

Sermon Outline

“LIFE IN HIS NAME”:
THE PURSUIT OF WHOLENESS AND THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

THE FATHER LOVES THE SON

JOHN 3:31-36

I. Introduction

II. Lessons Thus Far

A. Jesus' dialogue with Nicodemus (Jn 3:1-21)

1. Eternal life comes by the regeneration from the Holy Spirit and by looking to the Son of Man in faith.
2. God loves the world and shows this love by sending his Son to save the world.
 - a. Those who believe in the Son will escape condemnation and enter the eternal life.
 - b. Those who do not believe in the Son will remain in their sins.

B. John the Baptist (Jn 3:22-30)

1. John reminds his disciples that he is not the Main Event, Jesus is.
2. God is ultimately the One who is behind this mass movement of people toward Jesus.
3. Jesus is the heavenly Bridegroom who has come for his people
4. The work of John and of all believers is to direct the eyes of people to Jesus for their salvation.

C. In 3:22-30, we have a restatement of truths. But we also see something more: God's love for the world is itself based on his love for his own Son.

III. The Son Is Above All (John 3:21)

A. Verse 21: “He who comes from above is above all. He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven is above all.”

1. This recalls Jesus' words to Nicodemus in verses 12-13: “If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.”
2. When John refers to Jesus as “He who comes from above,” he's reflecting on those words Jesus said to Nicodemus and explaining why Jesus can be our Savior.

3. The reason Jesus is our Savior is because of his origins—Jesus “comes from above” (cf. 18:36-27).
4. The roots of Jesus’ messiah-ship lie in his heavenly origin, his deity.
5. It is appropriate for Jesus to be the Christ, because Jesus is the heavenly Son of Man and the Son of God.

B. Two important truths are in view here.

1. The divine origins of the Lord Jesus
2. The supremacy and pre-eminence of Jesus.
—The fact that he “comes from above” means *he is* “above all.”

IV. No One Receives His Testimony (John 3:32)

- A. How did people treat Jesus? “He bears witness to what he has seen and heard, yet no one receives his testimony” (v 32).
- B. When John says “no one receives his testimony,” he means, as Calvin explains, “that compared with the vast crowd of unbelievers there are very few, almost no, believers” (Calvin, *The Gospel According to St. John 1-10*, 83).
- C. This echoes what our Lord said to Nicodemus in verses 10, 11: “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony.”

V. Concerning Those Who Receive Jesus’ Testimony (John 3:33)

- A. Thankfully, the “no one” of verse 32 is not an absolute “no one,” because John is confident that God will raise up believers.
- B. John adds: “Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true” (v 33).
 1. Jesus is in the courtroom of the world.
 2. Every word that Jesus speaks, every teaching he gives, is as good as a sworn public testimony.
 3. Those who receive or believe what Jesus has said are themselves testifying “that God is true.”

VI. The Holy Spirit without Measure (John 3:34)

- A. Verse 34 explains *why* Jesus’ testimony is true: “For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure.”

- B. Why does Jesus speak the words of God completely and accurately? It's because God has given him the Holy Spirit "without measure."
- C. As such, there are no limits to the influence of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' life.
 1. Unlike us, Jesus has no unwillingness to obey the leadings of the Holy Spirit.
 2. Jesus was the only man in the world who knew what it means to be completely devoted to God and his will.
- D. Therefore, Jesus' words are the words of God, and Jesus is in a position to give the Holy Spirit.

VII. The Father Loves the Son (John 3:35)

- A. God gives the Holy Spirit without measure to Jesus for the same reason he has given all to Jesus.
—This is where it all begins: "The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand" (v 35).
- B. The Father's heart flows in endless waves of love toward his Son.
This is a love that has always been there.
This is inexhaustible love.
This is steadfast love of the highest degree.
This is *God's* kind of love.
- C. From this love, the Father promises his darling Son: "Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession" (Ps 2:8).
- D. All of God's dealings with us stem from this one thing—his infinite love for the Son.

VIII. Whoever Believes in the Son Has Eternal Life (John 3:36)

- A. Because the Father loves the Son and has given him all things, "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him" (v 36).

IX. Falling into Love

The love at the heart of the universe is not some vague feeling of niceness or kindness. It's a love with a face. It's a love with personhood. It's a love defined *within* God himself. This is the love that the Father has for the Son. Every experience of love; the love for our spouses, children, friends, or

beautiful things, are but splinters, fragments, or spin-offs of this one great love at the basis of all existence. God loves the world. Yet, his love for the world is itself rooted in his love for his Son. God wants his Son to have the world—and to have us as his own. When we believe in Jesus, we fall into the love of God.

Questions for Reflection

1. Was there anything in particular about today's sermon that blessed and encouraged you?
2. Was there anything that you disagree with or found difficult to accept?
3. Jesus' divine origin is the basis of his messiahship (v 21). Discuss.
4. According to v 32, how did people respond to Jesus?
5. How should we understand the phrase "no one receives his testimony" in this context?
6. "Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true" (v 33). Discuss.
7. According to v 34, *why* is Jesus' testimony true? Why can we trust in what Jesus says?
8. What does it mean that Jesus had the Holy Spirit "without measure"?
9. "The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand" (v 35). What is the weight or significance of this statement?
10. How does Ps 2:8 relate to Jn 3:35?
11. What results from belief in the Son? What is consequence of not believing/disobeying the Son?