

# (John) 17 - the Light Shinning

by Alan Redpath

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*Jesus' declaration of glory and his choice to obey God's will even unto death are the keys to understanding the significance of John 17.*

**Duration:** 44:13

**Scripture:** John 12:27-28, John 12:32, John 12:36, John 12:44-47

**Topics:** "John"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the verse 'While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.' The sermon is divided into three main points: opportunity, responsibility, and transformation. The preacher emphasizes that while we have the opportunity to believe in the light, which is Jesus, it is our responsibility to respond and believe in Him. This belief in Jesus brings about a transformation in our lives, making us sons of light. The preacher also highlights John's verdict on Jesus' work, emphasizing that belief in Christ is identified with belief in God, a vision of Christ is a vision of God, faith in Christ dispels all darkness, and Jesus came to save the world, not to judge it.

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## Transcript

Which, you may remember, we divided into five sections. We dealt with the first two yesterday, Jesus and the Disciples, Jesus and the Multitude, and Jesus and the World. We were looking at that, but didn't quite get through it.

I want to read that portion to you once again, because it's so important. Could we read through to verse 43? I'll take from verse 20. No, from verse 27.

Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? No, for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then a voice came from heaven, I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.

The crowd standing by heard it, and said that it had thundered. Others said an angel had spoken to him. Jesus answered, This voice has come for your sake, not for mine.

Now is the judgment of this world. Now shall the ruler of this world be cast out, and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself. He said this to show by what death he was to die.

The crowd answered him, We have heard from the Lord that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man? Jesus said to them, The light is with you for a little while, for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, lest the darkness overtake you.

He who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light. When Jesus had said this, he departed and hid himself from them.

Though he had done so many signs before them, yet they did not believe in him. It was that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled. Lord, who has believed? I report.

And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe. For Isaiah again said, He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they should see with their eyes and perceive with their heart, and turn for me to heal them. Isaiah said this because he saw his glory and spoke of him.

Nevertheless, many evil, even of the authorities, believed in him. But for fear of the Pharisees, they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue. For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

This is the word of the Lord. Now this morning we're going to look at the last three of these sections of the chapter. Actually, we did take a look at the second part, but I want to be sure that you've got hold of this, because really it is one of the most important things in the Christian life.

You've got the fact, I hope, that these Greeks came to ask Philip and said to him, Sir, we want to see Jesus. You've got that down in your note. Now, you notice the declaration in verse twenty-three.

Jesus answers them, The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Not to be crucified, but to be glorified. That's the declaration.

And then the illustration in verse twenty-four. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.

And then the application in verses twenty-five and twenty-six. He who loves his life loses it. And he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

If anyone serves me, he must follow me. And where I am, there shall my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

Now, just be clear that you have in your notes clearly down there, fruit is by dying, not by doing. And sacrifice is the secret of producing it. Sacrifice is the secret of producing it.

And Jesus applies this principle to himself and to his disciples. Travail must precede satisfaction. Isaiah fifty-three, verse eleven.

He shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied. And the statement in verse twenty-five, are you with me? The statement in verse twenty-five is written in every gospel. In every gospel.

I gave you the references, so that you could have them. They are Matthew ten, verse thirty-nine, Mark eight, verse thirty-five, Luke nine, verse twenty-four. That's a tremendously important verse.

He who loves his life loses it. And he who hates his life, hates it, in this world, will keep it for eternal life. Now, some of you have found that very hard to accept, and hard to understand.

He who hates his life. Hating the thing that God had given him? Why should I hate that? Well, I don't want to backtrack and go over things I've said to you before, but I want to be sure that you get hold of it. Hate, in the Bible, doesn't mean what you think it does.

I mean, when you hate somebody, the next step is you're going to kill them. And, uh, that could never be what Jesus meant. Hatred in the Bible is, um, well, Romans nine, verse thirteen.

Romans nine, verse thirteen, where Paul says, God chose, loved Jacob, and hated Esau. Well, God didn't hate Esau, in the sense that you and I interpret that word. It really means God loved Jacob, but rejected Esau.

Rejected him. And again, not wishing to repeat over and over again what I said before, but I think yesterday mentioned Luke, chapter fourteen, as an example of the use of this word. Luke fourteen.

And, uh, where Jesus said in verse twenty-six, if anyone comes to me and doesn't hate his father, mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, there you are, he cannot be my disciple. That's a terrific statement. It really is.

