **John 12:44** Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. 45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. 46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. 47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. 48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. 49 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. 50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

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**The People, Places, and Times**

**The Trinity.** One thing we know about God is that He is a God of relationship. In some ways God is a relationship. We can see this in God as Trinity. The Father relates to the Son. The Son relates to the Father. The Spirit relates to the Father and Son. They are a divine community so connected that they are one in essence. Although it is hard for our minds to comprehend, God is community and wants nothing less than for the people He created to dwell in community.

**Background**

Jesus gives His farewell sermon to the Jewish people six days before the Passover. Jesus had returned to Bethany, where He had performed one of the greatest miracles: raising Lazarus from the death. The chief priests had deep-seated issues with Jesus and because of that miracle. Too many people had come to a believing faith in Jesus. The Pharisees plotted to kill Jesus (John 11:45–48).

Jesus laments over the unbelief in the land. The people had witnessed Jesus perform countless miracles, yet they persisted in unbelief. There were those who believed Jesus but would not confess their belief because of fear of the Pharisees; they loved the praises of men rather than God (John 12:42). Jesus mourns within Himself over the rejection of the words He has spoken and their ultimate rejection of God. He commends those that accept the light that He bears, and the redemption provided to them because they believe (John 12:44).

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**At-A-Glance**

- Believing and Seeing Jesus (John 12:44–45)
- Jesus Is Light in Darkness (v. 46)
- Jesus the Rejected Savior (vv. 47–48)
- Jesus Speaks as the Father Speaks (vv. 49–50)

**In Depth**

1. **Believing and Seeing Jesus (John 12:44–45)**

   Jesus had been the miracle worker in the eyes of the people. He did not work miracles behind closed doors or in an obscure fashion. Jesus worked miracles where everyone could see Him. In His farewell address to the Jewish people, Jesus laments over their unbelief in Him and who sent Him. Jesus desperately
desired for the people to believe on the God that sent Him.

Jesus mourned over their blindness to see Him and ultimately see the Father who sent Him. Unbelief is regarded in Scripture as sin. It hinders salvation, deliverance, and the working of miracles in the lives of individuals but most importantly the lives of believers (John 8:24). The sin of unbelief severs the community of believers from God.

Jesus was broken hearted because the people He was sent to save could not believe and see the goodness of God though it dwelt among them. Jesus could have demonstrated the power of God so much more and performed more miracles if only the people could see and believe. The Jewish people believed the prophecies that foretold of the coming of the Messiah and believed God would keep His word, but when God fulfilled the word of prophecy, the Jews were blinded to the excellence of Christ although He dwelt among them.

How much have you limited God’s power from working in your life because you could not see or believe in Him?

2. Jesus Is Light in Darkness (v. 46)
Darkness is the absence of light and truth in the world. It can be embedded in the lives of people as an environment where sin festers and Satan has access to steal, kill, and destroy. God sent Jesus into the world to free mankind from the bondage of sin. Jesus is the light of the world (John 8:12). Jesus came so that people would not have to succumb to the darkness of this world. When Jesus is accepted as light, darkness must yield its grip so that we can live in freedom and live abundantly.

Jesus is the only source that provides light in dark circumstances. Jesus is the only way to God who is also light (1 John 1:5). Those who truly desire light will believe Jesus is the light of the world and will no longer live in darkness.

Believing on Jesus means to accept Jesus as the Son of God and the Father who sent Him. Accepting Jesus as the light ensures power over the darkness of the world, and grants us fellowship with God the Father. Receiving Jesus as the light of the world means the power and blessing of salvation can be realized.

In what areas of your life does darkness permeate and the light of Christ need to dwell?

3. Jesus the Rejected Savior (vv. 47–48)
Jesus has been called the rejected cornerstone (Psalm 118:22). Jesus understood that His purpose for being sent into the world was to redeem humanity back to God. Jesus reminded the Jewish people that even if they rejected His words and staggered in unbelief, He did not judge them (John 12:47). Jesus affirms that He came to be salvation for the world. Jesus lamented over the rejection of the people not receiving the word of God, because the word of God was salvation.

Jesus needed those who rejected Him and His words to understand that there was a cost. Rejecting Jesus as Savior has the penalty of death. The judgment would come on the last day should rejection be their final decision. The penalty of death could be avoided by accepting Him.

Do you have a loved one that is rejecting Jesus as the Savior? What steps can you take to help them see and believe Jesus?

- Jesus Speaks as the Father Speaks (vv. 49-50)
Throughout Jesus’ ministry He reminds everyone that His purpose is only aligned to what the Father speaks and desires (John 5:19; 6:38). Every word that Jesus spoke came directly from God the Father. Every action Jesus performed is what the Father commanded.
God sent Jesus with a message to preach forgiveness of sin, the Gospel of salvation, and eternal life. Jesus spoke exactly what the Father said without deviation or flaw. Jesus proclaimed the Father’s desire for everlasting life (John 12:50). Jesus came to fulfill His purpose of salvation from sin despite the rejection and persecution.

*How has God commanded you share the Gospel of salvation? Have you followed the command?*

**Search the Scriptures**

1. Why was it important that when people believe on Jesus and His words, they believe God (John 12:44)?

2. Why did Jesus emphasize salvation and not judgment although they rejected Him (v. 47)?

**Discuss the Meaning**

1. John 12 was ultimately Christ’s message of salvation and His fulfilling the command to be a sin offering for humanity. Jesus lamented over the rejection of God’s words through Him, yet Jesus focused on the assignment to preach everlasting life. What relevance does Jesus’ commitment to the Gospel of salvation have on our own evangelism?

2. Reflect on your life before salvation, do you remember how desperately you needed a Savior? Reminisce on your salvation experience and the impact salvation has had in your life. With whom could you share your testimony of salvation within your neighborhood?

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**Liberating Lesson**

The most compelling way to convey the message of salvation is to share the purpose of Christ’s coming. It is also important to express the benefits of external life granted by the light of Jesus Christ. There is so much darkness in the world, with global disease, the senseless killing of marginalized people, corrupted government, and a divided church. All of this darkness can cause people so much pain and grief. Jesus came to provide solutions for all of these issues. When Christ is presented as Savior rather than a judge, more people freely see and believe God. Testimonies of salvation and conversion stories help make Christ reachable. As the church becomes more relatable, reachable, and tangible so does the message of Christ. Christ’s message was simple and simple is what people need right now.

**Application for Activation**

- Individual believers must share their testimonies with unbelieving family members, friends, and neighbors. Pray for opportunities to share testimonies with unbelievers. Commit to individual evangelism.
- The Church must show how Christ has liberated them from darkness so that the world will know Christ’s freedom. Create opportunities and forums to share about the good the Church has done, and the evils the Church used to permit but now has rejected.

**Follow the Spirit**

What God wants me to do?

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**Remember Your Thoughts**

Special insights I have learned?

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Daily Bible Readings

**MONDAY**
You Must Be Born from Above
(John 3:1–8)

**TUESDAY**
Jesus Brings Eternal Life
(John 3:9–17)

**WEDNESDAY**
My Rock, Fortress, and Deliverer
(2 Samuel 22:2–7)

**THURSDAY**
Salvation Comes from God
(Psalm 62)

**FRIDAY**
Don’t Neglect God’s Message of Salvation
(Hebrews 2:1–9)

**SATURDAY**
Father, Glorify Your Name!
(John 12:27–36)

**SUNDAY**
Jesus, the Light of the World
(John 12:44–50)