**The Gospel of John:**

**Walk While You Have The Light**

*John 12:35-43*

**Context**

Although we are made in the image of our Creator, He is nothing like us (**Gen 1:26-28; Psalm 50:21**). One clear distinction is His patience and longsuffering—especially toward the wicked who continually offend His holiness. God would be fully just in completely destroying all those who transgress His standards. Rather, He demonstrates a bearing and patience with them in ways that are extraordinary. His patience is infinitely perfect.

**Psalm 103:8***—The Lord is compassionate and gracious, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness.*

**2 Chronicles 30:9***—For if you return to the Lord, your brothers and your sons will find compassion before those who led them captive and will return to this land. For the Lord your God is gracious and compassionate, and will not turn His face away from you if you return to Him.”*

**Exodus 34:6***—Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth.*

**Jonah 4:2***—He prayed to the Lord and said, “Please Lord, was not this what I said while I was still in my own country? Therefore in order to forestall this I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity.*

**2 Peter 3:9***—The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*

God initially showed His incredible patience in the Garden of Eden. Although Adam sinned, He lived for 930 years (**Genesis 5:5**). Before God flooded the entire world in judgment, He had Noah (the Preacher of God’s righteousness), preach for 120 years before He sealed the Ark (**Gen 6:5-7; 1 Peter 3:25**).

**Genesis 6:1-3**—*Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them,****2****that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose.****3****Then the Lord said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.”*

His kindness extends to individual sinners.

**Romans 2:4**—*Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?*

People are prone to think that because He is patient that they will get away with sin. Not so.

**Ecclesiastes 8:11**—*Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons of men among them are given fully to do evil.*

**Galatians 6:7-8**—*Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.****8****For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.*

His patience does end. What we see in this portion of John’s gospel is the Lord's final calling to the nation to believe in Him or deal with the consequences—of both unbelief and belief.

**The last call to believe in the Light—or else**

1. **The last gracious call to believe**

**John 12:35-36***—So Jesus said to them, “For a little while longer the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes.****36****While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light.”*

1. They determined Him to be unqualified
   1. The Son of Man would not die, but establish the Kingdom (**12:34**)
   2. Jesus spoke of His impending death (**12:34**)
   3. Their hopes were shattered and their verdict was in
2. Despite their rejection, He still compassionately appeals to them
3. He also warns them

**Matthew 23:38-39**—*Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!* ***39****For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’”*

**Luke 19:42-44**—*saying, “If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes.* ***43****For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side,****44****and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.”*

1. The Light would only be with them for a little while longer

**John 1:4-9**—*In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.****5****The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.* ***6****There came a man sent from God, whose name was John.****7****He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him.* ***8****He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light.* ***9****There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.*

**John 8:12**—*Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”*

**John 9:5**—*While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.”*

**2 Corinthians 4:6**—*For God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*

* 1. *Little While*—the brevity of His remaining time on earth

**John 7:33**—*Therefore Jesus said, “For a little while longer I am with you, then I go to Him who sent Me.* 

**John 13:33**—*Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’*

**John 16:16**—“*A little while, and you will no longer see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me.”*

**2 Corinthians 6:2**—*for He says, “At the acceptable time I listened to you, And on the day of salvation I helped you.” Behold, now is “the acceptable time,” behold, now is “the day of salvation”*

1. Walk while you have the Light
   1. So that darkness will not overtake you
   2. The one walking in darkness cannot see

**1 John 2:11**—*But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.*

* 1. Walking at night was not a common practice then

1. Believe in the Light
   1. You become sons of the Light

**1 Thessalonians 5:5**—*for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness*

**1 John 1:5-7**—*This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.****6****If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;****7****but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.*

* 1. You radiate the Light of God’s glory in Christ to the world

**Matthew 5:14-16**—“*You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden;****15****nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.****16****Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*

**Ephesians 5:8**—*for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light*

**Philippians 2:15**—*so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world*

1. When people persistently reject
   1. He removes His grace

**Psalm 81:11-12**—“*But My people did not listen to My voice, And Israel did not obey Me.* ***12****“So I gave them over to the stubbornness of their heart, To walk in their own devices.*

**Isaiah 63:10**—*But they rebelled And grieved His Holy Spirit; Therefore He turned Himself to become their enemy, He fought against them.*

**Cf. Romans 1:18-32**

**Hebrews 10:26-27**—*For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,****27****but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries.*

* 1. They suffer the wrath and judgment of God in eternal punishment

1. He went away and hid Himself from them
   1. Concluding Jesus’ public ministry

**John 8:21**—*Then He said again to them, “I go away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin; where I am going, you cannot come.”*