It really pins you right back. Of course, uh, here again I may be saying what I've already told you, forgive me if I am, but I want to underline it. Most, it's helpful sometimes to find a commentary, but most of them don't comment on the thing you're looking for, and then sometimes you find yourself in a strong disagreement.

Uh, the commentaries I have, most of them say, that means, in Luke fourteen, twenty-six, that your love for your family must be like hatred compared to your love for Jesus. Comparative. Now, I can't accept that.

I can't accept it because Paul said, husbands, love your wives even as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. That's not comparison, it's equality. That's love.

And you love, you show your love by sacrifice. Husbands, love your wives even as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. But, if I put the word reject here, if anyone comes to me and does not reject his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, reject the whole lot, yes, even and his own life, even his own life, reject it.

Does that make it more simple or still complicated? Well, I think I used the illustration of a businessman who, a director of a business, goes to work at nine o'clock in the morning, and from then till about one, he issues instructions, he issues orders, gets things done, of course it's in private enterprise, and all his instructions are carried out, and he returns home at five o'clock in the evening. Does he then proceed to issue orders to his wife like that? He'd better not try. Does he issue orders to his teenage children like that? He'd better not.

He'll have trouble on his hands. What does he do? I'll tell you what he does. He rejects his own life.

He rejects his business life and comes home and loves like a husband and a father should do. He rejects the one in favor of the other. Now, that's the thought in Luke 14 and in John 12.

Except a man rejects his own life, his right to it, turns his back on it, turns right round the other way in favor of the Lord Jesus. He cannot be my disciple. He rejects his right, his right to his family.

We are families, our parents, our brothers and sisters, our wives, our husbands, what have you. They're God's gift to us. And we acknowledge that.

And he has a right to help himself to them at any time. I haven't a right to that, he has. And I acknowledge that.

That any time he can help himself to any of them, it's a great thrill when you're a father or mother, you'll recognize this, it's a great thrill when you have the valedictory service one day of your son or daughter who's going to the mission field. But on that day, you have a tear in one eye and a twinkle in the other. Because you won't see them again for four years and the tear is there.

But the twinkle in the will of God, that's there too. See what I mean? You've rejected your right to them. You said, take, help yourself Lord, to them.

Use them in your service. Accept a man. Hate not.

Reject not his right to his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, and even to his own life. He can't be my disciple. Now I hope that clarifies the thing for you.

You're just turning your back on your right to yourself. That's it. And until you do that, you cannot be his disciple.

That's Christian revolution. That's what the world needs to see, waits to see today. Christians in revolt against themselves.

And that's the limit. Because you see, that man has crucified his right to live. And the Holy Spirit only anoints in service a man who's faced crucifixion in his life.

I think I'd better repeat that. The Holy Spirit never anoints myself. He anoints, he anoints the life that has rejected itself in favor of Jesus.

Completely. Well, there's the declaration, illustration, the application. Now, let's move on.

If you haven't got that, come and ask me sometime. I'm always available by dialing 3-0. And we'd love to talk with you personally, anytime.

Got it? All right. Let's just move on a stage. Notice the conflict of Jesus here in verse 27 to 30.

Verse 27 to 30. What a battle. I think I'd like to read verse 27 and verse 28 in a slightly different way.

If you've got it written in your Bible like this, your version. Now is my soul troubled. What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour.

No, for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify thy name. I would like to read those this way.

I hope you don't think this is heresy. What shall I say? Shall I say, Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause, came I to this hour.

No, I will say, Father, glorify thy name. Now, that's the way round I would like to put it. And I think it emphasizes what it's all about.

I'll read that again. Father, save me from this hour. What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour.

But for this cause, came I to this hour. No, I will say, Father, glorify thy name. You see, that's the choice that Jesus made.

Get it? As God, he couldn't possibly sin. But as man, he was able not to sin. I'll repeat that.

As God, Jesus couldn't possibly sin. But as man, he was able not to sin. And as man, he chose the path of obedience, even unto death.

But he needed death. So his choice. Everyone repeat it? I've forgotten it now.

Oh yes. As God, he couldn't possibly sin. As man, he was able not to sin.

It reminds me of Major Thomas, in one of his famous statements. You may have heard it. Jesus, who was never ever less than God, came to behave as though he was never ever more than men.

