

The Gospel According to John

Healing and Renewal by the Light of Christ

John 12:37-50



John 12:37-40

But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him. 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?”

For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again,

“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.”

John 12:41-43

These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory,
and he spoke of Him.

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;
for they loved the approval of men
rather than the approval of God.

John 12:44-48

And Jesus cried out and said,
“He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me but in Him
who sent Me. He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me.
I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone
who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.
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. 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.

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.
I know that His commandment is eternal life;
therefore the things I speak,
I speak just as the Father has told Me.”

Main Idea

The human heart is sick with sin and in need of a restoration and renewal that can only come by the Light of Christ, the only source of true and lasting life.

Restoration and Renewal

What is the cause of unbelief?



John 12:37

But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him.

For many, this was both confusing and constraining in respect to the claims of Christ.

If Jesus was who He claimed to be, why weren't the Jews believing in Him?

It was Isaiah's question, too.

Isaiah 53:1

Who has believed our message?

And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

What is the cause of unbelief?

The sin sickness of the soul.

John 12:38-40

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God did not create corrupted people
unable to believe -- it was Adam's sin
that plunged his posterity into darkness,
blinding all eyes and hardening all hearts.
God's acts of blinding and hardening
are continuing judgments.

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There is a fundamental sin sickness
of the soul that must be healed
if there is to be faith.

What is the cause of unbelief?

The sin sickness of the soul.

The core corruptions of the heart.

This was a pre-existing condition!

John 12:39-40

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Deuteronomy 9:13

The LORD spoke further to me, saying,
“I have seen this people, and indeed,
it is a stubborn people.”

This isn't unique to the Jews!

Genesis 6:5

Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that **every intent of the thoughts of his heart** was only evil continually.

Ephesians 4:17-18

So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer **just as the Gentiles** also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, **because of the hardness of their heart.**

This corruption of the heart is a radical reorientation and distortion of core values and desires.

Galatians 5:17

For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

Consider the degree of corruption required to exchange the eternal delights of the incomparable God for the temporal pleasures and values of a wicked world.

An example of this distortion from our text

John 12:42-43

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;
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This exchange reveals a radical
reversal of values that can only be
explained by core corruptions!

Disbelief is not due to a lack of information or of demonstration.

It is due to the sinfulness and corruption of the human heart.

Restoration and Renewal

What is the cause of unbelief?

What is needed for belief?



What is needed for belief?

Regeneration

John 12:39-40

For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again,
*“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.***”

What is this healing?

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The healing needed is a regeneration of the entire inner person that enlivens the mind, the heart, and the will.

In this sense, faith is a gift of God -- *the produce* of a heart that has been fundamentally changed.

Ephesians 2:8

For by grace you have been saved through faith;
and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.

It is for this reason that
our faith is not a work that earns
salvation but a gift of God's grace
whereby salvation is received.

What is needed for belief?

Regeneration

Renewal

The Christian life is a life of faith
from beginning to end, as Paul says,
“For in [the gospel] the righteousness of God
is revealed *from faith to faith*; as it is written,
‘But the righteous shall live by faith.’”
(Romans 1:17)

John 12:46

“I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.”

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believing in Me **will not remain in darkness.”**

The believer *has been* transferred
from the domain of darkness
into the kingdom of the Beloved Son.

Yet there remains a long road of
inculturation that involves progressive
renewal of the inner person.

2 Corinthians 4:16

Therefore we do not lose heart,
but though our outer man is decaying,
yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

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Colossians 3:9-10

Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and **have put on the new self** who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.

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Remember the condition of the unbeliever:

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that **they might not see the light** of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

The unbeliever is blind to the light of the gospel and cannot see the glory of Christ who is the image of God and, therefore, cannot believe.

But...

2 Corinthians 4:6

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.

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Jesus is the revelation of God's glory.

Look at what Jesus says of Himself:

John 12:44-46

And Jesus cried out and said, “He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me but in Him who sent Me.

He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me.

I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.

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Jesus came as the perfect revelation of God
and of God's gospel of grace.

Take note of what John said about Isaiah:

John 12:39-41

For this reason they could not believe, **for Isaiah said again,**
*“He has blinded their eyes, and He hardened their heart;
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These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory,
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These things Isaiah said **because he saw His glory,**
and he spoke of Him.

Isaiah saw the glory of Christ,
and he spoke of Him.

When did Isaiah see the glory of Christ?

Isaiah 6:1

In the year of King Uzziah's death
I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted,
with the train of His robe filling the temple.

When did Isaiah see the glory of Christ?

Isaiah 6:8-10

Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying,
“Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?”

Then I said, “Here am I. Send me!” He said,
“Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on listening, but do not
perceive; Keep on looking, but do not understand.’

Render the hearts of this people insensitive, their ears dull,
and their eyes dim, otherwise they might see with their eyes,
hear with their ears, understand with their hearts,
and return and be healed.”

John understood Jesus to be the Word incarnate, the glorious King come into the world to reveal the Light of God's gospel to the world.

John 12:46

“I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone
who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.”

So, what are we saying?

“Faith comes from hearing,
and hearing by the word of Christ.”

(Romans 10:17)

Restoration and Renewal

What is the cause of unbelief?

What is needed for belief?

What are the results of faith?



John 12:46

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What are the results of this believing?

True life

John 12:49-50

“The Father Himself who sent Me has given Me
a commandment as to what to say and what to speak.
I know that His commandment is eternal life;
therefore the things I speak,
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The life that God commands is not a future life to be hoped for someday.

Nor is it a theoretical life that may or may not respond to Christ now.

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It is true life with eyes to see, a heart to understand, and a will to obey.

What are the results of this believing?

True life

Lasting life

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I know that **His commandment is eternal life**;

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The life that God commands is not a temporal life bound up in temporal stuff. It is an everlasting life springing forth from knowledge of the everlasting God revealed in the eternal Son He sent.

**This is eternal life, that they may know You,
the only true God, and Jesus Christ
whom You have sent.**

(John 17:3)

Concluding Thoughts:

Faith comes from hearing the word of Christ, so we should be positioning ourselves to be hearing the word of Christ.

Fullness of life is the fruit of this faith.

This faith does not exchange the eternal value of knowing Christ for the temporal pleasures of this world.