**Matthew 23:39**—F*or I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’*

* 1. This is a judicial warning (given His comments)
  2. So much evidence but such hard hearts  
       
     **John 1:11**—*He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.*

1. **The disastrous causes to not believe**

**John 12:37-43**—*But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him.****38****This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: “Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”****39****For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again,****40****“He has blinded their eyes and He hardened their heart, so that they would not see with their eyes and perceive with their heart, and be converted and I heal them.”****41****These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him.****42****Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue;****43****for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.*

1. Regardless of His works, they still did not believe
   1. Power of sin (**John 3:19-20**)
   2. Satan (**John 8:44**)
   3. They are blind
2. Do not underestimate the depravity of the human condition (**1 Cor 2:14**)  
   1. No one denied His miracles (**John 11:47**)
   2. Without a regenerated heart, the mind and reason are inadequate unto salvation
3. Israel’s unbelief
   1. Divine
      1. A fulfillment of prophecy (**Is 53:1**)
         1. Who has believed our report?
         2. The arm of the Lord has been revealed (through His miracles)
      2. God has blinded their eyes (**Is 53:10**)

**Romans 9:18**—*So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.*

Cf. **Romans 9-11**

* + 1. It was a judgment on God’s part for years of rebellion and forsaking His truth
    2. Out of their rejection, salvation has come to the Gentiles (**Romans 11:11**)
    3. God’s plans will be accomplished (**Genesis 50:20**)
    4. Thinking they could see, they were blind (**Matthew 15:14; John 9:40-41**)
  1. Human
     1. God blinding their eyes does not mean that they are faultless
     2. Their will is very much in play; they choose evil

God’s judicial harness is not presented as the capricious manipulation of an arbitrary potentate cursing morally neutral or even morally pure beings, but as a holy condemnation of a guilty people who are condemned to do and be what they themselves have chosen.[[1]](#footnote-1)

* + 1. Those who persistently harden their hearts against God may be hardened by God
       1. Pharaoh hardened his heart 10 times
       2. God hardened his heart 10 times

**Isaiah 55:6**—*Seek the Lord while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near.*

* + - 1. They would not believe (**v40**) so they could not believe (**v39**)

1. The Pharisees were not confessing Him
   1. Because of fear of excommunication
   2. They loved the approval of man vs God
   3. Indicating their faith was superficial

**John 5:44**—*How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?*

**James 4:4**—*You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*

**Matthew 16:26**—*For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?*

1. **The critical outcomes of both**

**John 12:44-50**—*And Jesus cried out and said, “He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me but in Him who sent Me.****45****He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me.****46****I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.****47****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.****48****He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.****49****For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak.****50****I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me.”*

1. He who believes in Me, believes in Him who sent Me

**John 5:24***—“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.*

**John 8:19***—So they were saying to Him, “Where is Your Father?” Jesus answered, “You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also.”*

**John 10:38***—**but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.”*

* 1. You cannot believe in the Father without believing in the Son
  2. *He who sees the Son sees the One who sent Me (***John 14:9***)*

1. *He is the light that has come into the world*

**John 8:12***—Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”*

**Colossians 1:15***—He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.*

**Hebrews 1:3a***—And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power…*

1. *Those who believe will not remain in darkness*
   1. He rescues us

**Colossians 1:13***—For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son*

* 1. We become sons of light (**vv35-36**)

1. Those who hear and do not obey
   1. Unbelievers (**3:36; Romans 2:8**)
   2. Sons of disobedience (**Eph 2:2: 5:6**)
2. At His first coming, He did not judge
   1. He came instead to save

**John 3:17**—*For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.*

**Luke 9:56a**—*for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them…*

**1 John 4:14**—*We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.*

1. He will judge in the future

**Acts 17:31**—…*because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”*

**Romans 2:16**—*on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.*

1. Those who reject will be judged
   1. The means of not being judged is to believe
   2. His words are what will judge them at the last day
   3. They condemn themselves

**Hebrews 12:25**—*See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven.*

**John 12:49-50**—*For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak.****50****I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me.”*

1. Fully God, the Son submits to the Father
   1. He speaks only what the Father has given Him
   2. The words are unchangeable and absolute

**Matthew 5:18**—*For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.*

**1 Peter 1:25**—*But the word of the Lord endures forever. And this is the word which was preached to you.*

**So what?**

God’s chosen nation received many blessings, but rejected their Messiah. They were judged because of their rejection. There is overwhelming evidence of the truth of who Jesus is. Do not neglect so great a salvation by a refusal to believe. Repent and embrace the claims of the Gospel while it is still called today.

1. # DA Carson, *The Gospel According To John,*448-449.

   [↑](#footnote-ref-1)