In order that we, who are never ever more than men, might behave as though we were never ever less than God. Now, by the time you've heard that, you've got your ears pinned right back, and you take about half an hour to understand what it is. Meanwhile, he's off on something else.

And I'm just quoting that. But that's a great statement. But it needs thinking into.

Jesus had to make a choice. And if he had acted any minute and drawn on his power as God, his whole purpose of redemption would have failed. Oh, just read the temptations of Christ with that in view.

As the devil takes him up into a high mountain and shows him all the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them, some glory. And he says, fall down and worship me. Help yourself to them.

Take them. Fall down and worship me. And I love the literal translation of that, when Jesus answered, get out of here.

Get out. It is written, you shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve. He was the servant of the cross.

I'm not interested, he says, in going back to heaven alone. But I'm not interested in taking these kingdoms which you've messed up and destroyed. I'm going to change them into the kingdom of light and life and power by way of a Calvary.

Jesus was the servant of the cross. There was a choice. He could have acted as God.

He refused to. He acted only as man. His rescue would have meant our ruin.

You might like to jot that down. His rescue would have meant our ruin. His death meant our deliverance.

His rescue, repeating, would have meant our ruin. His death meant our deliverance. And when he said, Father glorify thy name, a voice came from heaven.

Verse 28, I have glorified it and will glorify it again. Heaven opened three times in Jesus' life to bear witness to him. You might like to note these.

At his baptism, Mark chapter 1 verse 11, at his baptism, on the mount of transfiguration, Mark chapter 9 verse 7, the mount of transfiguration, and here in verse 28. Got those? Looking on a verse or two, verse 32, I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself. That's one of the greatest verses in the Bible.

Does that mean to say that because of Calvary, everybody will be saved and everybody will get to heaven? Uh-uh. Listen and jot it down. Right? One sacrifice on the cross.

Adequate, a-d-e-q-u-a-t, adequate for the salvation of everybody from creation until now. Adequate. But effective only in the lives of those who believe and repent.

Repeat, Calvary, adequate for the salvation of everybody. Everywhere. At all times.

But effective only in the lives of those who believe and repent. I, if I am lifted up, will draw all men to myself. That is, all men without distinction, not all men without exception.

All men without distinction, not all men without exception. Jesus draws, and having drawn, then he sends. He draws, then he sends.

Therefore, I must yield to his love, verse 32, I will draw all men to myself. I must yield to his love. I must walk in his light, verse 35.

Jesus said to them, the light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have light. Jesus will draw, then I must walk in his light, verse 35.

And notice verse 36. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you will become sons of light. Three points for a sermon on that verse.

While you have the light, that's opportunity. Believe in the light, that's responsibility. Become sons of light, that's transformation.

I'll give you that again. While you have the light, that's opportunity. Believe in the light, that's response.

Become sons of light, that's transformation. I'd like to come and hear you when you preach that one. Try it out next week.

Jesus and the world. Now come with me to the second of these things here. John's verdict on Jesus' work, verse 36 to 43.

John's verdict on Jesus' work. I mean by, as I said yesterday, John, of course, the writer of the gospel. John's verdict.

We all have to, under the necessity of forming judgments on things and people, even if we don't pronounce a verdict. In writing this passage, he's writing it about 60 years afterwards. 60 years after it all happened.

And he records the effect of Jesus' ministry. Twofold, really. Verse 37, they believed not in him.

They did not believe in him. And verse 42, many, even of the rulers, authorities, believed on him. Always these two issues are preached in the gospel.

Many believed on him, many believed not. Now notice something here, and notice it carefully. The rejection of Jesus by the Jew is shown to be the fulfillment of prophecy.

Verse 38 to verse 41. It was that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled, Lord, who has believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe. For Isaiah again said, He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they should see with their eyes, and perceive with their heart, and turn for me to heal them.

Jesus, Isaiah, said this because he saw his glory and spoke of him. Nevertheless, many, even of the authorities, believed in him. But for fear of the Pharisees, they did not confess it, lest he should be put out of the synagogue.

For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. Now you've got to be mighty careful here that you get this right. There were some who believed in Christ, but wouldn't confess him for fear of being put out of the synagogue.

Verse 42 and 43. Reason, they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. Which do I prefer? They didn't turn.

Verse 39. Here's where you need to be careful when you're thinking. I'll give it to you very slowly because it's important.

Unbelief was not compulsory. Unbelief was not compulsory. Okay, I'm not going too fast I hope.

They could not because they would not. That was due to their own attitude, not to divine action. Due to their own attitude, not to divine action.

The light was shining, but they turned to their own darkness. Now very carefully put down. If I close my mind to Jesus, he may close it permanently.

If I close my mind to Jesus, he may close it permanently. And here's what I especially want you to get. But don't imagine from these verses that they did not believe in order to fulfill prophecy.

But that in not believing, they were in fact fulfilling it. Now let me just say that again. Where I said they did not turn because they couldn't.

Verse 39. If I close my mind to Christ, if I go on closing my mind to Jesus and refuse constantly, he may close it permanently. You can go on in continued rejection, unbelief, and refusing to listen to what he has to say to you until, until you just can't.

And your mind is shut. Desperate. But don't imagine from these verses that they did not believe in order that prophecy might be fulfilled.

But in not believing, they were in fact fulfilling it. Incidentally, this is only for Bible students. I hope you're all that.

But I'm thinking some of you may be going on for further studies. Some of you have studied maybe the prophecy of Isaiah. Have you done that at school or anybody been through Isaiah with you? No? Not? No, apparently not.

Well, you see, that's a very important book. Both of these quotations in verses 38 and 40 are from Isaiah. The first quotation in verse 38 to verse 39, first part of it, are from the second part of Isaiah, which is chapters 40 through 66, the second part.

The second quotation, verse 40 onwards, is from the first part of Isaiah, in chapters 1 through 39. And both quotations are said to be from the same person. Now that may mean nothing to you, but so many people preach that there's two Isaiahs.

One in chapter 1 through 39, another in verses 39 through 40 to 66, because the two parts are so unlike each other. The second part of Isaiah is Messianic, and here is authority for them both being written by the same man. That's just a matter of Bible interpretation.

Come on with me now to the last. John's verdict on Jesus' work, verse 36 to 43. And the last, Jesus' verdict on his own work, verses 44 to 50.

If anyone hears my sayings and does, sorry. Jesus cried out and said, who who he who believes in me believes not in me, but in him who sent me. And he who sees me sees him who sent me.

I have come as light into the world, but whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. If anyone hears my sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I didn't come to judge the world, but to save the world.

He who rejects me and does not receive me at my sayings has a judge. The word that I have spoken will be his judge on that day. For I have not spoken on my own authority.

The Father who sent me has given me commandment, what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has bidden me.

In verse 44 to 46, Jesus speaks of his person, who he is. This is 44 to 46. And of those who believe, he who believes in me believes not in me, but in him who sent me.

In verses 47 to 50, he speaks of his words. And those who don't believe, verse 48, he who rejects me and does not receive my sayings has a judge. The word that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day.

Those who don't believe. Jot this down. No one can have faith in his person who rejects his words.

Because his word comes with absolute authority. He, Jesus speaks in his word, I must listen. Because he knows what he's saying.

A lot of people who speak just don't know what they're saying. Now notice, finally, just time to do this. The teaching of Jesus here.

Significant things about it which show the true nature of belief and unbelief. Significant things. Significant.

S-I-G-N-I-F-I-C-N-A-N-T. Significant facts in the teaching of Christ. That means important.

Which reveal the true nature of belief and unbelief. I'll give them to you. Put them down.

And then, uh, get them in your mind and heart. One. Belief in Christ is identified with belief in God.

Verse 44. Belief in Christ is identified as belief in God. Verse 45.

A vision of Christ is a vision of God. He who sees me, sees him who sent me. Got that? Verse 46.

Faith in Christ dispels all darkness. I've come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. Faith in Christ dispels all darkness.

Four. Verse 47. He came not to judge the world, but to save it.

I do not, if anyone hears my sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him, for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. Four facts in Theresa's teaching. Revealing the true nature of unbelief and belief.

Watch it. I mean by that, uh, be sure you're familiar with those. I'll give them again.

Verse 44. Belief in Christ is identified with belief in God. Verse 45.

A vision of Christ is a vision of God. Verse 46. Faith in Jesus dispels all darkness.

Verse 47. He didn't come to judge the world, but to save it. And notice, verse 49.

The teaching of Jesus didn't come from himself, but from God. Verse 49. Didn't originate in himself, but in God.

And one more sentence. The word and the will of God, expressed through the Son of God, Jesus, bring eternal life. Verse 50.

The word and the will of God, expressed through the Son of God, bring eternal life.

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